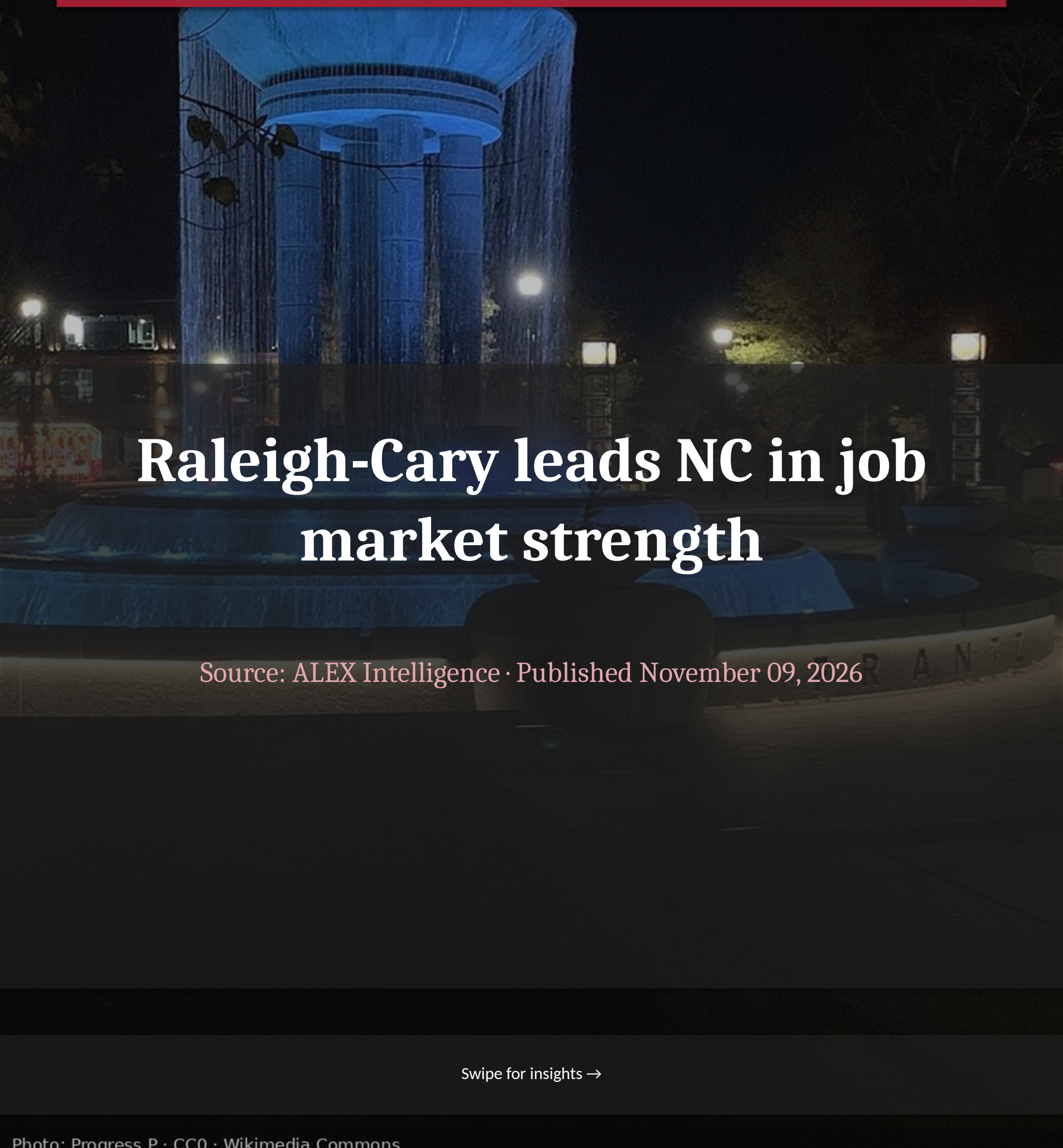
Raleigh-Cary, NC — #1 of 10: metropolitan unemployment rate (September 2026)



Raleigh-Cary leads NC in job market strength

Source: ALEX Intelligence · Published November 09, 2026

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THE DATA

2.7%

metropolitan unemployment rate (September 2026)

Raleigh-Cary, NC maintains the lowest unemployment rate among all 15 North Carolina metros.

This figure underscores a labor market so tight that businesses face real challenges in hiring. With only 2.7% of the workforce unemployed, the Triangle's job market is among the most competitive in the state. This level of labor scarcity is a structural feature of the region's economy, not a cyclical blip.



Photo: James Willamor · CC BY-SA 3.0 · Wikimedia Commons

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Employment Statistics, September 2026 (seasonally unadjusted, metropolitan) · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-09-triangle-lab-bls-unemp-rate-msa

01

Talent scarcity drives premium pricing

This is not a passive trend — it is a direct feedback loop. As wages rise to retain talent, property owners must raise rents to cover rising operating costs. The result is a self-reinforcing cycle that elevates asset values in the most in-demand submarkets, especially near innovation hubs like RTP and the Research Triangle Park.

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02

Rents are pricing out entry-level talent

This is where the Triangle's real estate market diverges from its national peers. Unlike markets where unemployment is high and rents are stagnant, the Triangle's low unemployment is not translating into broad-based affordability. Instead, it is concentrating wealth and limiting access for those not already in high-income roles — a structural imbalance that will shape housing policy and development priorities in the next decade.

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