


AN NC CHAMBER EVENT

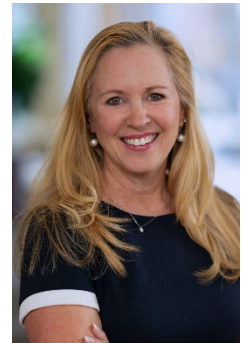
NC Business Playbook

OCTOBER 16, 2025
DURHAM, NC

NC  Chamber

Dr. Richards
President and CEO
Catapult

Dr. Richards is a purpose-driven President & CEO with a proven record of leading mission-based organizations through growth, transformation, and market expansion. She currently leads Catapult, a multi-state employers association serving more than 2,000 employers across more than 20 states. Under her leadership, Catapult has evolved into a premier professional services organization delivering high-value HR solutions, including compliance advisory, recruiting & talent acquisition, compensation and workforce analytics, and leadership development programs.



Dr. Richards spent over 30 years in higher education and workforce development, including serving as the first female President of Johnson & Wales University's Charlotte campus and as the Founding CEO & Regional Dean of Northeastern University-Charlotte. At Central Piedmont Community College, she served as Campus Dean and built strategic partnerships with industry to align education programs with employer needs.

Appointed by NC Governor Cooper to the NCWorks Commission, she is a respected workforce thought leader with strong relationships across business, government, and education sectors. She currently serves on the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond's Charlotte Advisory Roundtable, is past-chair of the Employers Association of America and has served in leadership roles on numerous nonprofit and civic boards.

Dr. Richards has been widely recognized for her leadership, including being named a Most Admired CEO (twice), twice as a 50 Most Influential Women, a Top 10 Most Inspiring Women Leader, a Top 25 Women in Business, and was Woman of the Year in 2014.

She is a frequent speaker on leadership, workforce development, and the future of work, and has hosted Carolina Business Review and multiple executive forums.

Dr. Richards holds a Ph.D. in Leadership for Higher Education, master's in Student Affairs in Higher Education, and a bachelor's in Speech Communication. She resides in Charlotte, NC with her husband and beloved English Cream Retriever, and enjoys time with her adult children when they visit.