

Jobless Rate Down in 4, Up in 2 Area Counties

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November unemployment dropped in four of six area counties, including a drop in Watauga that landed the county's rate at under 6%. The .6 of a percent drop landed Watauga's rate at 5.7%, one of the few counties with rates in the 5 to 6 percent range. Another university town had the lowest rate in the state —Orange with 4.3% unemployed, one of three counties in the state with an under 5% rate. Alleghany and Avery showed increases in their unemployment rates—7.5% in Alleghany, up .2%, 8.2% in Avery, up .4%—while Ashe unemployment dropped .6 of a percent, landing at 8.1%, Caldwell dropping .8% to 7.5%, Wilkes dropping .7% to 7.8%.