NEBRASKA WORKFORCE
Trends
MARCH 2011

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Benchmarking

In this issue of Nebraska Workforce Trends, you might notice a lack of unemployment rates by county or industry numbers. Labor Market Information is in the process of going through its annual benchmarking protocol. Benchmarking is intended to align estimated data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) and Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) programs with known numbers from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage data (QCEW). Benchmarking is a necessary step in insuring the data released by the Department of Labor is of the highest quality.

The CES and LAUS data will be absent for this issue, but there will be two data releases during the month of March. April's issue of Nebraska Workforce Trends will contain both January and February data. Any release dates can be found on the Publications Calendar, located on the LMI Home page under Resource Library.

There and Back Again

Commuting Patterns of Nebraskans

Ben Kuspa, Research Analyst

One of the most important things to consider when applying for a job is how to get there. Employers want employees who are able to get to work by themselves and every employee has a certain distance they are willing to travel to and from a job in a day. This becomes even more important when deciding on a site for opening a business. Fortunately, the Census Bureau collects commuting pattern information from US residents via the American Community Survey (ACS). With the release of the 2005-2009 five-year estimates from the ACS, commuting information is available for smaller areas in Nebraska and the nation.

So how do Nebraskans go about getting to work? The short answer is: by car and by themselves. According to the ACS, of the 910,688 Nebraskans who are over the age of sixteen and active in the workforce, 79.8% of them commute to work by car and solo. The second highest percentage (10.1%) of commuters also travel by car but utilize a carpool. 4.8% of the workforce work from home and do not commute at all, 3.2% walk, 0.7% use public transportation, and 1.3% utilize other means such as motorcycles or bikes. While there may not seem to be a high incidence of transportation methods other than cars, it still represents 47,595 employees who do not use a car to commute. Also, the manner in which the question was asked only reveals the primary mode of transportation – for example, if they drove three days in the past week and biked twice, only the car transportation was counted, discounting some of the mixed methods. One of

Commuting by Earnings

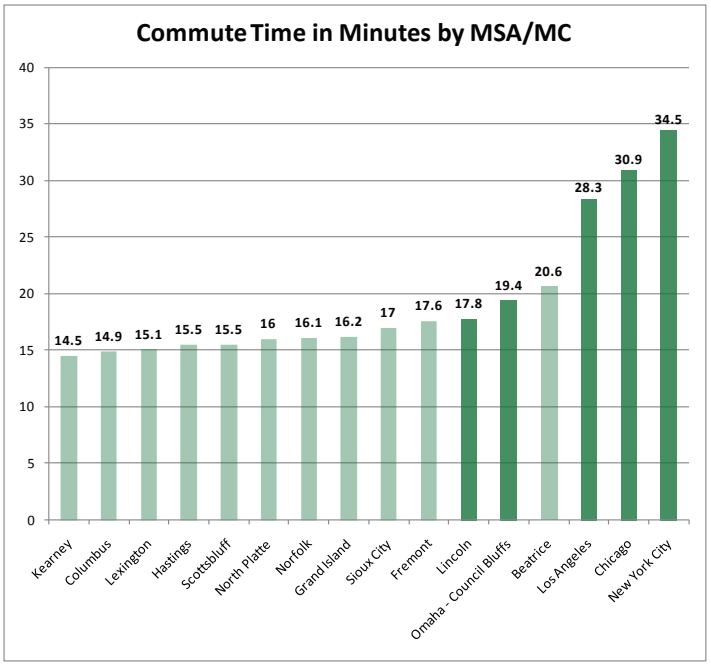
Commuting Methods by Annual Earnings (N=910,429)						
Earnings	Car, Alone	Carpooled	Public Transportation	Walked	Taxicab, Motorcycle, Bicycle or Other Means	Worked from Home
$1 to $9,999 or less	70.4%	11.4%	1.6%	7.0%	1.7%	8.0%
$10,000 to $14,999	74.2%	12.4%	1.0%*	4.6%	1.7%	6.1%
$15,000 to $24,999	78.6%	11.8%	0.7%	3.4%	1.0%	4.4%
$25,000 to $34,999	81.9%	10.9%	0.4%*	2.2%	1.0%	3.5%
$35,000 to $49,999	84.1%	9.3%	0.4%*	1.8%	1.3%	3.1%
$50,000 to $64,999	85.2%	7.7%	0.2%*	1.9%	1.3%	3.6%
$65,000 to $74,999	86.4%	6.6%	0.0%*	1.9%*	1.0%*	4.1%
$75,000 or more	85.0%	6.0%	0.3%*	1.4%	1.3%*	6.0%
Total	**79.8%**	**10.1%**	**0.7%**	**3.2%**	**1.3%**	**4.8%**

* Margin of Error greater than 20%

Source: American Community Survey, 2005-2009 Estimates, Table B08119

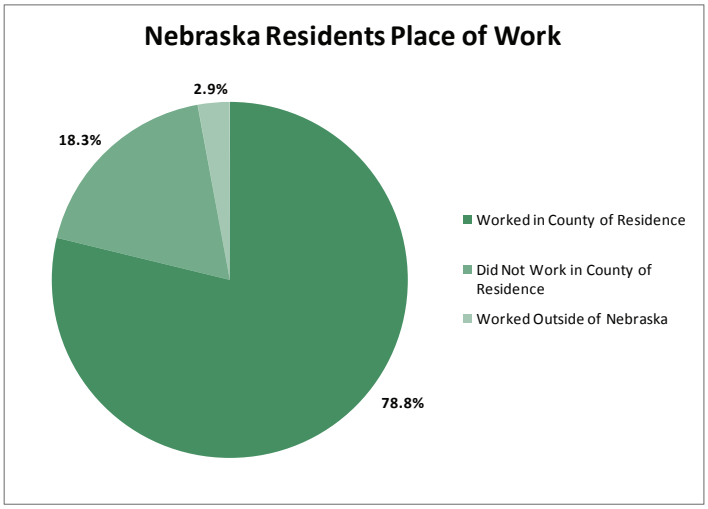
the reasons that may account for the large percentage of car commuters is also the nature of the Nebraska communities – having a small population over a large landmass usually leads to a smaller investment in infrastructure for public transportation.

The Census also provides data for commuting methods based on basic demographic information. One example of this is in the breakdown of commuting methods by gender. Overall, gender does not seem to play a large role in commuting patterns. Men are slightly more likely to bike or use motorcycles than women; women make up that slight imbalance with more car and public transportation usage, but the differences are negligible. Men are also more likely to commute to a county outside the county of residence, tend to spend more time commuting, and travel to work at an earlier hour. Women generally travel to work at a slightly later time – 25.6% leave for work between 9:00 a.m. to midnight while only 21.3% of men leave for work in the same time period. One possible explanation is that women might be employed at



a higher rate in occupations that require non-traditional hours.

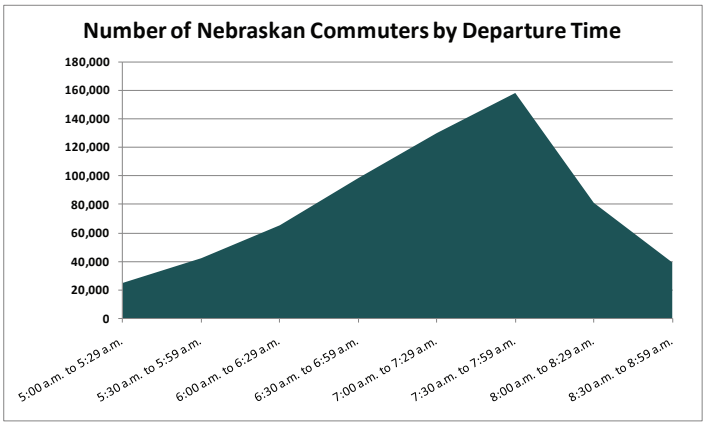
A more apparent trend can be seen in the breakdown of commuting methods when compared to income. As demonstrated in the Commuting Methods by Annual Earnings table, the incidence of non-car transport and carpooling decreases as incomes rise. While it is unsurprising that cheaper methods of transport are eschewed by higher wage earners in favor of the convenience of car travel, it does demonstrate that those who earn lower wages are reliant on cheaper methods of travel such as walking, public transportation, and carpooling. There is also a higher incidence of people who work from home at both ends of the wage spectrum – those who earn less than $15,000 and those who earn $75,000 or more work from home 6% of the time or greater. This may be accounted for by part-time or unskilled telecommuting jobs on the low end of the wage scale and skilled contractors, entrepreneurs, and

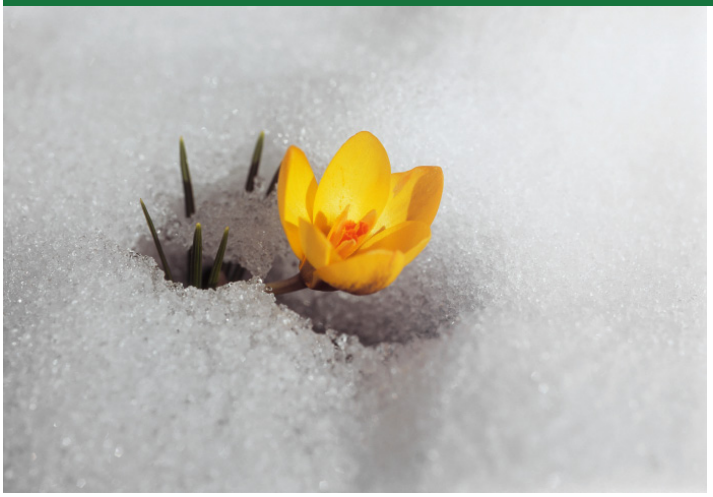


management on the high end.

Another interesting metric that is assessed is the amount of actual time spent in transit when traveling to work. The mean travel time to work for all Nebraskans is 17.7 minutes. Among the Nebraska Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) and Micropolitan Statistical Areas (MC) there is some differentiation. Kearney has the shortest average commute at 14.5 minutes while Beatrice has the longest commute at 20.6 minutes. The two MSAs in Nebraska, Lincoln and Omaha-Council Bluffs, have average commute times of 17.8 and 19.4 minutes, respectively. These are all fairly reasonable when compared to the three largest MSAs in the United States. Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York City have average commuting times of 28.3, 30.9, and 34.5 minutes. This is partially due to the higher incidence of non-car travel, especially in New York City where only about 50% of the workforce commutes by car but about 30% use public transportation. In Los Angeles, 73.5% drive and only 6.1% use public transportation, but they have a much larger population across a much greater area than most cities in Nebraska.

If you wish to find out more about commuting in your area, more data is available from the Census at their website (factfinder.census.gov). You can also find out the worker flow from county to county on the Nebraska Department of Labor's website at neworks.nebraska.gov (Historic Data Analysis – Demographics – Commuting Patterns).





The Changing of the Seasons

Seasonally Adjusted Data

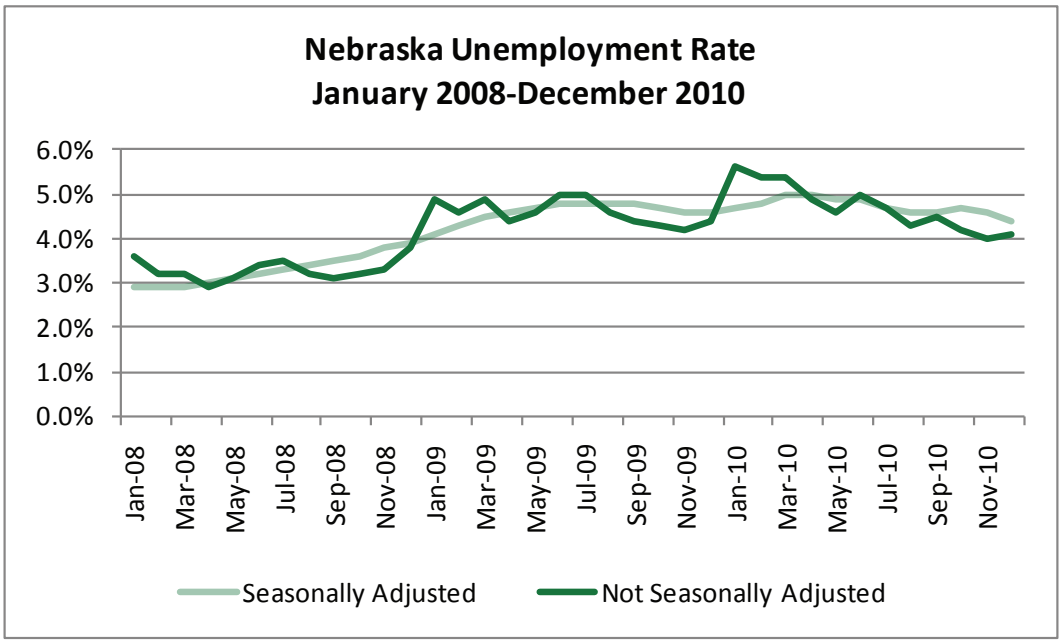
Jodie Meyer, Research Analyst

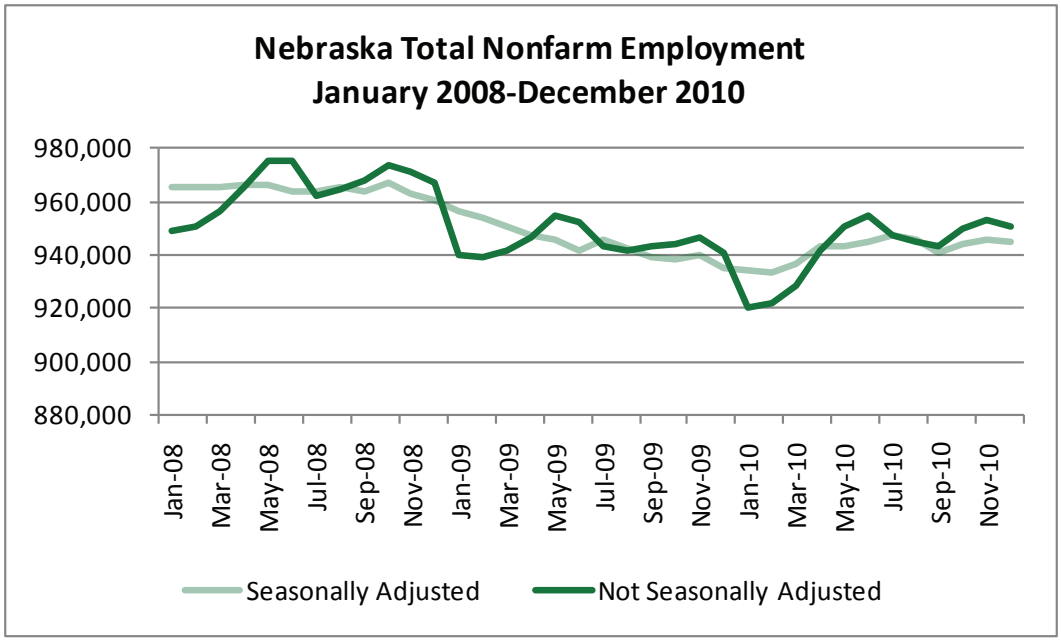
The snow is soon to be melting and spring is on its way. Along with it brings changes in the weather, the landscape, and employment levels. Employment levels naturally change over time for many reasons, one of these being seasonality.

Seasonality in employment refers to changes that occur at the same time every year. The peaks and troughs of the time series are typically consistent, occur at about the same time each year, and can be explained by factors such as weather, harvests, major holidays, and the school year.

Seasonality occurs in many industries in Nebraska for many reasons. Some types of construction, for example, slow down during the winter months as the cold weather hampers building efforts. When the schools let out for the summer, education employment decreases. Retail employment increases with the holiday shopping season. Tax preparation services increase before tax day in mid-April. Local Government sees an increase in the summer as hiring increases for staffing summer recreation programs. Other parts of the county have industries that display different seasonal patterns such as tourism increases in Colorado as ski resorts open and food manufacturing increases in Washington after the apple harvest.

Since these trends follow a more or less regular pattern each year their influence can be eliminated by adjusting the data. If the seasonality shifts are not adjusted it can make it difficult for data users to interpret the underlying trend in some data series. When looking at the chart of the unemployment rate the spike in the unadjusted rate in January of 2010 to 5.6% compared to the 4.4% rate in December of 2009 can look alarming. It is normal for the unemployment rate to increase between these two months due to the ending of temporary seasonal jobs, but it is difficult to tell by looking at this data set if this increase is higher than normal. When the seasonally adjusted data is examined the rate only increased by 0.1%, not 1.2% between the two months revealing that the rate was only slightly changed and following the normal seasonal pattern. Seasonally adjusted data is very useful when comparing month-to-month or quarter-to quarter trends.



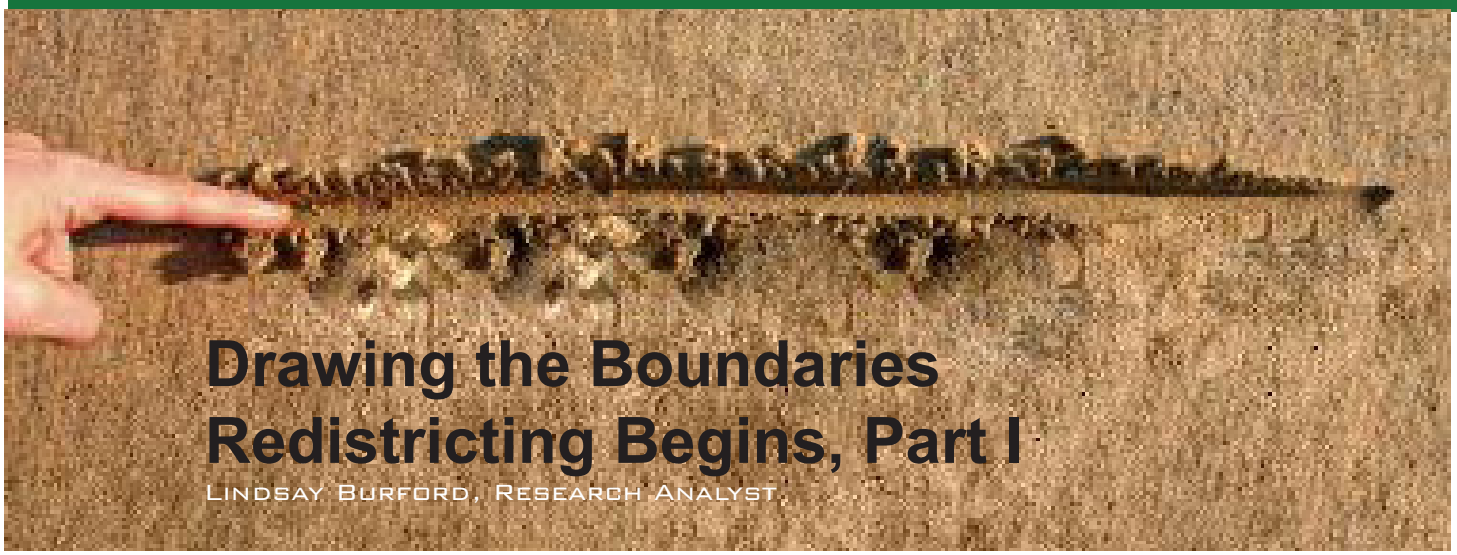


This does not mean that non-seasonally adjusted data is not useful. Unadjusted data is better to use to reflect the real-life situation at that point in time. When looking at the chart of the total nonfarm employment, it is easy to see the seasonality in the non-adjusted data set. The seasonally adjusted set does show the dip in employment during the recent recession, but it cannot tell us the current number of jobs. For this measure it is better to use the non-adjusted data. Non-seasonally adjusted can be used to compare for the same month of past years to get an idea of economic trends, but a month-to-month comparison can be greatly affected by seasonality, and should be used with caution.

Some data sets produced by the Nebraska Department of Labor are available through the Bureau of Labor Statistics as seasonally adjusted. Labor force estimates such as employment, unemployment, and the unemployment rate are available seasonally adjusted for statewide data only. These statistics are not seasonally adjusted for Omaha, Lincoln, or at the county level. The estimates of employment levels from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) Survey are available as seasonally adjusted for statewide totals, but not for specific industries. Average annual data does not have a seasonal component and therefore is never seasonally adjusted.

Be careful comparing data sets, especially from different sources. Seasonal adjustment models used from different sources may produce different results. Seasonally adjusted data should never be directly compared to non-seasonally adjusted data. The Nebraska Department of Labor website does not provide any seasonally adjusted data with one exception – the statewide unemployment rate. The Statewide unemployment rate appears seasonally adjusted in the monthly Nebraska Press Release, the Nebraska Economic Trends Publication, and on the front page of the Labor Market Information NEworks website.

Various mathematical techniques are used to seasonally adjust data from simple calculations to complex statistical methods that generally require specialized software. Most of these techniques typically involve moving averages or time series models. The most widely used software is X-12-ARIMA (auto-regressive integrated moving average) developed by the U.S. Census Bureau. More information on these adjustments methods can be found on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website, www.bls.gov.



Drawing the Boundaries Redistricting Begins, Part I

Lindsay Burford, Research Analyst

This is part I of a three-part article. This article focuses on Reapportionment; next month's article will focus on the history of Redistricting, and the final will be the released local Census data for redistricting.

Introduction

By law, the Census delivered the new population count, which included reapportionment results, to the President on December 21, 2010. Press releases announced which states gained and lost representatives through the reapportionment results. Currently, the Census has begun the process of releasing individual state data for redistricting purposes. Both processes seem straightforward, but when one digs deeper, there are complicated histories for both processes when it comes to those who represent you.

Reapportionment vs. Redistricting

Reapportionment and redistricting are different. There are 435 members within the U.S. House of Representatives. Each state, by law, must have at least one representative. After each state is given their mandated representative, 385 representatives must be distributed throughout the states. This division of the remaining 385 representatives is called reapportionment. While reapportionment is decided at the national level, redistricting occurs at the state level. Redistricting is the revision of geographical boundaries of areas from which people elect U.S. House of Representatives, state legislature, county or city councils, and other elected positions. By law, redistricting data must be submitted to the states within one year of the decennial census, or March 31, 2011.

Apportionment Fun Facts

- The U.S. Census Bureau is housed under the Department of Commerce and was created in 1902.
- Census 2010 marked the 23rd population count since the process began in 1790.
- The first Census was managed under Thomas Jefferson, then Secretary of State, in 1790. There were six questions on that year's census.
- When the Census began in 1790, Article 1, Section 2 stated that one representative would not represent more than 30,000. If that law would still be followed with our current population, there would be approximately 10,291 representatives in the House.
- In 1790, one representative in the House represented 34,000 people. In 2000, one representative in the House represented almost 647,000 people. After the 2010 Census, one representative in the House represents 710,767 people.
- In 1876, Rutherford B. Hayers became President based on the botched apportionment of 1872, a time when Hamilton's Method of Apportionment was used. The Electoral College vote was 185 for Hayes and 184 for Tilden. Tilden would have won if the correct apportionment as required by law had been used.

1787 Constitution drafted by the Constitutional Convention

1790 First Census

1822 Rep. William Lowndes proposed new apportionment method. It failed.

1832 Rep/ John Quincy Adams and Sen. Daniel Webster proposed new methodologies. Both fail.

1872 Mathematical problems start arising under Hamilton's method.

1876 Rutherford erronously became President

1880 Alabama Paradox

1907 Oklahoma joined the union; New State Paradox discovered

1911 Chief statistician at the Cnesus Bureau, Joseph Hill, proposed the Huntington-Hill method.

Apportionment Method	Time frame used	Mathematical Concept
The Hamilton/Vinton Method	First introduced in 1790; officially adopted in 1852; 1852 - 1901	Sets the divisor as the proportion of the total population per house seat. After each state's population is divided by the divisor, the whole number of the quotient is kept; the faction is dropped. This typically results in surplus house seats. The first surplus seat is assigned by the state with the largest fraction after the original division. The next is assigned to the state wit hthe second largest fraction, and so on.
The Jefferson Method	1791 - 1840	Uses a divisor that will result in the correct number of seats being apportioned; thereby avoiding a surplus or a deficit of House seats.
The Webster Method	1842 - 1851; 1901 - 1911; 1931	Divides the state populations by the divisor. Quotients with fractions of 0.5 or higher are awarded an extra seat; states with fractions lower than 0.5 are dropped. (Modified version of the Hamilton/Vinton Method)
The Huntington-Hill Method	First introduced in 1911; officially adopted by Congress in 1941	Divides the state populations by the divisor. If a state's quotient is higher than the geometric mean, it receives an additional seat.

U.S. Reapportionment

Reapportionment is a multi-century old process. Article 1, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution states the House of Representatives must be based upon a national census. The first decennial census took place three years after the signing of the Constitution in 1790 with an allotment of 65 House Representatives. Reapportionment has occurred after every decennial census, with the exception of the 1920 census.

The goal of reapportionment has always been to divide the representatives among the states in the most equitable distribution possible. However, since 1790, there has been a constant debate about which apportionment method yields the most equitable results. Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson both proposed methods of apportionment to Congress. Congress approved a bill using Hamilton's method. Dissatisfied with Hamilton's method, Jefferson convinced President Washington to veto this bill. President Washington exercised his power of veto to do just that, the first veto in U.S. history. Congress passed another bill in 1791 adopting Jefferson's method and increased the House size to 105. This rocky start led to a roller coaster ride of bills, methodological and mathematical disagreements, and conflicting views about the size of the House.

Jefferson's Method of Apportionment was used until the 1840 census. This method is referred as the "method of greatest divisors." It disregarded any fractional remainder after the division of 30,000 (the Constitutional criteria that one representative could not exceed) to the country's population. Jefferson's method is believed to favor large states over smaller states. When it was originally proposed in 1790, it prevented Connecticut from receiving an additional representative because of the mathematical computation; hence favoring large states over smaller states. In 1832, John Quincy Adam proposed a new method of apportionment that would curb the favor of larger states receiving a higher number of representatives. However, Adam's method countered Jefferson's method so much so that it favored smaller states. Congress never endorsed Adam's method.

In 1842, Congress enacted a law officially adopting Senator Daniel Webster's Method of Apportionment. His method, referenced as the "method of major fractions," allocated an additional representative to a state that had a fractional remainder greater than 0.5. Various methods were passed into law over the next several decades until a climax occurred in 1920. Congress failed to reapportion in 1920, a direct violation of the Constitution, as the result of a difference of opinion over the method of dividing political power. At this point in time, Congress requested that the National Academy of Sciences form a panel of mathematical experts to review all methods of reapportionment in order to determine which method best utilized equal distribution of representatives to states.

Their report led to the endorsement of the "method of equal proportions," also known as the Huntington-Hill Method. This method rounds to the geometric mean[1]. If a state's fractional remainder is higher than this mean, it receives an additional

1921 No reapportionment occurs- a direct violation of the Constitution.

1929 The National Acacemy of Sciences released endoresement for the Huntington-Hill method.

1931 Congress used the Huntington-Hill method; House increased to 435.

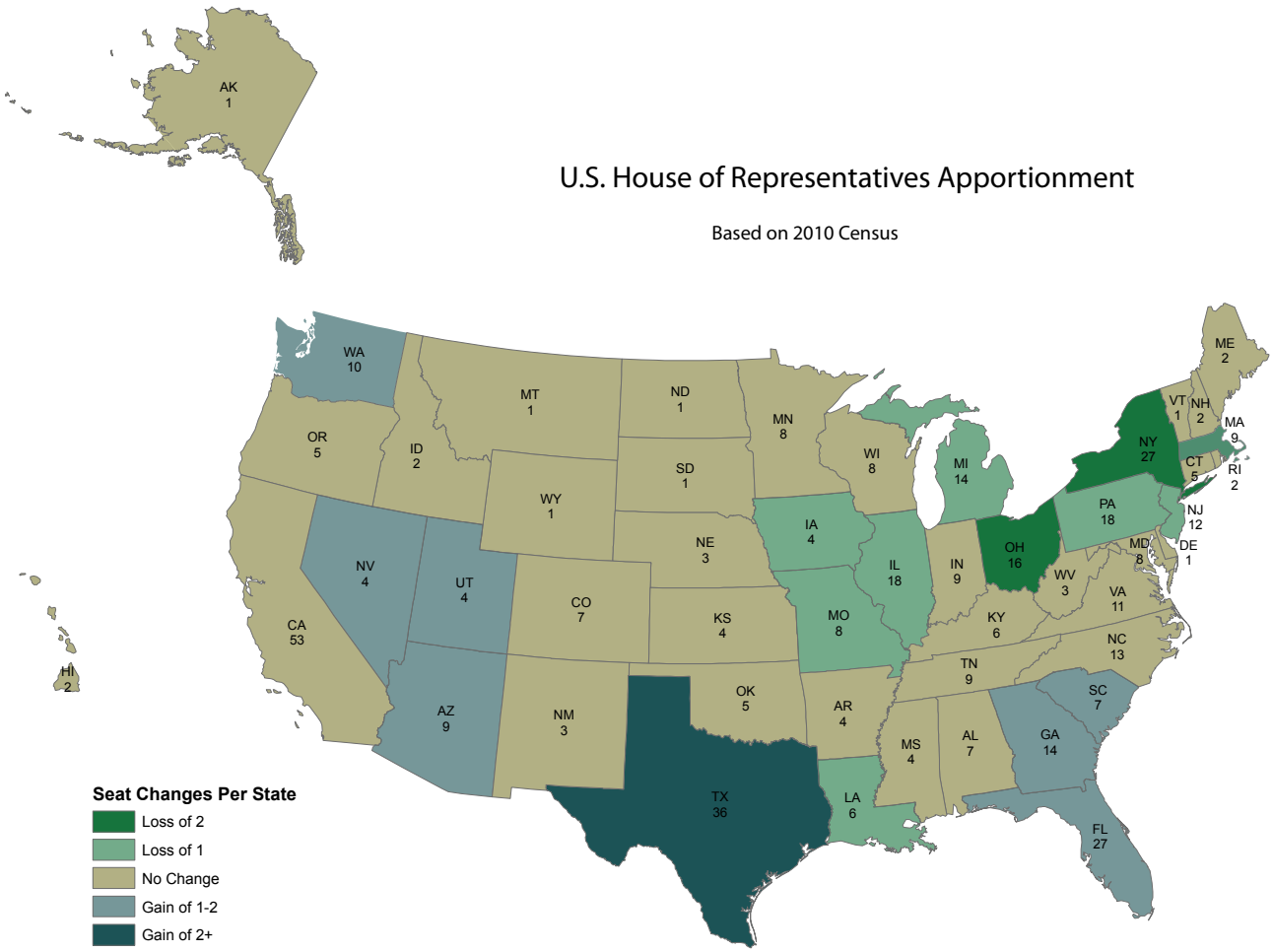
1941 Congress officially adopted the Huntington- Hill method; law created stating 435 is the permanent house size and reapportionment will be a self executing process.

1990 Massachusettes files against the Census regarding apportionment.

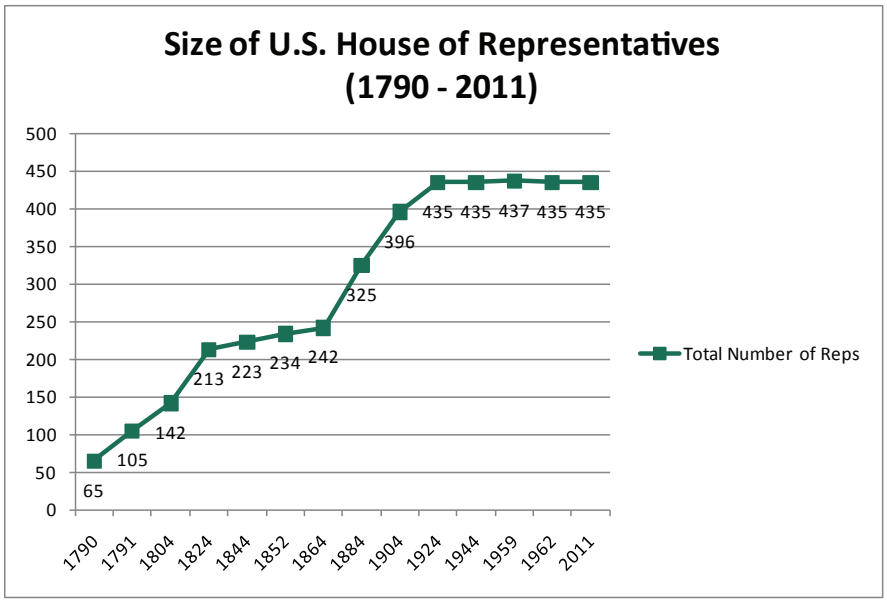
1992 U. S Supreme Court upholds the Huntington- Hill method after Montana challenged teh constituionality of it (Montana v. U.S Dept. of Commerce).

1992 U.S. Supreme Court rules against Mass.'s case, upholding the method.

12/21/2010 Census Bureau delivers apportionment data to President Obama.



seat. Congress followed the panel's recommendation and passed a bill in 1941 citing this methodology to be the reapportionment method and the final number of seats in the House to be 435.



Conclusion

While this methodology has been officially challenged twice (by Montana and Massachusetts), it still remains in place. President Obama received the reapportionment data on December 21, 2010 that detailed which states would gain and lose seats in the House based upon this method of reapportionment. The U.S. House of Representatives Apportionment map details these results. The number inside each state shows the current number of representatives that the state is allotted after the reapportionment process. Six states gained at least one representative. Texas gained four representatives. Nine states lost representatives; Ohio and New York both lost two representatives. The remaining states did not lose or gain any representatives, Nebraska being in that category. While the story appears to end here, it does not. Next month's article will detail what happens after a state receives their population counts and allocated number of representatives! Stay tuned…

[1]Geometric mean is best described as taking n amount of numbers, multiplying them together, and taking the nth root of this value. For example, the geometric mean of 4, 7, 9, 10 is 7.09 (=[4*7*9*10]^0.25)

Chadron State College

Employment Outcomes

Chadron State College graduated 436 individuals between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008, an increase of 76 graduates over the previous year. Nearly half (44%) of the graduates were working in Nebraska in the first quarter of 2009, a seven percent decrease from the previous year. The estimated average annual earnings for all graduates were $25,322.

There were 15 graduates in six fields of study/degrees that had more than 85% of the graduates working in the state. The highest number of graduates within this group was in the Counselor Education/School Counseling and Guidance Services field of study that had six of the seven Masters Degree graduates working in the state (86%) and estimated average annual earnings of $54,898. This field of study/degree also had the highest estimated average annual of all disclosable data.

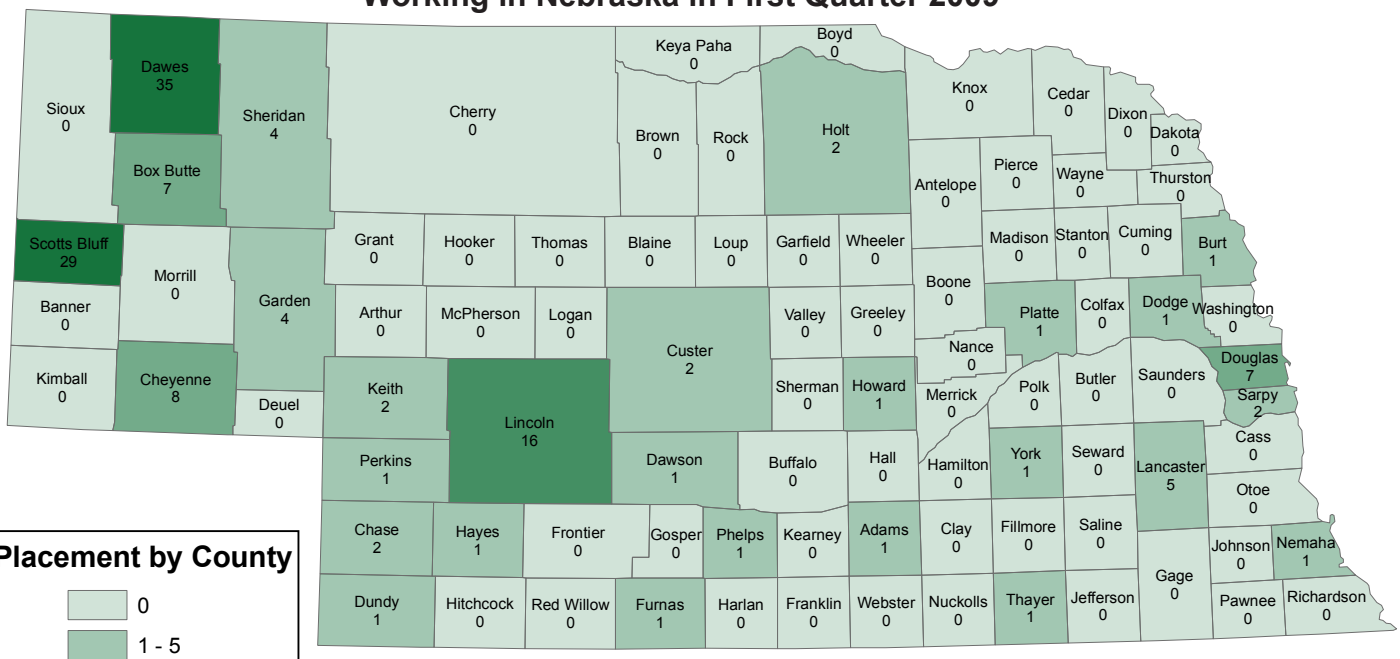
There were seven fields of study/degrees that had estimated earnings above $30,000 per year with five being Master's Degrees programs. The highest Bachelor's Degree earnings were for the four graduates in Physical Education Teaching and Coaching with $36,052.

There was at least one graduate employed in 28 of the state's 93 counties. Dawes County, followed by Scotts Bluff County had the highest numbers of graduates working in the counties.

The five graduates employed in the Management of Companies & Enterprises industry had the highest estimated average annual earnings of $44,248. The Educational Services industry had the highest number, 88, of graduates working in the state. The estimated average annual earnings for graduates employed in the Educational Services industry were $36,031 and includes both Bachelor's and Master's Degrees.

For more outcome information on Chadron State College, Central Community College, Metropolitan Community College, Mid-Plains Community College, Northeast Community College, Southeast Community College, Western Nebraska Community College, Peru State College, Wayne State College and University of Nebraska – Kearney, contact the Nebraska Workforce Development Labor Market Information Center.

2007-2008 Chadron State College Graduates Working in Nebraska in First Quarter 2009



Institution	*Number of Graduates*	*Number of Graduates Working in Nebraska*	*Percent of Graduates Working in Nebraska*	*Estimated Average Annual Earnings for Bachelors Degree Graduates*	*Estimated Median Annual Earnings for Bachelors Degree Graduates*
Chadron State College	436	194	44%	$25,322	$25,800

Women's History Month

Jacob Liudahl, Research Analyst

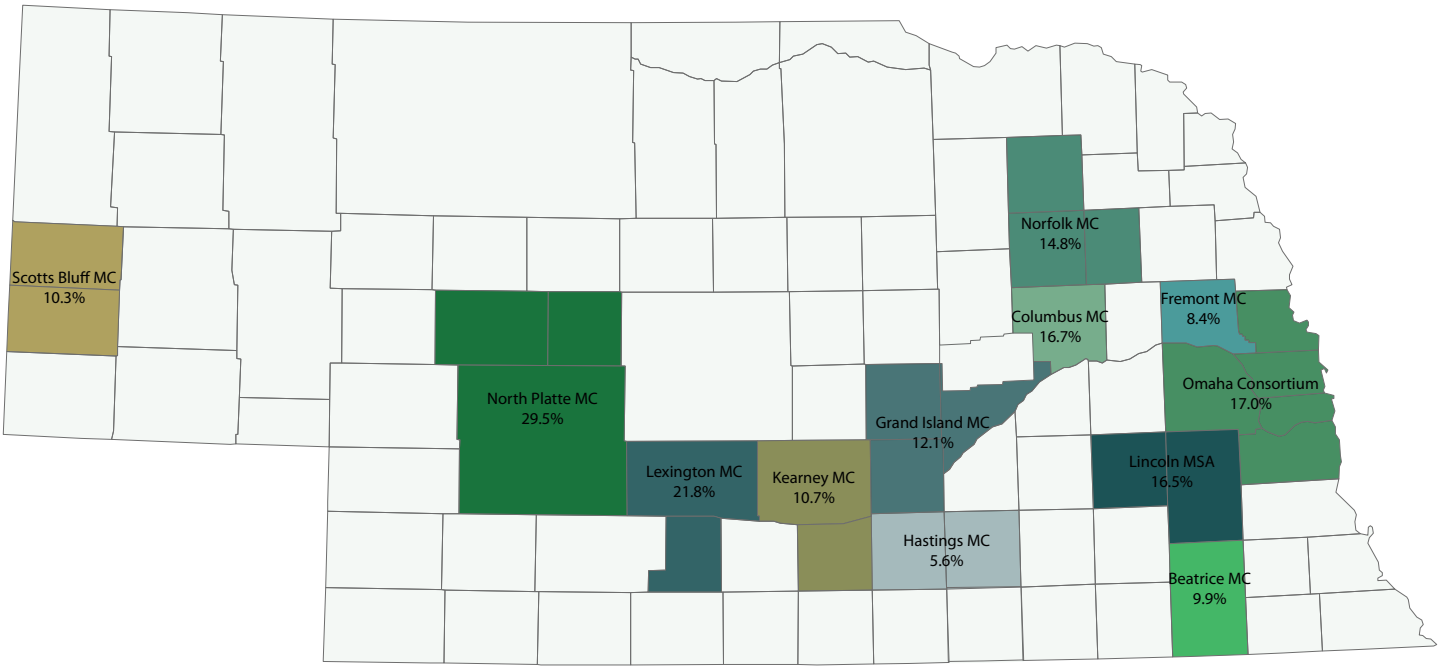
March is Women's History month. This month we honor all of the accomplishments of famous Nebraskan women like Willa Cather (author), Kay Orr (first female Republican governor), and Mary Pipher (psychologist, author). There have been tremendous strides made in the past hundred years to bring gender equality to society. Women business owners are just a few of the many striving to make a livelihood and perhaps change the world.

The map represents the percentage of women who own a business which has employees. This does not include women who own a business jointly with a man or businesses without paid employees. Research indicates a higher percentage of women are self-employed compared to the overall workforce than women who owned businesses with employees compared to the overall.

Across the nation, 7.6 million people were employed by women-owned businesses in 2007. This represents a total of 910,761 women-owned businesses with employees. In Nebraska's Statistical Areas, these businesses employed an average of 9.6 employees per business. This number translates to over 4,000 businesses and over 39,000 employees.

More detailed than how many businesses women own are what types of businesses those are. Nationwide, women owned 52 percent of all businesses operating in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry. Across Nebraska, Accommodation and Food Services edged out Health Care and Social Assistance as the industry with the most female-owned businesses. In terms of employees, Transportation and Warehousing businesses owned by women employed the most workers and totaled over twice the payroll of the next nearest industry.

Percentage of Female-Owned Businesses with Employees by Nebraska Statistical Area



Source: Survey of Business Owners: Women-Owned Businesses: 2007

Irish American Heritage Month

Saint Patricks's Day

Ryan Caldwell, Research Analyst

When people think of **Nebraska**, they rarely think of the Irish. In reality there are strong Irish ties all over the state, making Nebraska a great place to celebrate **St. Patrick's Day**, a traditional Irish holiday.

Nearly **37 million** residents in the U.S. claimed **Irish ancestry** in 2009, which is equivalent to the entire population of California. **40%** of employed Irish-American civilians 16 years of age or older in the U.S. worked in Management, Professional and Related Occupations. Additionally, **27%** work in Sales and Office, **16%** in Service, and **9%** work in Production Occupations.

Of people in the U.S. with Irish ancestry who are 25 years of age or older, **92%** have at least a **high school diploma**, and **32%** have a **bachelor's degree or higher**. This is 7% and 4% **higher** than the nation as a whole, respectively.

In 2009 the median household income for a household headed by an Irish-American was $56,383, which was just over **six thousand** dollars more than the average household in the U.S.

In the 2000 census, over 15% of Omaha residents claimed **Irish heritage**, many of whom can tie their Nebraska roots back to the 1800's.

In the 1860's, the **Union Pacific Railroad** was built by many Irish immigrant laborers. In fact, as many as **10,000** Irish **laborers** worked out of Omaha along the Union Pacific lines as the new tracks crawled across the state.

Nebraska is also home to the world's largest **shamrock**. It is located in **O'Neill**, Nebraska's Irish capital. The shamrock is made of **green** concrete in the middle of a main intersection of the city.

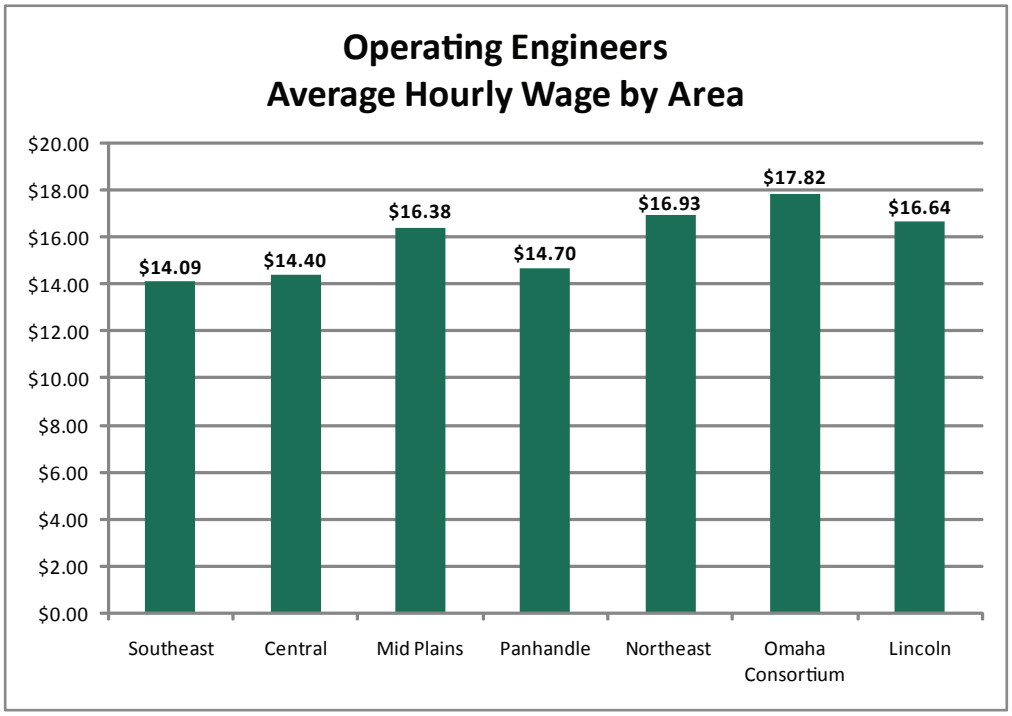
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators

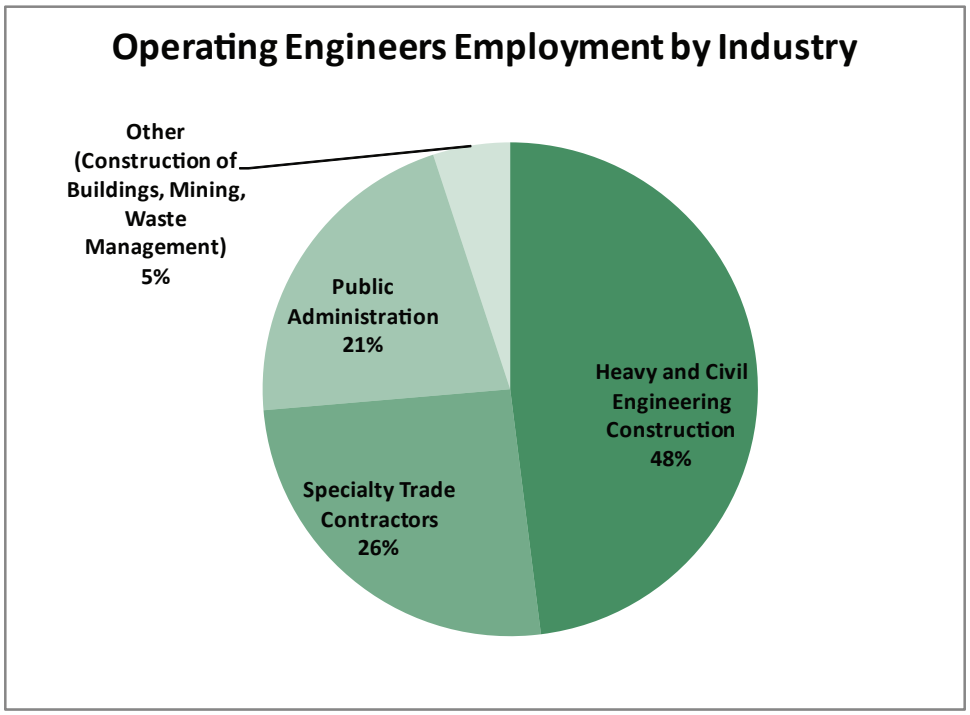
Ben Kuspa, Research Analyst

Before the Industrial Revolution, construction of all sorts was limited to what could be done with manual labor. The invention of powered machinery allowed construction to be accomplished exponentially easier and faster and also created a demand for a new type of employee to control these machines: the Operating Engineer and Other Construction Equipment Operators. Operating Engineers work with many different kinds of heavy machinery when working on road and other construction projects.

An estimated 2,850 individuals worked as Operating Engineers as of May 2009. Almost half of these workers (1,330) were employed in the Heavy and Civil Engineering industry. This industry employs more than the second highest two industries, Specialty Trade Contractors (710) and Public Administration (590), combined. The Heavy and Civil Engineering industry is involved in road and other large-scale construction such as public works while the Specialty Trade Contractors industry is composed of individuals that take on a specific outsourced aspect of a job (cement work, site preparation, etc).

Operating Engineers use a wide array of different heavy equipment. Some of the most common are dump trucks, front end loaders, graders, hoists, land drilling rigs, power saws, scrubbing machines, and skid steer loaders. When using such equipment, safety is one of the major concerns. That is why some of the highest skills associated with the Operating Engineer profession are safety-related. It is important that Operating Engineers are attentive to their environment and co-workers and are up-to-date on safety standards. Communication skills and teamwork are paramount in order to remain safe and on task. Operating Engineers may also need to work long or odd hours, so it is important that they are physically fit enough and have sufficient motor function to safely operate machinery over long shifts.





Regarding education, the most important thing for Operating Engineers is experience. Operating Engineers typically require a moderate amount of on-the-job training to become competent. Some employers may require a High School diploma or G.E.D. as a condition of employment. Certain vehicles may require specific certification to operate such as a Commercial Driver's License. Industries or job sites might have their own specific requirements as well, such as the safety procedures that need to be followed when working in mines and quarries. For those that wish to pursue certification or trainings, training schools exist that are sometimes funded by employers. Additionally, apprenticeships may be sought via unions that provide long-term guided on-the-job training.

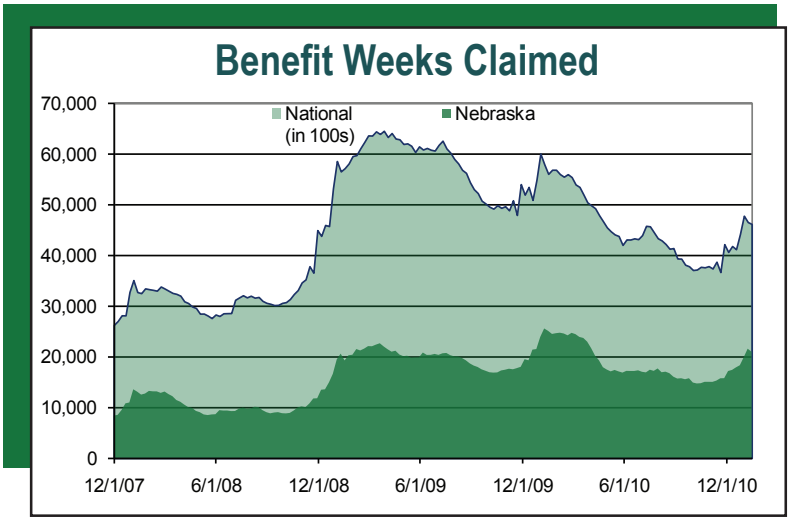
Operating Engineers have a varying level of wages. Statewide, the average entry wage is $12.79 per hour ($26,606 annually), the average wage is $16.75 per hour ($34,854 annually), and the average experienced wage is $18.74 per hour ($38,979 annually). Some industries pay more than others. Within the Heavy and Civil Engineering industry, the average hourly pay is $15.71. The Specialty Trade Contractors industry has a slightly higher average hourly pay at $16.99 and the Public Administration industry is in the middle with an average hourly pay of $16.69.

Demand for Operating Engineers is expected to increase over the next decade. According to the Nebraska occupational projections, the number of Operating Engineers is expected to increase by 13.58% by 2018. Of those new jobs, about 55% of the jobs are attributed to replacement needs while 45% of the jobs are for job growth openings.

If you have an interest in learning more about Operating Engineers or other occupations, please visit the Nebraska Department of Labor's website at neworks.nebraska.gov. You can also search for open positions for this occupation and many others.

Economic Indicators

Economic Indicators of the Month



National Indicators	Date	Value
GDP Growth	10Q4	2.8%
Unemployment Rate	Jan-11	9.0%
Fed Interest Rate	Feb-11	0.25%
Current Account Balance	10Q3	-$127 Billion
Exchange Rate DXY	Jan 11-Feb 11	-0.38%

Nebraska Indicators	Date	Value
Unemployment Rate	Dec-10	4.4%
House Value Appreciation	10Q3-10Q4	-1.61%
Average Weekly Manufacturing Hours	Dec-10	40.7
Net Taxable Retail Sales	Nov-10	$1.928 Billion
Median Employment Wages	10Q4	$30,421

Pricing Indicators	Date	Value
Barrel of Crude Oil	Feb-11	$99.21
Corn for Grain	Dec-10	$5.37
Cattle 500+ Lbs	Dec-10	$106.00
ECI Change	10Q4	0.40%
PPI Change	Jan-11	0.80%

Trevor Nelson, Research Analyst

Benefit Weeks Claimed

Jobless claims are considered to be one of the best leading indicators of the direction of the labor market and the economy at large due to the timeliness and correlation with job gains and losses. The U.S. Department of Labor produces the measure of jobless benefit weeks claimed on a weekly basis. These claims are made by people who are attempting to receive unemployment benefits. Claims data can indicate upcoming turns in the economy. Large increases in claimants nationally may mean a downturn is about to begin, whereas large drops in the number of claimants could mean rapid improvements in the labor market. However, jobless claims are not a perfect indicator as they tend to be highly volatile and potentially impacted by events unrelated to permanent job losses such as holidays and weather.

The graph to the right details benefit weeks claimed for Nebraska and the nation from January 2008 to the most recent claims count. The two figures are very closely correlated to each other, in part because Nebraska's jobless claims are a portion of the nation's, but mostly because the national economy impacts the state's economy. A large upswing began in both figures in November 2008, just as the recession began to get worse. The upswing continued until May 2009 when the number of claims leveled off. Nebraska claims stayed around 20,000 through August 2009. The national claims stayed around six million over the same period. Since August 2008, claims decreased sporadically in both areas through November 2010, when both measures began increasing slightly.

Notes: Unemployment Rates are seasonally adjusted. DXY is the U.S. Dollar compared to a basket of international currencies. Retail Sales figures are in billions of dollars. Median Employment Wages are OES 50th percentile Annual Wage for All Occupations. Crude Oil Price is as of the close of business on the last Thursday of the month. Corn for Grain is based on the price per bushel. Cattle 500+ Lbs is price per cwt. ECI is Employer Cost Index. PPI is Producer Price Index. CPI is Consumer Price Index.

January 2011	Indexes			% Change From	
	Jan-11	Dec-10	Jan-10	Jan-10	Dec-10
U.S. All Items	220.223	219.179	216.687	1.6%	0.5%
Midwest Urban All Items	210.388	209.270	206.564	1.9%	0.5%
Northeast Urban All Items	235.969	235.141	232.294	1.6%	0.4%
South Urban All Items	213.589	212.488	210.056	1.7%	0.5%
West Urban All Items	223.149	222.081	219.989	1.4%	0.5%

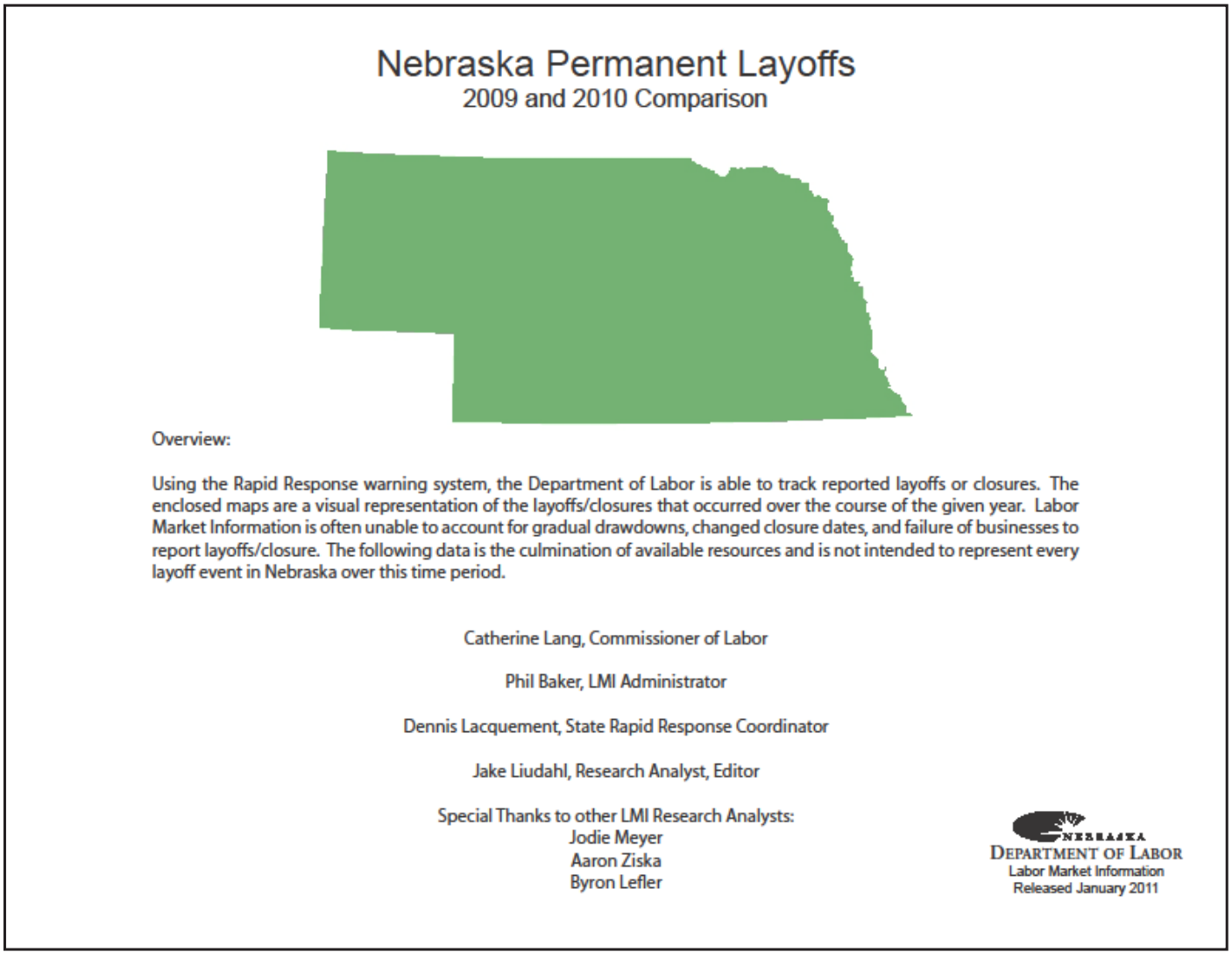
Sources: tradingeconomics.com, bls.gov, fhfa.gov, usda.gov, revenue.state.ne.us, oil-price.net

LayoffComparison

Jacob Liudahl, Research Analyst

New this month on Nebraska Labor Market Information's website is the year-end Layoff Comparison for 2009 and 2010. This publication combines together the monthly Layoff Maps into an annual report based on the time each layoff occurs. The Layoff Comparison contrasts the maps of layoffs in Nebraska for 2009 and 2010 and offers analysis based on location, industry, and time period.

The Layoff Maps draw from the Rapid Response system, which is a program to guide businesses and employees in the event of a layoff or business closure. Even though the program does not capture every layoff in Nebraska, the data is more than sufficient to see a pattern of more layoffs in 2009 than there were in 2010. To access the Layoff Comparison, navigate to the LMI Home Page on NEWorks and click on "2009-2010 Layoff Comparison" in the Publications box. The Layoff Comparison can also be found by clicking "Get More" under the publications box and scrolling down until finding "Layoff Comparison" and clicking View.



Nebraska Permanent Layoffs

2009 and 2010 Comparison

Overview:

Using the Rapid Response warning system, the Department of Labor is able to track reported layoffs or closures. The enclosed maps are a visual representation of the layoffs/closures that occurred over the course of the given year. Labor Market Information is often unable to account for gradual drawdowns, changed closure dates, and failure of businesses to report layoffs/closure. The following data is the culmination of available resources and is not intended to represent every layoff event in Nebraska over this time period.

Catherine Lang, Commissioner of Labor

Phil Baker, LMI Administrator

Dennis Lacquement, State Rapid Response Coordinator

Jake Liudahl, Research Analyst, Editor

Special Thanks to other LMI Research Analysts:
Jodie Meyer
Aaron Ziska
Byron Lefler

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Openings and Expansions

Trevor Nelson, Research Analyst

Note: ***The following information is obtained through a monthly survey of Nebraska's Career Centers. Openings and expansions that were not publicly reported or reported to career center managers are not listed. If you own or know of a business which is opening or expanding, please email Trevor.Nelson@nebraska.gov with you information.***

Lincoln:

From the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce; Rick's Steak-out – N 17th. Proven Nutrition – 1225 P Street, Suite A. Pickleman's – 1442 O Street. A & D Technical Supply – 1822 N Street.

Omaha:

Cabelas is opening up a new facility in Papillion. Extreme Pizza opened a new location and hired new employees. Nebraska Christian College is expanding their college and added a new building with 15 new teachers. Grey Plume opened a new restaurant at Midtown Crossing and hired 30 employees. Aksarben Cinema opened a new theatre, adding 40 employees. January expansions per the Omaha Chamber of Commerce; Abundant Capital. Benco Dental Supply. Cogent. Kosama in Douglas and Sarpy county. Massage Heights. Matador. Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, Inc. Panda Express. Spotless Janitorial, six retention and expansions projects. Allen Construction Services. Cargill (Expansion Phase II). Marathon Ventures. Signature Performance. 97th Intelligence Squadron.

Panhandle Region:

Scottsbluff:

Former Farm Credit Services of America building remodeled into Riverside Business Plaza professional offices in Scottsbluff. The Feed Barn Restaurant in Mitchell reopened under new management.

Sidney:

ADC Digital Communications has been purchased by Tyco Electronics and the company has increased hiring slightly with more to come.

Credits

Nebraska Workforce Trends is published by the Nebraska Department of Labor - Labor Market Information Center in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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