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NACA to add more than 1,000 jobs in Charlotte

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The **Neighborhood Assistance Corp. of America** plans to ramp up its affordable lending programs by adding more than 1,000 employees to its Charlotte office.

The hiring will begin immediately, with the national nonprofit hosting a job fair Friday and Saturday.

NACA focuses on lending to low- and moderate-income families. Gov. Bev Perdue announced the expansion Thursday, with the state giving NACA a \$1 million grant from the One North Carolina Fund. It plans to invest more than \$4 million here, with 1,014 jobs expected to be added over the next five years.

“North Carolina remains a strong presence in the U.S. finance sector, and this is a tremendous opportunity for the Charlotte-area,” Perdue said. “Our top-rated business climate and skilled financial-services work force are attractive to growing national operations.”

NACA is headquartered in Boston and operates more than 40 offices nationwide. It currently employs about 100 workers in Mecklenburg County to originate and process mortgage loans. Under the five-year state incentive agreement, the organization plans to add 550 jobs immediately.

The jobs will pay an average annual wage of \$35,982. Salaries will range up to \$80,000 annually.

The hiring will focus on mortgage negotiators, customer-service representatives, call-center managers and mortgage counselors.

“NACA is excited that it’s putting more than 1,000 people to work during these tough economic times,” NACA Chief Executive Bruce Marks said Thursday. “Today’s announcement is more than just a sound bite — we are following through on this investment by holding a jobs fair tomorrow to hire 550 people immediately.”

Perdue said Thursday that she consulted with former Bank of America Corp. Chairman Hugh McColl Jr. about the deal. McColl has been a longtime supporter of NACA’s work. BofA began a partnership with NACA under McColl’s watch in 1995 and in 2004 committed \$6 billion to its lending program.

Perdue says McColl confirmed to her that he expected NACA could follow through on its job commitments in several phone conversations.

“When someone begins something like this in Charlotte, it always grows,” McColl said in an interview Thursday. “They’ll come in and find this is a good place to find (a work force). I would hope it would be an eruption of jobs, not just trickle down.”

The group claims it will be the largest number of people hired immediately in one area and the largest job commitment in the country since the mortgage crisis began in 2007. The hiring comes as NACA embarks on a nationwide Save the Dream Tour.

Marks says the added jobs are crucial as NACA leads its campaign to make mortgages affordable. Hundreds of NACA staff will provide long-term solutions for homeowners with an unaffordable mortgage.

“Charlotte continues to be attractive because of our knowledgeable financial-services work force and we welcome NACA’s investment in North Carolina,” N.C. Sen. Dan Clodfelter (D-Mecklenburg) said in a release.

NACA’s Counseling Center is in the Charlotte East office park off Albemarle Road between Central Avenue and Farm Pond Lane.

“Charlotte continues to be recognized as a leader in financial services with a talented and experienced labor force,” says Charlotte Chamber Chairman Tim Belk. “We are pleased to welcome NACA to the community and look forward to the investment in jobs and presence they will bring to our East side.”

The chamber assisted NACA in its expansion effort.

Charlotte East owner Roger Kellogg, principal of **Kellogg Development Co.**, and leasing director Eric Speckman have worked closely with NACA since 2007, when the nonprofit established a small office in the park.

NACA has legally binding agreements with all the major lenders/servicers to restructure the mortgages they service.

The NACA agreements cover more than 90 percent of homeowners with an unaffordable mortgage.

The staff from the Counseling Center in Charlotte will travel nationwide to work on Save the Dream events where more than 25,000 people are counseled over four days, with thousands receiving affordable restructured mortgages with permanent interest rates often at 4 percent, 3 percent and 2 percent and where necessary the principal reduced.

The organization, started in 1988, has the primary goal of building strong, healthy neighborhoods nationwide through affordable homeownership. NACA operations include financial counseling, specialized mortgage services and a Home Save program for homeowners with an unaffordable mortgage.

NACA will host a job fair from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday at its Charlotte Counseling Center.

For more information about Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America, including employment opportunities, go to www.naca.com.