



**ELON**  
UNIVERSITY

THE ECONOMIC AND  
COMMUNITY IMPACTS  
OF **ELON UNIVERSITY**

**2020**



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# Executive Report

## Introduction

Elon University is a national university renowned for experiential learning and student success. More than 7,000 students come to Elon from 46 states, the District of Columbia, multiple U.S. territories and 49 other nations, creating a dynamic and engaged academic community. Elon's core values have remained constant throughout its history: close relationships between students and their faculty and staff mentors, a culture that supports constant innovation, and a strong sense of community.

Elon provides students a multitude of opportunities for study on campus and around the world, integrated with extensive community-engaged

learning, service and internship opportunities. In keeping with its mission, Elon has the unique capacity and responsibility to prepare students to be global citizens and informed leaders motivated by concern for the common good.

The breadth and depth of services at Elon have a far reach that impacts not only residents throughout Alamance and Guilford counties, but also across North Carolina and around the globe. This report demonstrates that Elon University is a driving economic force. The impacts of Elon are unique to each region and touch the lives of those who live there.



# Executive Summary

Elon University's **36,000 alumni** generated a combined economic impact of **\$8.6 billion** throughout the United States.

In fiscal year 2020, Elon University generated **\$695 million** and supported and sustained over **7,441 jobs** while producing **\$34.6 million** in government tax revenue in North Carolina.

## Charitable Donations/Volunteer Services

- In FY20, employees and students at Elon University generated more than **\$5.8 million** in charitable donations and volunteer services in North Carolina. These benefits are in addition to the **\$695 million** annual impact that Elon generates for the state. The **\$5.8 million** impact includes the following:
- **\$1.9 million** donated to local charitable organizations by Elon employees and students.
- Nearly **\$3.9 million** in value of volunteer time provided to area communities by Elon employees and students.



**One out of every 10 jobs in Alamance County is attributable to Elon University.<sup>1</sup>**

In FY20, Elon University generated **\$372.1 million** in economic impact and supported and sustained more than **5,700 jobs** while producing more than **\$18.8 million** in government tax revenue in Alamance County.

<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau reports Alamance County employment at 59,656.

## Project Overview

In October 2019, Tripp Umbach<sup>2</sup> was retained by Elon University to provide comprehensive analysis of the economic, employment, government revenue, and community benefits that arise from university operations. Tripp Umbach is nationally recognized as the leader in measuring the economic impact of academic medical centers, health-care organizations, universities and bioscience organizations.

The report quantifies the economic impacts generated by Elon University throughout North Carolina, Alamance County and Guilford County. This study was developed to assist leaders at Elon to communicate the latest economic, employment and government revenue impacts associated with the university's operations.

This report measures the direct and indirect economic impact stemming from Elon operations for Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20).<sup>3</sup> These impacts fall within the following categories:



- Business volume impacts (analysis includes capital expenditures, operational expenditures, salary data and state and regional business volumes)
- The direct, indirect and induced employment impacts of Elon University
- The government revenue impact of Elon University at the local and state levels
- The impact of visitor spending on the economy (wage premiums, job creation, etc.)<sup>4</sup>
- The impact of student spending in the region (retail/merchandise, hospitality, etc.)
- The impact of Elon University alumni on the economy (including wage premiums and job creation)
- The impact on economic development throughout the region
- The impact that employees and students have on the community through donations and volunteer work
- The economic impact on the community related to university spending due to the COVID-19 pandemic

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.trippumbach.com/>

<sup>3</sup> Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in some areas of the study Tripp Umbach requested FY19 data versus FY20 data.

<sup>4</sup> Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Tripp Umbach requested FY19 data versus FY20 visitor data to reflect the average number of annual visitors.

<sup>5</sup> Minnesota IMPLAN Group Inc. (MIG) is the corporation that is responsible for the production of IMPLAN (IMPact analysis for PLANning) data and software. IMPLAN is a micro-computer-based, input-output modeling system. With IMPLAN, one can estimate Input-Output models of up to 528 sectors for any region consisting of one or more counties. IMPLAN includes procedures for generating multipliers and estimating impacts by applying final demand changes to the model.

## Methodology Employed in the Economic Impact Study

Tripp Umbach's economic impact analysis measures the effect of direct and indirect/induced business volume and government revenue impacts for all of Elon University's operations throughout the state of North Carolina, Alamance County and Guilford County for FY20. Primary data collected from the university included capital expenditures, operational expenditures, number of employees, payroll and benefits, taxes paid to local and state governments, visitation numbers for events on campus, number of students, and proportions of students who live on- and off-campus to accurately measure their spending in the local area. The approach taken in this study was decidedly conservative.

Tripp Umbach analyzed the economic impact of Elon University using the IMPLAN input-output model.<sup>5</sup> The total economic impact of Elon University represented here includes the spending from the university on goods and services with a variety of vendors; the spending of faculty, staff, students and visitors; and the business volume generated by organizations within Alamance County, Guilford County and the state of North Carolina. It is important to remember that not all dollars spent by a university remain in its home state. Dollars that "leak" out of the state in the form of purchases from out-of-state vendors are not included in the university's economic impact on the state. The economic impact values presented in this report are generated by direct, indirect and induced operational spending, capital spending, payroll, visitor spending and student spending within Alamance County and Guilford County and throughout North Carolina.

## Ready and Resilient

Elon resumed on-campus classes for the 2020-21 academic year by creating a culture of **responsibility and resilience**. While people around the world were adapting to life during the COVID-19 pandemic, Elon was also changing to help ensure a safe and healthy return to campus in the fall for nearly 9,000 students, faculty and staff.

Elon increased spending to create a healthy, safe and secure learning environment. Elon supported local businesses by making significant financial investments in the following areas: screening and testing, health services, cleaning supplies and protective equipment, technology, food services, equipment and rentals and additional lodging. Specifically, Elon contracted with three hotels throughout the community, at no cost to students who required isolation or quarantine, helping the local lodging industry when occupancy rates were at record lows. This is just one example of how Elon supported the local economy during the pandemic.

Maintaining in-person instruction and campus life had a significant economic impact on the local economy, employment and tax revenue throughout 2020. Increased spending by Elon because of the COVID-19 pandemic generated nearly **\$20.2 million** (**\$11.3 million** direct impact and **\$8.9 million** indirect and induced) in economic impact, sustained **158 jobs** and generated nearly **\$1 million** in government revenue throughout the region. Elon proved to be an important economic engine during a year when visitation and spending in the community were at record lows.

# Strengthening the North Carolina Economy

Elon University is a driving engine for education throughout North Carolina, linked through outreach and engagement with stakeholders and communities across the state. With two campuses — in Alamance County and Guilford County — Elon generates economic and community impact throughout the state and in localized regions.



## Economic Impact

In FY20, Elon University's operations directly or indirectly impacted residents throughout North Carolina, generating nearly **\$695 million** in overall economic impact. Elon University affects business volume in North Carolina in two ways:

1. Direct expenditures for goods and services by Elon, its staff, faculty, students and visitors. This spending supports local businesses, which in turn employ local individuals to sell the goods and provide the services that university constituencies need.
2. Indirect or induced spending within the state of North Carolina. The businesses and individuals that receive direct payments re-spend this money within the state, thus creating the need for even more jobs.

As a result of expenditures on goods and services by Elon, its staff, faculty, students and visitors, the overall economic impact of all of Elon University's operations on North Carolina in 2020 was **\$695 million (\$214.6 million direct impact and \$480.4 million indirect and induced)**.

### ELON UNIVERSITY 2020 IMPACT ON NORTH CAROLINA



## Elon University Creates and Sustains Jobs

In FY20, Elon University supported more than **7,441 jobs** in the state of North Carolina, directly impacting workforce vitality and bolstering the economy on a number of levels. These jobs, both full time and part time, included not only direct employment by the university, but also indirect and induced jobs created for supply and equipment vendors; contractors and laborers for the construction and renovation of university facilities; and jobs created in the community at hotels, restaurants and retail stores in support of the university's workforce and its visitors.

Elon University directly employed 2,694 people during FY20. Elon University supports thousands of jobs statewide in virtually every sector of the North Carolina economy, such as construction, business

and professional services, restaurants and hotels, information technology, security, and temporary employment companies. These additional 4,747 jobs are due to the presence of Elon.

This employment makes a direct contribution to the overall workforce vitality of the state of North Carolina and bolsters the economy. Those directly employed spend dollars in the state and, therefore, support additional employment. The university's spending on capital projects, development and planning projects, and suppliers supports additional indirect jobs throughout North Carolina.

### ELON UNIVERSITY 2020 EMPLOYMENT IMPACT

**2,694** DIRECT

**4,747** INDIRECT/INDUCED

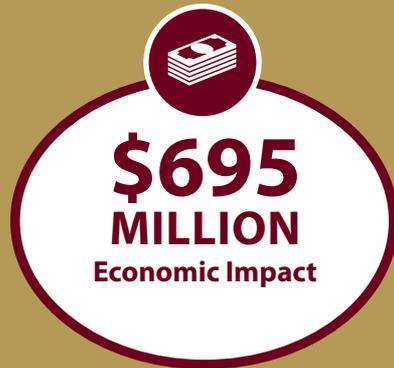
**7,441** TOTAL JOBS

## Elon University Strengthens State and Local Governments

Elon University contributes significantly to the state and local tax bases through spending with state and local organizations, university employees living in North Carolina and visitor spending.

State and local government revenues attributable to the presence of Elon University totaled more than **\$34.6 million** in FY20. Through its local spending, as well as direct and indirect support of jobs, the presence of the university stabilizes and strengthens the local and statewide tax base. Elon University is an integral part of the state's economy, generating revenue, jobs and spending.

### ELON UNIVERSITY 2020 IMPACT ON NORTH CAROLINA





## Impact of Elon on Alamance County

For more than 130 years, Elon has been a significant contributor to the Alamance County economy. Since 2010, Elon has pursued the most transformative period in the university's history. The university has made an investment of more than **\$800 million**; created more than 40 new academic majors, programs and centers; seen a 25 percent increase in enrollment and 65 percent increase in facility space; and received contributions to the university of more than **\$220 million**. The university has fully assumed a position of national leadership. The new strategic plan launched in 2020, Boldly Elon, is continuing the university's growth in size and stature.

Today, Elon is one of four top employers in Alamance County, along with Alamance-Burlington School System, Laboratory Corporation of America (LabCorp) and Cone Health Alamance Regional. In addition, Elon's vibrant cultural and academic programs, performing arts and athletics programs attract visitors from across the region and around the world.

## ELON UNIVERSITY 2020 ECONOMIC IMPACT ON ALAMANCE COUNTY

**\$87.5** MILLION DIRECT

**\$284.6** MILLION INDIRECT/INDUCED

**\$372.1** MILLION TOTAL

### Visitor Impact

Spending by visitors to Elon's campus for events in FY19 totaled **\$133.3 million**, produced **1,756 jobs** and generated **\$17.5 million** in government revenue. For instance, there were more than 16,000 prospective students and their families who visited Elon's campus in 2019 for admissions tours and events.

### Elon University Visitor Numbers

Athletic Events	118,932
Academic Seminars	497
Admissions Events - undergraduate	15,361
Admissions Events - graduate	683
Student Life Events	1,409
Convocations	3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>136,882</b>

## Employment Impact

Elon operations support **5,702 jobs** (full time and part time) within Alamance County. This includes 1,782 direct jobs at the university along with 3,920 additional jobs maintained by other employers due to the university's operations in the county.

**One out of every 10 jobs in the Alamance County is attributable to Elon University.<sup>6</sup>**

### ELON UNIVERSITY 2020 EMPLOYMENT IMPACT ON ALAMANCE COUNTY

**1,782** JOBS DIRECT

**3,920** JOBS INDIRECT/INDUCED

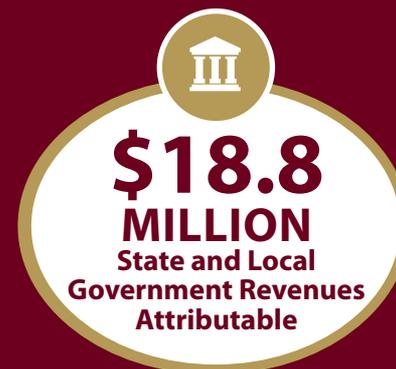
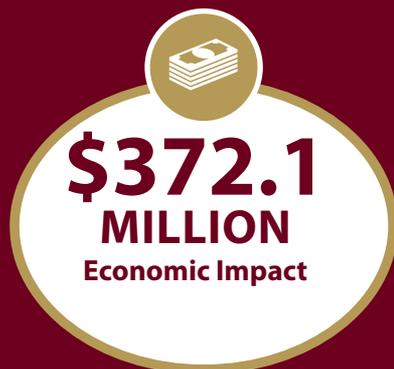
**5,702** TOTAL JOBS

## Government Revenue Impact

In 2020, operations of Elon University in Alamance County created more than \$18.8 million in government revenue, which includes the direct taxes paid to state and local government as well as additional indirect tax payments.



### ELON UNIVERSITY 2020 IMPACT ON ALAMANCE COUNTY





## Impact of Elon on Guilford County

Elon University School of Law is located in downtown Greensboro, North Carolina. The flourishing atmosphere in the city center, along with the dynamic student presence of Elon, has contributed to a significant economic impact on Guilford County.

It is important to note that the Elon University impacts on Guilford County in this report include the operations of the law school along with the impacts of spending by the main campus that occur in Guilford County.

### Economic Impact

The overall economic impact of Elon University on Guilford County totaled **\$125.8 million** for FY20. This is a combination of the impact of **\$68.5 million** of direct spending by Elon University in Guilford County, as well as indirect and induced impacts of **\$57.3 million**.

## Employment Impact

The total employment impact of Elon University on Guilford County was **916 jobs** throughout the county. This includes **510 jobs** that are directly related to Elon University and **406 jobs** indirectly supported or sustained by the university operations. These jobs are created in a variety of industries.

### ELON UNIVERSITY 2020 ECONOMIC IMPACT ON GUILFORD COUNTY

**\$68.5** MILLION DIRECT

**\$57.3** MILLION INDIRECT/INDUCED

**\$125.8** MILLION TOTAL

### Government Revenue Impact

In FY19, the operations of Elon in Guilford County created more than \$5.2 million in government revenue, which includes direct taxes paid to state and local government as well as additional indirect tax payments.

  
**\$125.8**  
MILLION  
Economic Impact

  
**916**  
JOBS  
Supported

  
**\$5.2**  
MILLION  
State and Local  
Government Revenues  
Attributable



## **Dedicated Community Partner**

Economic impact studies often capture only the impact that can be assigned a quantitative number, but the qualitative value and impact of Elon go far beyond its annual economic impact. Through service-learning programs, Elon has developed partnerships with local charitable and community organizations, strengthening the local communities while at the same time providing unique educational opportunities to Elon students.

## **Elon Community Outreach**

Tripp Umbach estimates that Elon employees and students in FY20 generated about \$5.8 million in charitable donations and volunteer services across North Carolina. These benefits include:

- \$1.9 million donated to local charitable organizations by Elon employees and students.
- Nearly \$3.9 million in value of volunteer time provided to area communities by Elon employees and students.

During FY20, more than 3,200 students volunteered their time for community service and volunteer activities. With more than 240 clubs and organizations, students participated in more than 100,000 volunteer

community service hours.<sup>7</sup> A few examples of the programs that Elon students participate in are detailed below.

## **Kernodle Center for Civic Life**

The Kernodle Center for Civic Life supports community programs and partnerships that help hundreds of Alamance County residents and provide rich learning experiences for Elon students.

## **Elon Academy**

The Elon Academy is a nonprofit program for academically promising high school students in Alamance County with a financial need and/or no family history of college.

## **Village Project**

The “It Takes a Village” Project uses a collaborative approach to tutoring children in the community who are struggling to read. For many families, the Village Project has become an indispensable resource and the springboard to education opportunities for their children.

## **The Humanitarian Immigration Law Clinic**

Elon University School of Law established the Humanitarian Immigration Law Clinic in

December 2010, allowing students under the supervision of law faculty to provide free legal services to low-income refugees and asylum seekers in North Carolina.

## **Small Business & Entrepreneurship Clinic**

The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Clinic is a law office within Elon Law, which provides business-related legal services to entrepreneurs and small business owners who would not otherwise be able to afford legal representation.

## **Health Outreach Program of Elon (H.O.P.E. Clinic)**

The H.O.P.E. Clinic is a student-managed and operated pro bono physical therapy clinic.

## **Elon Year-of-Service Graduate Fellows**

The Elon Year-of-Service Graduate Fellows program offers recent Elon graduates the opportunity to engage in one year of meaningful service work to improve the health, education and economic well-being of residents in Alamance County.

<sup>7</sup> Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Tripp Umbach requested FY19 data versus FY20 data to reflect an accurate picture of the average number of students who volunteer their time for community service and volunteer activities on an annual basis.

# Driver of Economic Development

Since 2009, Elon's campus has been transformed, with more than 78 buildings built, acquired or expanded. The total square footage of campus facilities has grown by 65 percent. Elon has spent more than \$450 million in capital investments, which has generated an overall economic impact of \$805.6 million and supported 4,600 jobs while producing nearly \$76.6 million in government tax revenue in the region over the decade.

## The Inn at Elon

In January 2020, the university opened The Inn at Elon, a four-star boutique hotel and conference facility located on campus. The hotel contains 80 full-service rooms, flexible event space and a full-service upscale restaurant and cocktail lounge. The **\$31 million** facility fulfills a longstanding goal of having an on-campus hotel. As an asset of the university, financing for The Inn at Elon includes a plan to directly benefit students. All revenue beyond operating costs is directed to fund scholarships.

Construction of The Inn at Elon generated an additional \$55.7 million in total economic impact to the state of North Carolina and supported more than 320 temporary jobs. The construction also resulted in \$1.7 million of total state and local government revenue impact.

## Elon Elementary School

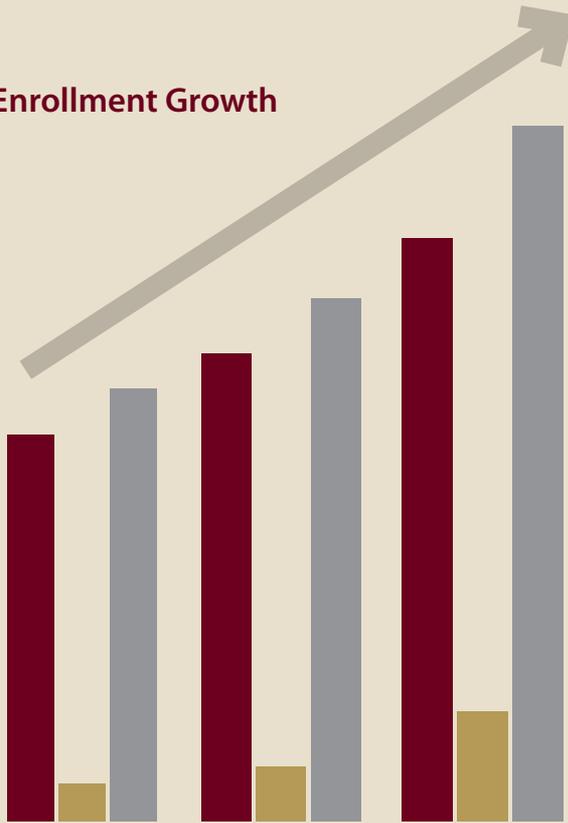
Through a partnership between Elon University and the Alamance-Burlington School System, the new \$18 million Elon Elementary School opened in June 2019. The school system exchanged the aging school building and land on Haggard Avenue for a new school built and paid for by Elon on university-owned property located 1.5 miles north of campus.



## Downtown Innovation Group

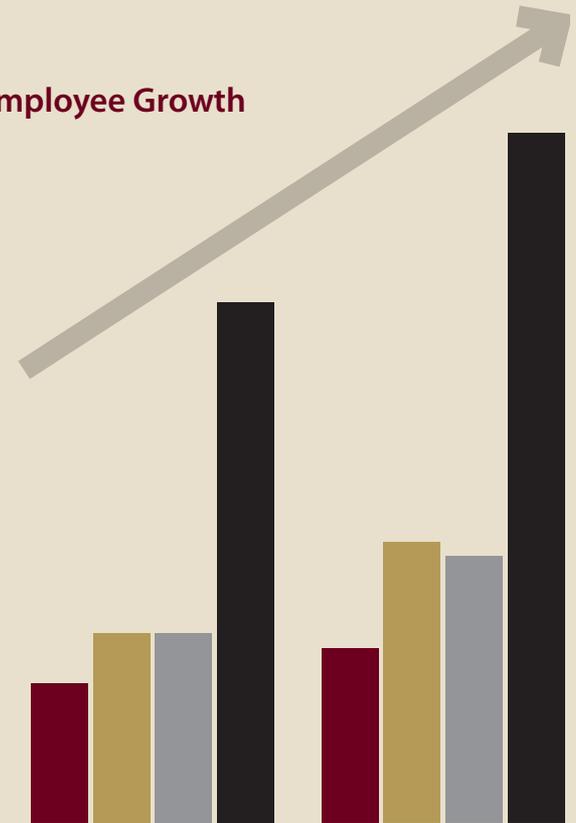
The Burlington Downtown Corporation estimates an \$8.1 million economic impact on downtown commerce over the past three years from its partnership with Elon University, including the opening of Elon University's Downtown Center for Community Engagement, which acts as a meeting space for student organizations, classes and local nonprofit groups; and the establishment of an Elon University downtown bus service loop to take students from campus to local agencies, schools and government offices for service work and internships.

## Enrollment Growth



Academic Year	2000-01	2009-10	2020-21
<b>Undergraduate</b>	3,900	4,995	6,291
<b>Graduate</b>	238	671	826
<b>TOTAL</b>	4,138	5,666	7,117

## Employee Growth



Academic Year	2009-10	2020-21
<b>Faculty</b>	470	609
<b>Staff</b>	743	1,134
<b>Students</b>	803	955
<b>TOTAL</b>	2,106	2,698



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