

# Physician Assistant Education in North Carolina

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# Key to PA practice:

- Negotiated performance autonomy
- Not: functional autonomy
- Scope of practice is determined by the supervising physician

**Physician Assistants (PAs) are health professionals licensed to practice medicine with physician supervision. PAs are qualified by graduation from an accredited PA educational program and certification by the NCCPA. Within the physician/PA relationship, PAs exercise autonomy in medical decision making and provide a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic services.**

Source: AAPA


# Facts at a glance:

- Nearly 60,000 practicing PAs in the US
- 221 million visits to PAs in 2005
- All states, DC and most territories authorize PA practice
- 49 states, DC and Guam authorize PA prescribing
- 3<sup>rd</sup> fastest growing occupation, 2002 to 2012 (BLS)

# PA curriculum


- Averages 26 months
- Competency- based

# First year:

- Anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology
  - Pharmacology
  - Behavioral and social sciences
  - Health policy
  - Patient interviewing and physical diagnosis
  - Clinical medicine: all organ systems
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# Second year:

## Supervised clinical practice

- Family medicine
  - General internal medicine
  - Pediatrics
  - Prenatal care & gynecology
  - General surgery
  - Emergency medicine
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# Second year, continued:

- Psychiatry/behavioral medicine
- Geriatrics

# Certification

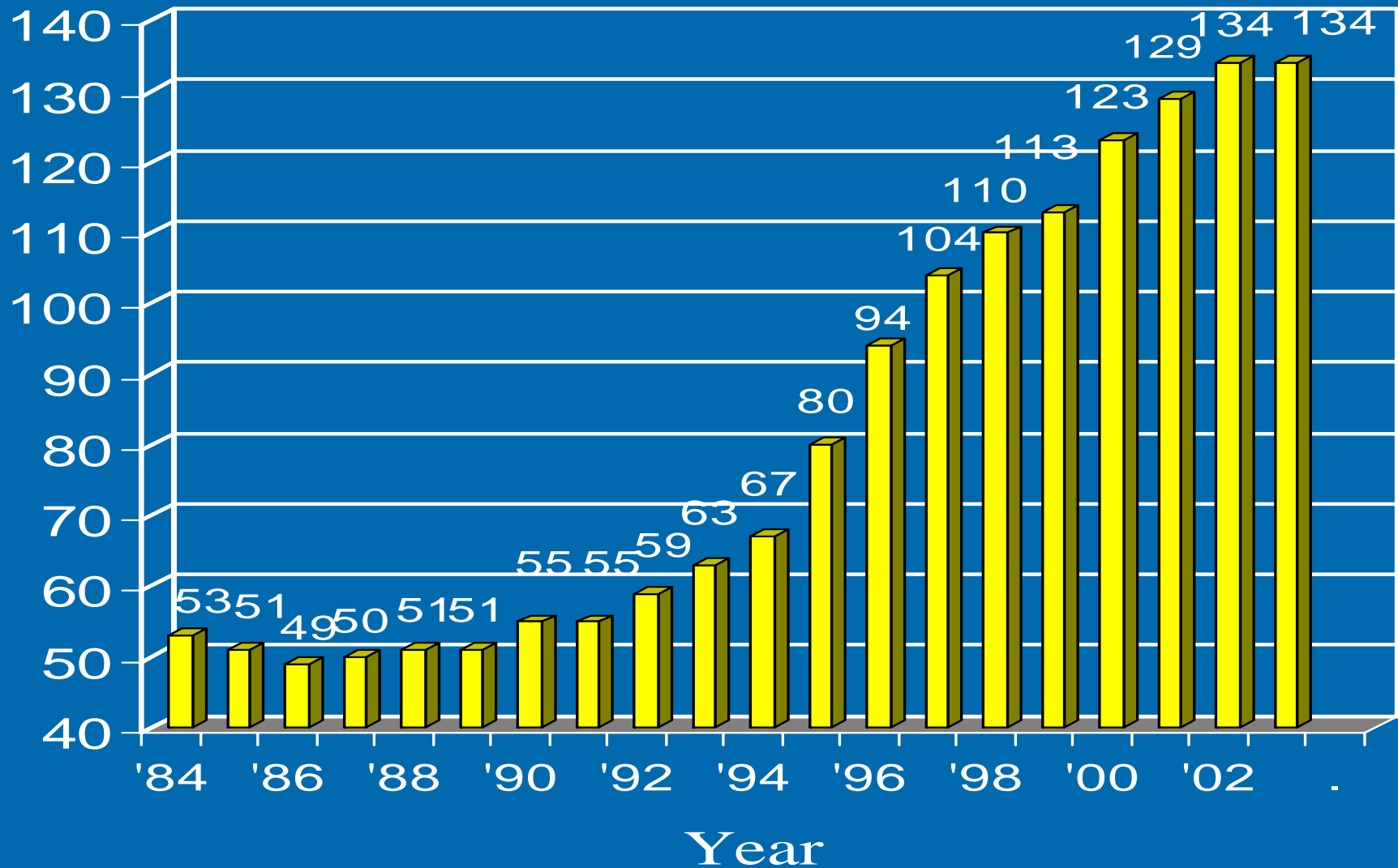
Upon graduation:

- Must pass the national exam, NCCPA
- Maintain certification by
  - 100 hours of CME every 2 years
  - Recertification by exam every 6 years

# PA education in the US

- 136 programs accredited by ARC-PA
- 4,500 graduates per year

# Total Number of PA Programs



Source: APAP 19th Annual Report

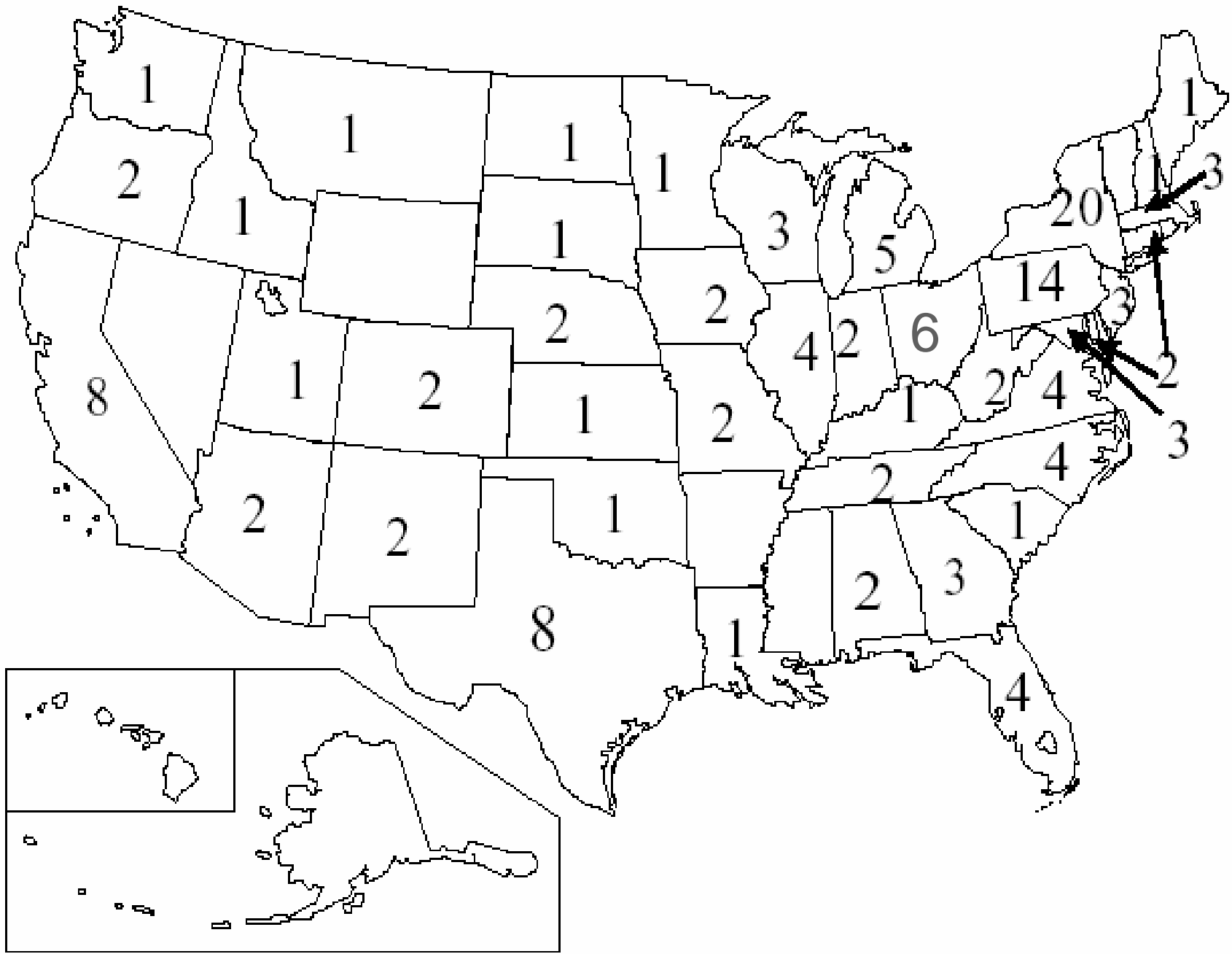


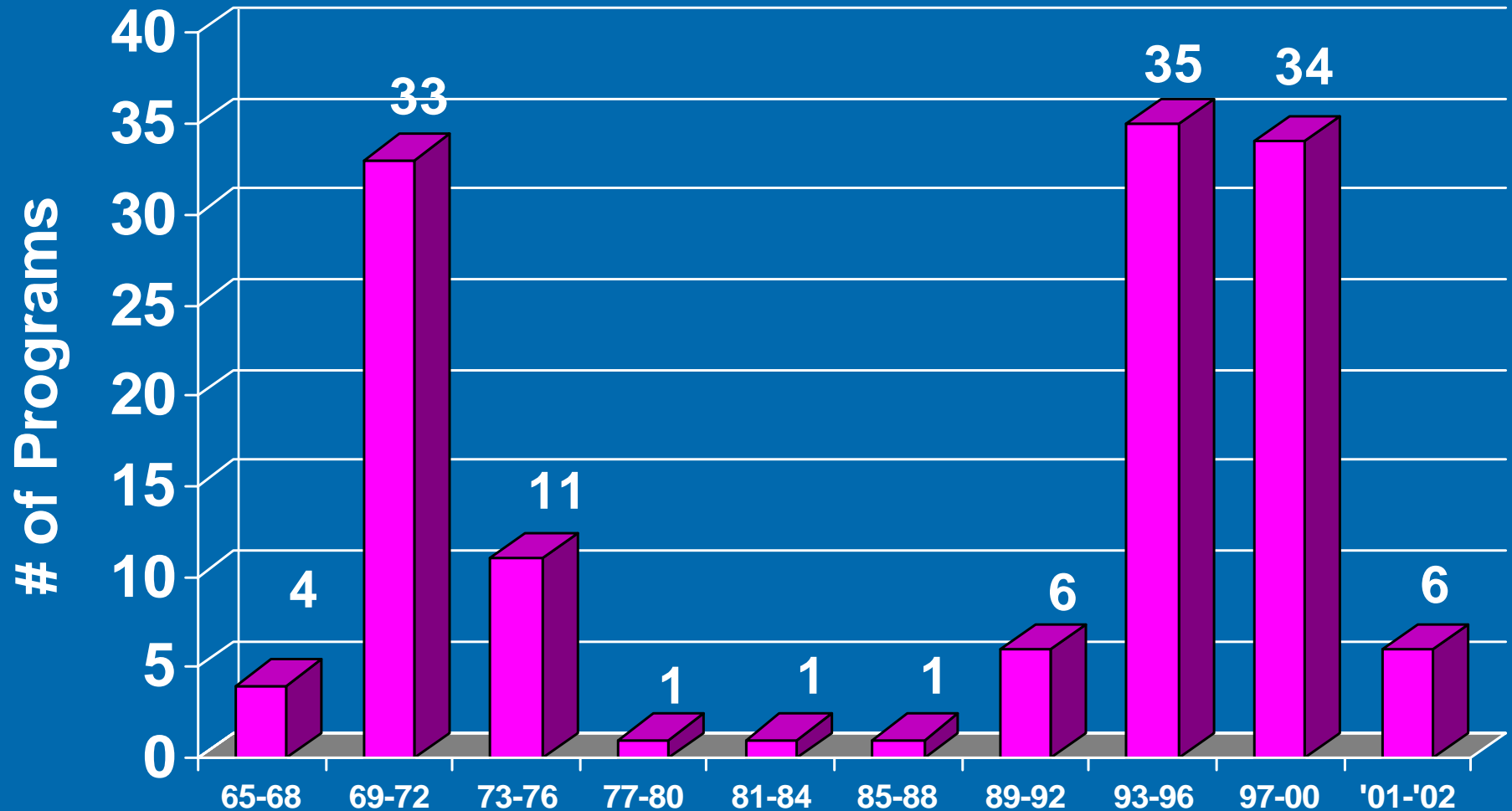
Figure 1. Geographic Distribution of Programs

Source: APAP 19th Annual Report

# PA Programs in NC

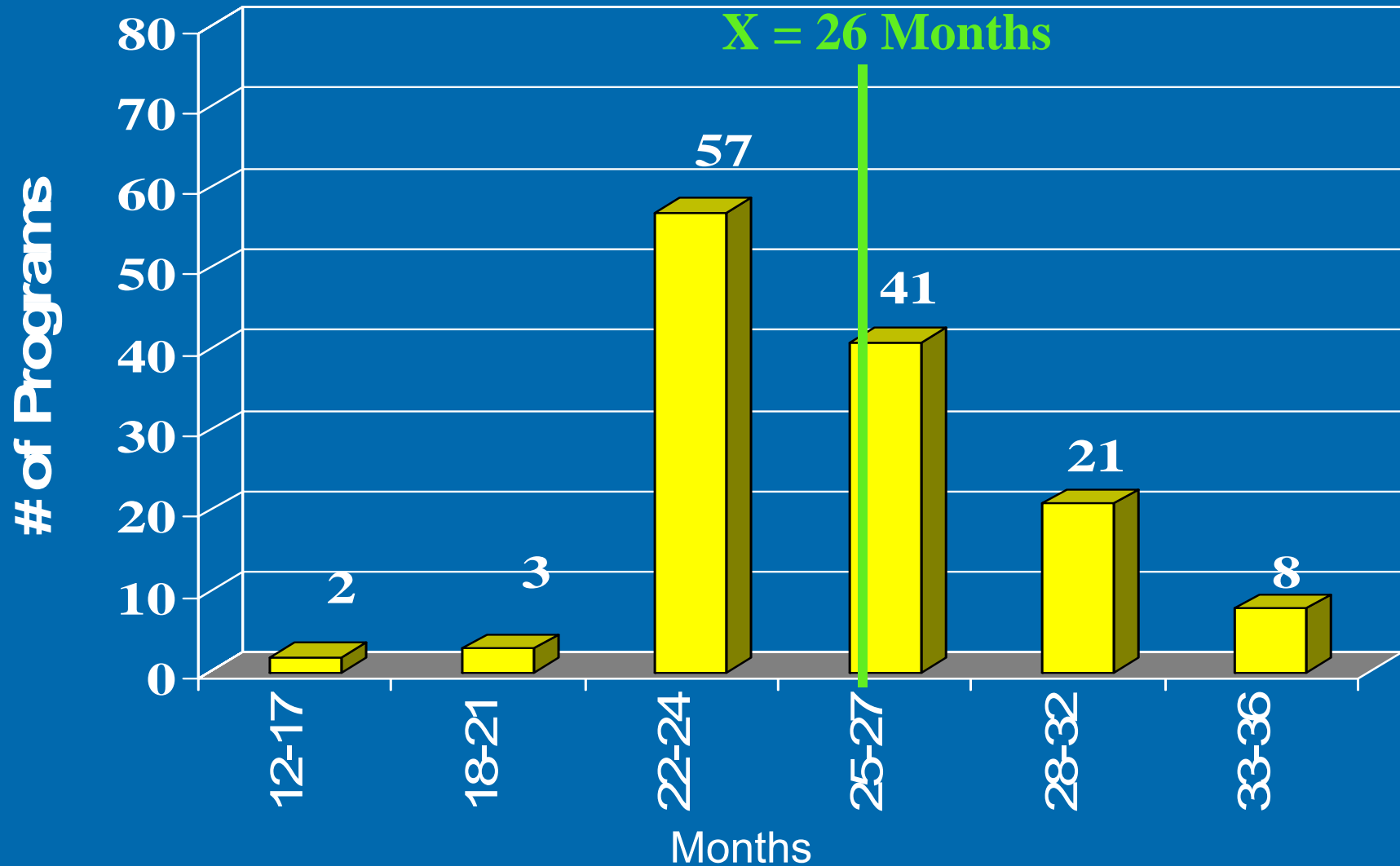
- Duke University (1965)
  - Wake Forest University (1971)
  - East Carolina University (1996)
  - Methodist College (1996)
- Total graduates from NC programs:  
3,096

# Number of New PA Programs By Year of First Entering Class



Source: APAP 19th Annual Report

# Program Length (N=130)

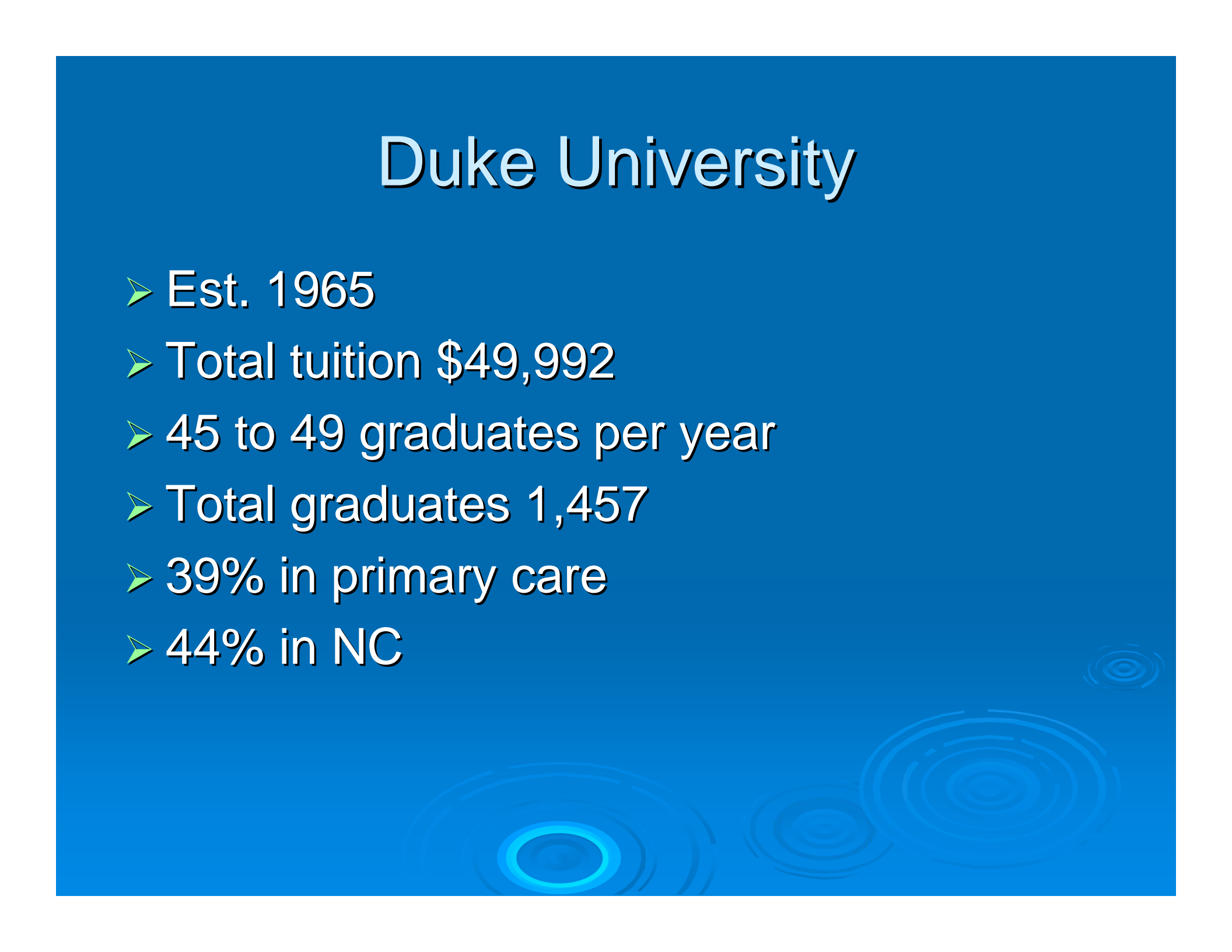


Source: APAP 19th Annual Report

# NC PA Programs



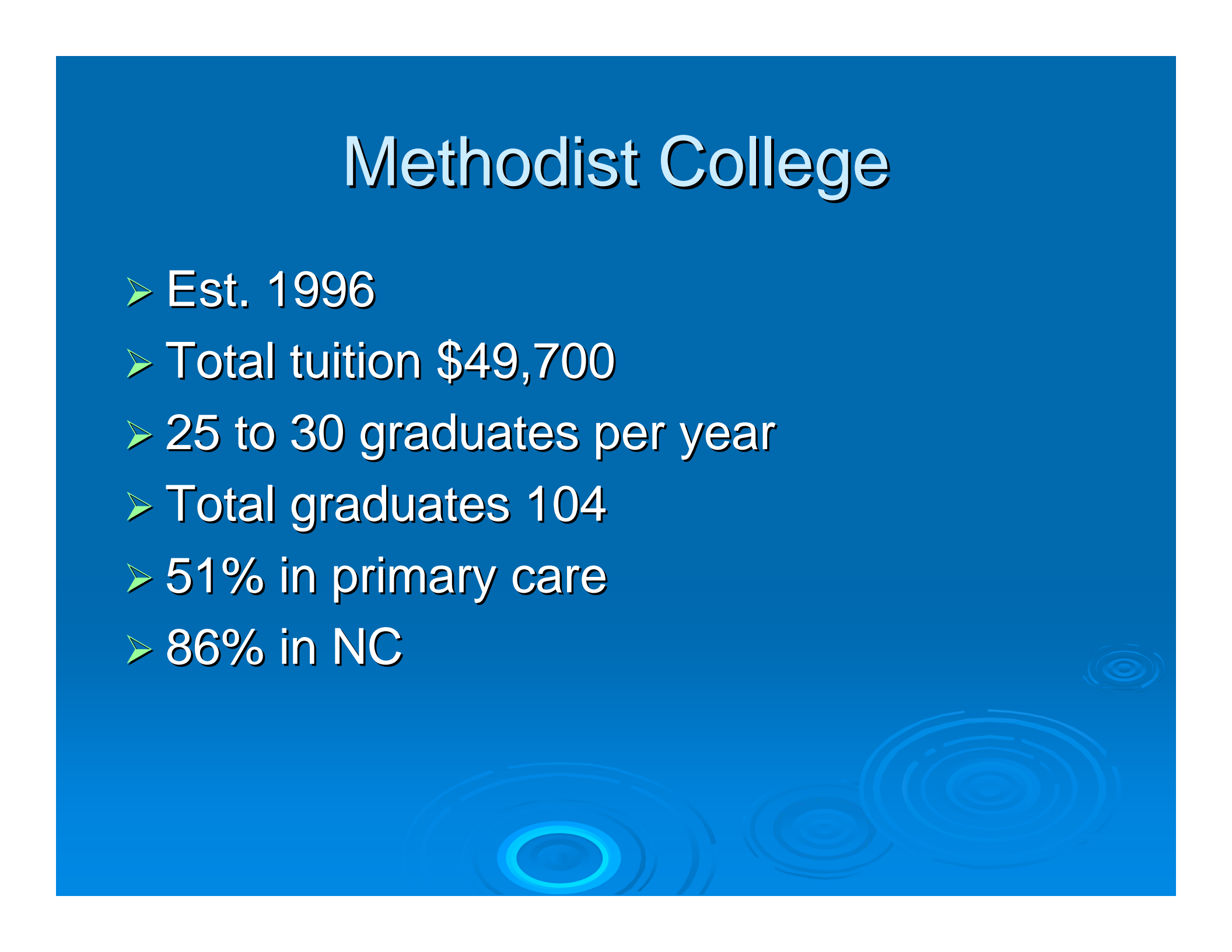
# Duke University

- Est. 1965
  - Total tuition \$49,992
  - 45 to 49 graduates per year
  - Total graduates 1,457
  - 39% in primary care
  - 44% in NC
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# East Carolina University

- Est. 1996
- Total tuition \$15,312 (\$56,600 out of state)
- 24 to 45 graduates per year
- Total graduates 210
- 40% in primary care
- 88% in NC

# Methodist College

- Est. 1996
  - Total tuition \$49,700
  - 25 to 30 graduates per year
  - Total graduates 104
  - 51% in primary care
  - 86% in NC
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# Wake Forest University

- Est. 1971
  - Total tuition \$40,432
  - 44 to 48 graduates per year
  - Total graduates 1,328
  - 38% in primary care
  - 67% in NC
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