

PROJECT SUMMARY

Introduction

The N.C. Department of State Treasurer (DST) recognizes that enrollment in their supplemental retirement plans *matters* when it comes to retirement readiness. Our statistics show that:

- 71.79% of all active employees who participate in the plans are on track to be “retirement ready.”*
- VERSUS**
- 44.05% of those who were not enrolled in the plans are on track to be “retirement ready.”*

DST, in partnership with Prudential Retirement®, launched the “Ticket to Your Future” campaign to encourage those who were identified as not “on track” to become retirement ready by joining the plan(s).*

The goal was simple: to encourage those employees to enroll despite the fact that our workforce was showing economic signs of distress, largely due to the pandemic. The engagement and action resulting from this campaign was so successful, we proudly submit it for your consideration in the 2021 NAGDA Award “National Retirement Security Month” category.

Many Things Came Together at a Crucial Moment of Realization

Fueling the momentum, NAGDCA declared October 2020 as National Retirement Security Month (NRSM). Simultaneously, while reviewing our year-to-date 2020 enrollment data, our historically low enrollment levels caused us to experience a moment of reflection. By comparison, enrollment in Q2 and Q3 2019 were 37% and 38% higher, respectively, than the same quarters in 2020.

We decided that NRSM was the time to put all of our efforts behind reminding people of their opportunity to enroll, and the impact participation can have on being prepared for retirement. What’s more, this timing was in *perfect* harmony with the rollout of our highly anticipated new participant enrollment webpage, which launched in September 2020, making joining the plan(s) easier than ever.

During NRSM, for the first time, Prudential and DST joined forces to pool resources in a large-scale, coordinated campaign called “Ticket to Your Future” in order to:

- highlight retirement security topics
- sponsor events and engagements with weekly themes
- launch a new webpage
- target more than 87,000 eligible participants

Theme & Collateral

The “Ticket to Your Future” campaign employed a multimedia approach with separate outreach for employees and employers, giving each audience the touchpoints they needed to learn about the importance of enrolling, and how easy it could be.

Our Multimedia Outreach Was Designed to Reach Our Target Audience ‘Wherever They Were’

NRSM collateral/support for employees	NRSM collateral for employers
Emails and postcards: over 87,000 distributed	Email
A new enrollment webpage	DST newsletter
Virtual event attendees 10,580 attended	
1:1 Retirement Education Counselor consultations 5,135 completed	
Social media posts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week #1: Ticket to your Future Learning and Defining Your Journey. • Week #2: Ticket to your Future Packing and Preparing. • Week #3: Ticket to your Future All Aboard the Retirement Express! • Week #4: Ticket to your Future Ease into your retirement - Sit back and enjoy the ride. 	

* According to 2019 myNC Retirement Statement data. “Retirement readiness” refers to those with a projected retirement income of at least 80% of their current pay for each year in retirement.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

North Carolina has a healthy pension system and, while employees may have access to a robust lifetime pension benefit as a part of their total compensation package, this benefit may not provide all the retirement income they need. Enrolling in the NC 401(k) and NC 457 Plans and/or the NC 403(b) Program is a critical step that can help give employees a more secure retirement.

Pension Contributions Can Make Saving in the Supplemental Retirement Plans Challenging

Our employees are required to participate in their respective pension plan at a rate of 6% or 7%. For some, these mandatory pension contributions make it challenging to afford additional contributions to the supplemental retirement plans. However, through education and awareness, we helped members understand that saving a little more today in a supplemental retirement plan can make a *big* difference in their retirement readiness.

It's Worth It: The Power of Enrollment

One thing we know is that enrollment *matters* when it comes to retirement readiness. As noted earlier, 71.79% of all employees who participated in the NC supplemental retirement plans were classified as “retirement ready,” versus only 44.05% of those who were not enrolled in the plans.* And, for those who are eligible for an employer match, enrolling in the plan(s) will enable them to capture every dollar they are entitled to.

We Focused on Those Trailing in Retirement Readiness

Our highly personalized “*A Better Financial Future Is Ready—Whenever/Wherever You Are*” email and postcard outreach targeted a *subset* of those with a projected retirement income of less than 80% of their current pay. Specifically, we targeted those who were projected to have a monthly retirement income shortfall of a minimum threshold, with the threshold becoming smaller the closer the individual was to their retirement age:

Ages of recipients:	Amount of retirement income shortfall:	Number of employees in target group:
18-34	\$200 or more	5,278
35-49	\$150 or more	34,992
50+	\$100 or more	47,355

Key personalization for employer match-eligible recipients

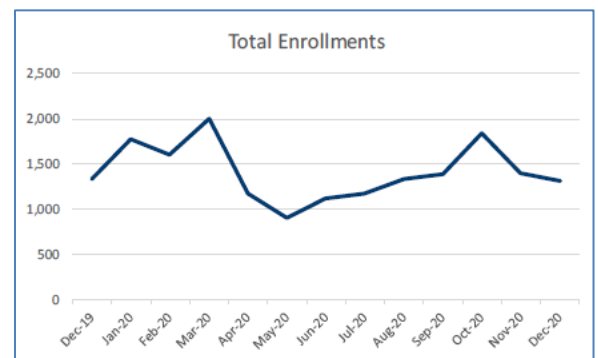
We also reached out to those who were “leaving money on the table” with each paycheck with an additional message, since they weren’t contributing to the plans at all. We did this by customizing their enrollment communication to include an additional sentence that provided their employer match details.

Our Goals, Headwinds, & Results

The campaign’s goal was to “course correct,” as we were experiencing lower-than-normal enrollments from late spring to early summer 2020. It was rewarding to see a substantial uptick in enrollments in the Fourth Quarter, when enrollments increased 24% and 11% over Quarters 2 and 3, respectively.

And, while an uptick of enrollments in the fall is quite common, our annual trends were abnormal overall and we weren’t sure if we were going to be able to experience *any* uptick before the pandemic subsided.

Good news! Post-campaign and in the Fourth Quarter, we realized over 4,500 enrollments.**



The results of our campaign confirm that a creative, coordinated effort, which combines general messaging with an integrated, targeted approach can, in the long run, mean so much to so many. We are confident that our efforts will continue to provide more retirement income to our well-deserving public servants for decades to come.

* According to 2019 myNCRetirement Statement data.

** Source: North Carolina Total Retirement Plans, 4Q 2020 Board of Trustees Report

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

NATIONAL RETIREMENT SECURITY MONTH

ENROLLMENT MATTERS FOR RETIREMENT READINESS

71.79%

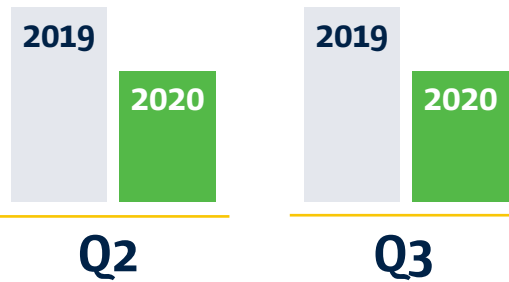
of people who are enrolled are retirement ready

vs.

44.05%

of people who are **not** enrolled are retirement ready

NRSM: THE BOOST OUR DECLINE IN ENROLLMENTS NEEDED



Enrollments for Q2 and Q3 2019 were **37%** and **38%** higher than the same quarters in 2020

PRUDENTIAL & NC DST JOINED FORCES FOR THE “TICKET TO YOUR FUTURE” CAMPAIGN

Through our large-scale, coordinated campaign:



10,580 attended sponsored events and engagements



7,218 views per week for the new webpage

4 weekly social media posts

87,000+ eligible participants targeted through the “A Better Financial Future Is Ready—Whenever/Wherever You Are” outreach

THE RESULTS

OUR GOAL



Course-correct the **nearly 40% drop** in enrollments in the spring/summer

OUR CHALLENGE



Uncertainty around whether the **pandemic** would prevent the **typical uptick** in fall enrollments

OUR RESULTS



4,500 enrollments in Q4: an increase of 24% and 11% over Q2 and Q3