

NEBRASKA WORKFORCE **Trends** MARCH 2012



Nebraska Industry Employment Growth



Mythbusting

Also Featuring...

Map Facts...

Read Across America

College Placement...

All Community Colleges

Fast Facts...

National Nutrition Month

Occupational Profile...

Computer Systems Analysts



TABLE OF CONTENTS

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.



All Community Colleges

College Placement

3

Nebraska Industry Employment Growth

Feature Article

4

Mythbusting

Feature Article

6

Read Across America

Map Facts

8

National Nutrition Month

Fast Facts

9

Computer Systems Analysts

Occupational Profile

10

Openings and Expansions

12

Economic Indicators

13

ALL COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Employment Outcomes

There were 5,182 Community College graduates between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009. Of these graduates, 3,799 (73%) were working in Nebraska in the first quarter of 2010. This percentage is down slightly over the past two years. In 2009, there were 75% and in 2008 there were 76% of the graduates working in the state. Slightly more than half (52%) of the graduates were female with 76% of the female graduates working in the state while 70% of male graduates were employed in the state. Minority graduates were less likely (66%) to be working in the state than white, non-Hispanic graduates (74%).

There was at least one graduate employed in 85 of the state's 93 counties. Lancaster, Douglas, Madison and Hall Counties had more than half (55%) of the graduates working in those counties.

There were 1,650 graduates in 73 degree/fields of study that had 80% or more of the graduates working in the state. Within this group, the 12 Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology Associate Degree graduates had the highest estimated average annual earnings of \$40,011 followed by Dental Hygiene Associate Degree graduates with \$39,055. Licensed Practical Nursing had the highest number of graduates in this group with 323 followed by Registered Nursing Associate Degree graduates with 311.

Majors in technical and medical fields of study produced

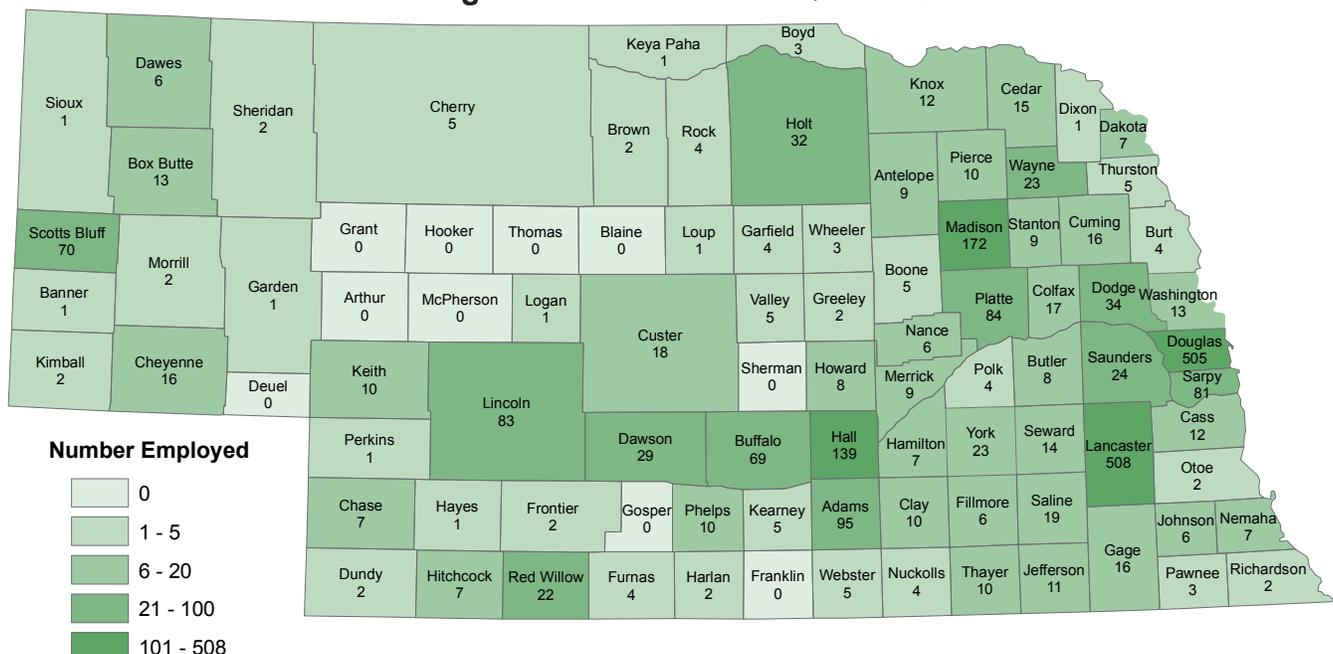


graduates with the highest wages. Associate Degree graduates in Heavy/Industrial Equipment Maintenance Technologies had the highest estimated average annual wages of all fields of study with \$46,335. There were 26 fields of study/degrees with 703 graduates working in the state that had estimated average annual wages above \$30,000 per year.

The 62 graduates employed in the Utilities industry had the highest estimated average annual earnings of \$45,928, followed by the six graduates employed in the Management of Companies and Enterprises industry with \$42,559. The Health Care industry had the highest number (1,013) of graduates working in the state with estimated average annual of \$27,431.

For more outcomes information on Central Community College, Metropolitan Community College, Mid-Plains Community College, Northeast Community College, Southeast Community College, Western Nebraska Community College, Chadron State College, Peru State College, Wayne State College and the University of Nebraska – Kearney, contact the Nebraska Department of Labor's Office of Labor Market Information.

2008-2009 All Community College Graduates Working in Nebraska in First Quarter 2010





Nebraska Industry Employment Growth

DAVE BAUER, RESEARCH ANALYST

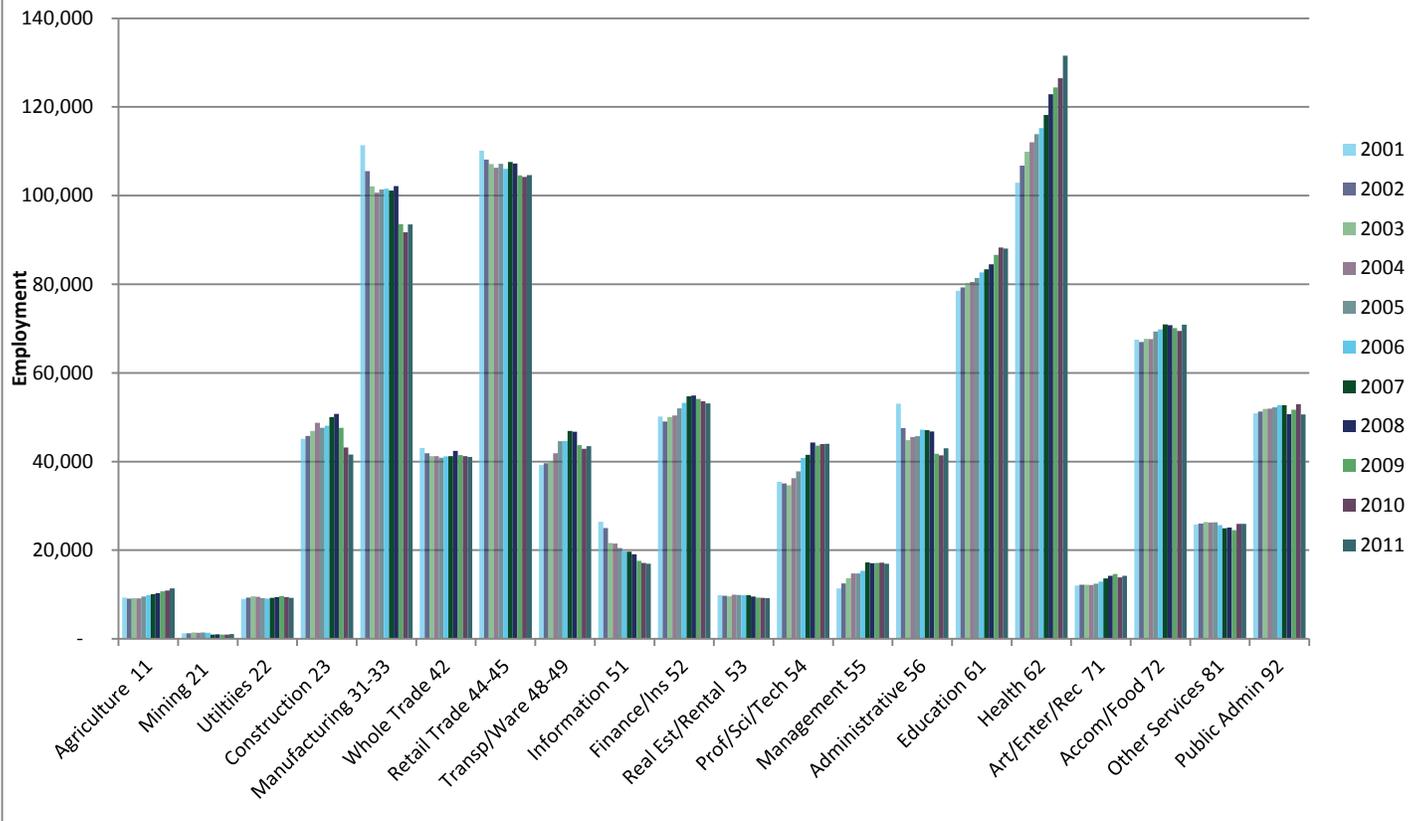
Second quarter employment, from 2001 to 2011, has grown in eleven of the twenty industrial sectors in Nebraska. The industries with the largest employment gains were Healthcare and Social Assistance (28,651), Educational Services (9,516) and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (8,622). By percentage, the industries with the largest employment gains were Management of Companies and Enterprises (49%), Healthcare and Social Assistance (28%), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (24%). The industries with the largest employment losses were Manufacturing (-17,870), Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (-10,085) and Information (-9,507). By percentage, the largest losers were Information (-36%), Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (-19%),

and Mining (-17%).

Manufacturing (31-33) was the state's largest covered employer in the second quarter of 2001. Only one year later, it fell to the state's third largest employing industry, as it remains today. In 2001, Healthcare and Social Assistance (62) was the state's third largest employer; today, it is the state's largest employer, as it has been since 2003. Healthcare is the lone industry that has shown consistent year-over-year job growth since 2001. Conversely, Information (51) is the lone industry that has consistently lost employment since 2001.

From the second quarter of 2001 through the second quarter of 2011, both the Other Services and Public Administration industries reported virtually no employment

Nebraska Industry Employment, 2nd Quarter Average, 2001 - 2011



increases. During this ten-year period, the largest year-to-year statewide job gains occurred from 2006 to 2007 (+14,211) and from 2004 to 2005 (+9,995). The largest statewide year-to-year job losses occurred from 2008 to 2009 (-22,063) and from 2001 to 2002 (-10,495).

Large employment increases are typical for many Nebraska industries during the second quarter of the year when the winter weather breaks, allowing seasonal work across the state to begin. Through the year, Nebraska's total employment numbers generally bottom out in the first quarter, wax in the second quarter, and wane in the

third and fourth quarters. The fluctuations are primarily driven by more weather-dependent industries such as Agriculture (11), Mining (21) and Construction (23) and supporting industries such as the Retail and Wholesale Trades (42 & 44-45) and Transportation & Warehousing (48-49). The Education (61), Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (71), and Accommodation and Food Services (72) industries experience yearly fluctuations, which are not typically weather-related, and do not always coincide with fluctuations of those that are seasonally-dependent.

From 2001 to 2011, the state's total employment increased by two percent, from 892,409 to 910,305. During this ten-year period, Nebraska's total average quarterly employment peaked in the second quarter of 2008 at 929,703; with June figures ultimately of 935,433. In 2009, total state employment dropped by 2.1 percent to 907,640 and another half percent to 903,806 in 2010.

Since 2001, the state's average annual rate of job growth was 0.2 percent. If that rate of growth were to continue, the state would not return to 2008 job levels for another ten years. The 2011 statewide average quarterly employment figure of 910,305 represents a very modest job gain of 0.8 percent over 2010 data. If that 0.8 percent annual rate of job gain were to continue, Nebraska could expect to surpass its ten-year employment high set in 2008 sometime during the 2013-14 time frame.



Feature Story



Mythbusting

SCOTT HUNZEKER, RESEARCH ANALYST



The Office of Labor Market Information produces a wide variety of information that is used by many different audiences. The first step to helping provide requested information is gaining an understanding of exactly the requestor wants. Sometimes requests are for a very specific purpose such as a grant application, and other times they are much vaguer, such as a request for “wages” or “employment” that requires more clarification. Assisting data users often involves explaining some common misconceptions about labor market data and how it is produced. Below are a few of the mistaken beliefs that have been expressed by data requestors.

● **The Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program includes all businesses in the state.**

The Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program is one of the most comprehensive data sets available from the Office of Labor Market Information. Detailed industry detail is available for counties on a quarterly basis.

As the name implies, the QCEW program is a census of businesses, but it only includes those that are liable for paying unemployment insurance taxes. This includes the majority of employment in the state, but there are some notable exclusions to the QCEW program. Railroads, agricultural businesses, non-profit organizations, self-employed, and domestic employees in a private residence are typically not covered by unemployment insurance and are not counted in QCEW figures.

In most cases, the Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages can provide the most detailed employment counts by industry. However, if you looking for data for an industry not covered under unemployment insurance laws, or if you are looking at a geography that has a high concentration of these businesses, another source of information that includes the non-covered employment may be best.

● **The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program can be used to track wages over time.**

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program produces employment and wage estimates for occupations. This information is obtained from a survey of businesses that is conducted twice a year with reference periods of May and November. The survey is designed so that data from multiple panels is grouped together to produce the wage and employment figures.

The “official” OES wage and employment estimates are released once each year. In Nebraska, the wage estimates are adjusted quarterly using the Employment Cost Index (ECI) to keep them as current as possible. Although you may be tempted to track wages over time to see how much they have changed, this cannot be done – comparing the quarterly wages will simply show the ECI factors that have been applied and are not actually changes in wages.

Comparing the annual, unadjusted wages should not be done because the survey is not intended to provide a time series for wages. If you are interested in finding out how wages have changed over time, you should look to another source for the data.

● **The Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) data is incorrect because it only includes those receiving unemployment benefits.**

The Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program produces counts of employment, unemployment and the unemployment rate each month. There are many misconceptions of how this data is calculated and what is included – many assuming that certain things are included or excluded from the estimates. One of the most common myths centers on unemployed individuals and how they are counted.

To fully understand the monthly unemployment data and what it contains, it is important to know the definitions used by the LAUS program. In order for someone to be considered unemployed by the LAUS program, that person must have not been working for a wage during the reference week used by the program, must have been available and willing to work, and must have made efforts to find employment during the previous four weeks. If all of these conditions are not met, the person is not considered to be unemployed by the LAUS program.

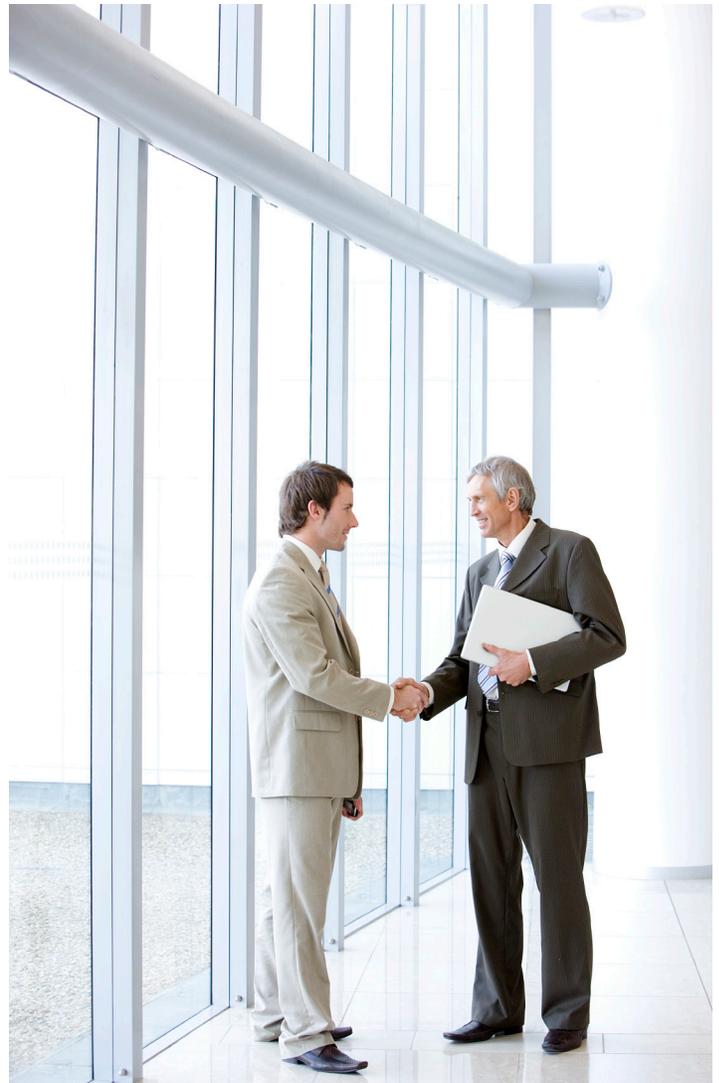
Unemployment insurance claims are one of many inputs of the LAUS program, but they certainly are not the only one. There are many individuals who are ineligible for unemployment benefits or who choose not to file for benefits but still meet the definition of unemployed. Other inputs (including the Current Population Survey) go into the LAUS program to account for these individuals, and all data is run through a statistical model to produce the monthly figures.

The Current Population Survey (CPS) is a telephone survey of households administered by the Census Bureau, which asks about employment status. Data from the CPS is used to create alternative measures for labor underutilization, which provides more narrowly or broadly defined definitions of unemployment. These rates can be found online at <http://www.bls.gov/lau/stalt.htm>.

● **If local data is available, it is better to use than statewide or national information.**

Many people requesting information are interested in the smallest geographic area for which data is available. While this local data may seem more applicable to the local situation and thus better, it may not always be the best option to use.

The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) is a complete count of employment by industry and geography (see above regarding this program). In instances where this data will fit your needs, QCEW is likely to be your best source since it does include all employers covered by



unemployment insurance laws.

Other data from the Office of Labor Market Information comes from surveying employers. For these programs, a more localized area means fewer survey responses will be included in the results. Although these will be focused on local responses, this typically results in more variability and greater error rates in the data. Unless what is needed has a very specific geography requirement, you may want to consider using a broader geographic area.

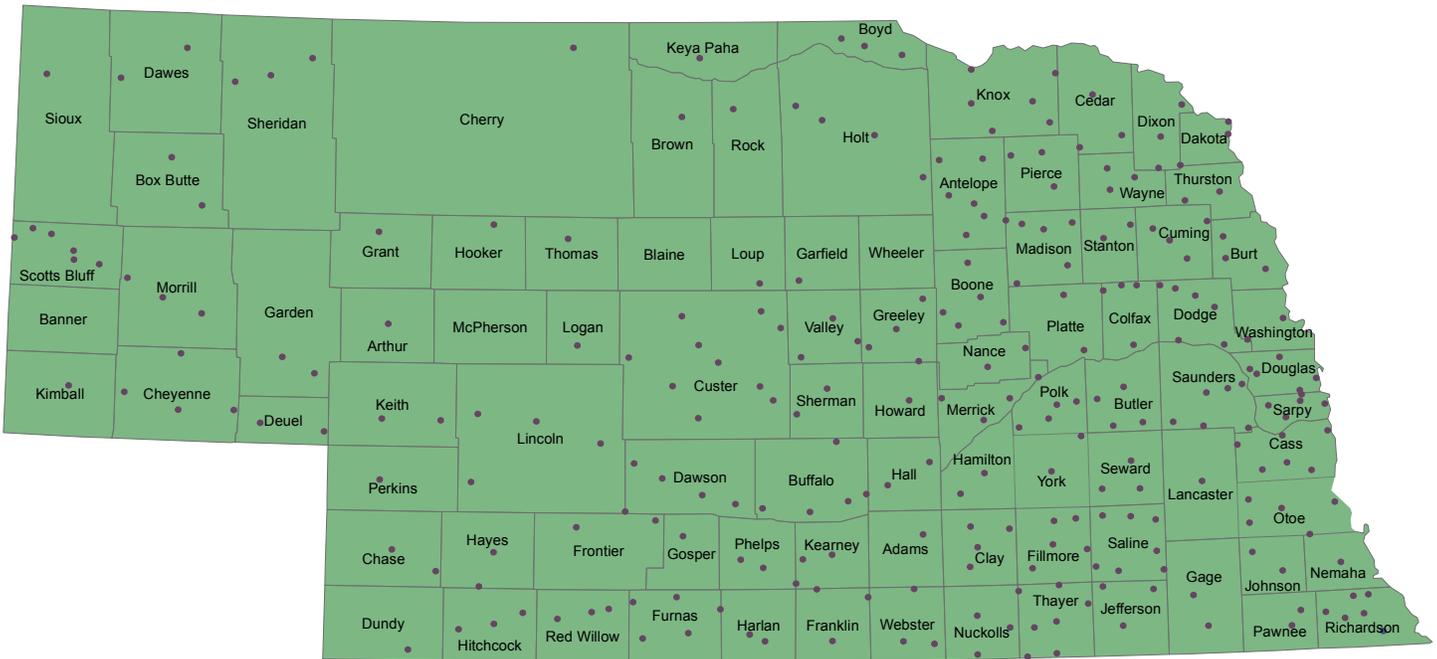
● **More detailed data isn't available.**

While we make every effort to post as much data as possible online so it can be easily accessed, custom calculations and tabulations can be done for many types of data. If you have questions or are looking for something specific, email the Office of Labor Market Information at LMI_NE@nebraska.gov or call 402-471-2600.

If you have any questions about data sets, where information comes from, or how it is produced, don't hesitate to contact us.

Read Across America

Cities With Libraries in Nebraska in 2010



JODIE MEYER, RESEARCH ANALYST

March 2nd is the National Education Association's Read Across America Day. For the last thirteen years this event has been held across the country in thousands of schools, libraries, and community centers and promotes reading to kids, teens and adults.

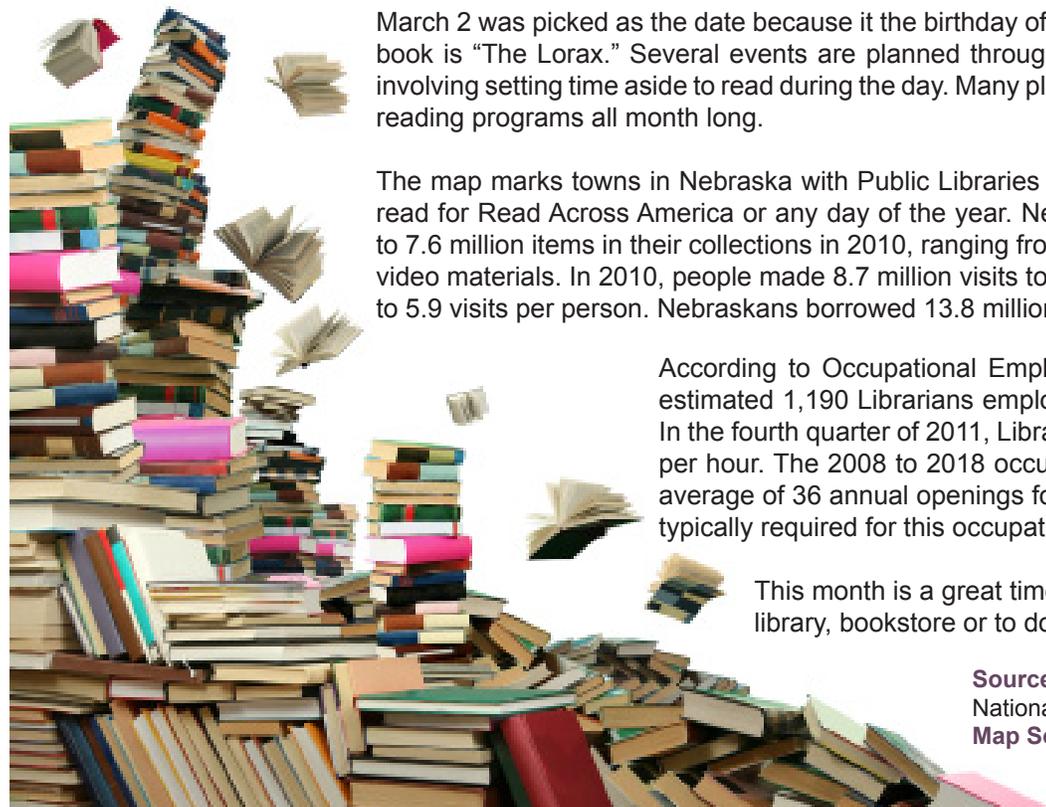
March 2 was picked as the date because it the birthday of Dr. Seuss. This year the featured book is "The Lorax." Several events are planned throughout the state and the nation, all involving setting time aside to read during the day. Many places are celebrating by promoting reading programs all month long.

The map marks towns in Nebraska with Public Libraries where you can pick up a book to read for Read Across America or any day of the year. Nebraska public libraries had close to 7.6 million items in their collections in 2010, ranging from books, e-books, and audio and video materials. In 2010, people made 8.7 million visits to Nebraska libraries, which factors to 5.9 visits per person. Nebraskans borrowed 13.8 million items or 9.3 per person in 2010.

According to Occupational Employment Statistics, there were an estimated 1,190 Librarians employed in Nebraska in May of 2010. In the fourth quarter of 2011, Librarians made an average of \$23.27 per hour. The 2008 to 2018 occupational projections estimate and average of 36 annual openings for Librarians. A Master's degree is typically required for this occupation.

This month is a great time to pick up a book at your local library, bookstore or to download one to your e-reader.

Source: Nebraska Library Commission, National Education Association
Map Source: Nebraska Library Commission





National Nutrition Month

JACOB LIUDAHL, RESEARCH ANALYST

Maintaining a healthy diet takes some work. With increased demands on our time and money, eating healthy has become a lower priority for many Americans. The prevalence of cheap, unhealthy meals has contributed to increased levels of obesity in recent decades. March is National Nutrition Month, celebrating healthy food choices and informing the public about how to make better nutrition decisions.

There are a number of tools available to help make smart nutrition decisions. Free health tracking software, such as the USDA's ChooseMyPlate.gov SuperTracker and popular smart phone applications MyFitnessPal and Calorie Counter, allow users to look up nutritional information and track their consumption on the go.

Recommended daily calorie consumption varies based on age, sex, and physical activity level, among other factors. Females 19-50 years old need 1,800-2,400 calories depending on activity level, while males between 19 and 50 years old need 2,200-3,000 calories to maintain proper balance.

The Journal of the American Medical Association estimated that in 2008 about one third of Americans were obese. Obesity was defined as having a body mass index (BMI) of 30.0 or higher. The same study reported that 68% of Americans during the same time were either overweight (25.0-29.9 BMI) or obese.

The Dietitians and Nutritionists NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) occupational code (29-1031), which includes job titles such as Registered Dietitian, Clinical Dietitian, Nutritionist, and Dietary Manager, approximates 60,000 employment in the United States as of 2008.

In May 2010, there were an estimated 430 Dietitians and Nutritionists employed in Nebraska. The median annual wage for this group was \$45,937, while the average annual wage was slightly higher at \$46,545.

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics reports Registered Dietitians (RD) must earn a bachelor's degree or higher, complete an accredited practice program, and pass national testing standards. It is estimated that approximately 50-60% of RDs hold advanced degrees.

Dietetic Technicians, Registered (DTR) requires an associate's degree or higher and completion of an accredited program and associated testing. Nebraska's estimated 150 Dietetic Technicians earned an average of \$27,811 annually.

Source: O*Net Online, Eatright.org, LetsMove.gov, USDA.gov

COMPUTER SYSTEMS ANALYSTS

LINDSAY BURFORD, RESEARCH ANALYST



We live in an advanced technological world. Some people are able to go to a co-worker to ask what the message prompt on the computer means and how to handle it. I am personally grateful for individuals that work in a computer analyst position. They do the “behind-the-scenes” work to make sure my computer is up and running when I get to work each morning. For that, I will always be appreciative.

Occupational Characteristics

The overarching task of Computer Systems Analysts is to analyze science, engineering, business, and other data processing problems that will improve computer systems. Such analysis could include various user requirements, procedures, and problems to automate existing systems, as well as review computer system capabilities, workflow and scheduling limitations.

Common knowledge that is expected from Computer Systems Analysts include computers and electronics; English; customer and personal service; mathematics; engineering and technology; and administration and management. Specific skills required within this position include critical thinking; active listening; reading comprehension; speaking; systems analysis; complex problem solving; judgment and decision making; and programming. Specific abilities related to this occupation include information ordering; oral comprehension; problem sensitivity; category flexibility; deductive reasoning; fluency of ideas; and near vision. Common work activities for Computer Systems Analysts include interacting with computers; making decisions and solving problems; processing and getting information; documenting and recording information; evaluating information to determine compliance with standards; and communicating with supervisors and peers.

Education and Training

Computer Systems Analysts require considerable preparation before entering this occupation. Typically, an individual will have a four-year bachelor’s degree, as well as several years of work-related experience. According to O*Net Online, 41% of employers stated their Computer Systems Analysts required an Associate’s Degree; 26% stated they need a Bachelor’s Degree; and 16% stated they are required to have a Master’s Degree. Computer Systems Analysts do not require a license in Nebraska.

Common fields of study for those interested in this occupation include computer and information sciences (general); information technology; computer systems analysis; or web and multimedia management and webmaster. There are several training programs throughout Nebraska that offer individuals higher educational experiences for this occupation, including certificates, Associate’s degrees, and Bachelor’s degrees. For more information about where these programs are found throughout the state, visit <http://traininglink.dol.state.ne.us/index.cfm>.



Employment and Wages

Computer Systems Analysts have a HOT! job prospect statewide, as well in most sub-regions within Nebraska. Only two sub-regions do not have a HOT! job prospect: The Southeast Region has a COLD! job prospect with a small projected job gain of 3.2% between 2008 and 2018; the Mid Plains Region also has a COLD! job prospect with a small projected job gain of 7.1% between 2008 and 2018. Statewide, the projected job growth for this occupation is 18.9%, with 135 annual job openings. The Omaha Region has the largest projected job growth between 2008 and 2018 at 21.7%, or 105 annual job openings.

The average entry wage in Nebraska for Computer Systems Analysts is \$23.02 per hour, or a little over \$47,800 a year. The average hourly wage (mean) is \$34.05, or \$70,800 per year. The average experienced wage throughout the state is \$39.56, or \$82,800 per year. All of these wages are below the national entry wage, average wage, and experienced wage for Computer Systems Analysts. The Northeast Region has the highest entry, average, and experienced wages throughout the state of Nebraska (\$30.22, \$38.66, and \$42.88 per hour, respectively).

Almost 22% of Computer Systems Analysts are found in the Professional and Technical Services industry. The second highest concentration of Computer Systems Analysts is in Management of Companies and Enterprises, where 8.3% of individuals in this occupation are employed. The ISPs, Search Portals, and Data Processing industry employs 5.7% of these types of analysts, followed by Hospital employment at 3.5%. Other industries that employ this specific occupation include: Administrative and Support Services; Credit Intermediation and Related Activity; Merchant Wholesales, Durable Goods; and Telecommunications.

Conclusion

Nebraska’s long-term projections suggest a HOT! job prospect in employment for Computer Systems Analysts. If you or someone you know has an overall interest in learning more about this occupation, please visit Career Resources on the Nebraska Department of Labor’s website.

Openings & Expansions

Openings and Expansions

JACOB LIUDAHL, 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 in confidence are not listed. If you know of a business which is opening or expanding, please email Jacob.Liudahl@Nebraska.gov with you information.

Lincoln

- H&R Block office – Pine Lake location
- Blue Blood Brewing Company Airgas – new location in Lincoln (locations also in Hastings and Omaha) – cylinder gases and related products for both medical and industrial uses.
- Graybar – new location in Lincoln (company district office is St. Louis, MO) – electrical, communications and data networking products, 5 employees and a manager

Omaha

- The Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce and the Omaha Career Centers reported the following businesses are opening or expanding their operations:
 - Peoples Services Center, business consulting, 8 employees
 - Chocolatier Blue, candy store, 5 employees
 - Fairway Store Inc., grocery store, 100 employees
 - Sonic Drive In, restaurant, 10 employees
 - Sitel, Customer call center, 125 employees
 - J Coco, restaurant, 15 employees
 - Urgent Care, care clinic, 10 employees
 - Makovicka Physical Therapy, 10 employees
 - Keyboard Kastle, piano store, 3 employees
 - Luvbird, boutique, 3 employees
 - Bank of the West, bank, 6 employees
 - Goodwill Ind., used good store, 33 employees
 - Salon Capelli, salon and spa, 5 employees
 - Walmart, neighborhood markets, 95 employees, 132nd & Maple, and 95 employees, 96th and Giles Rd
 - James Harris Salon, hair salon, 5 employees
 - Love Culture, women's clothing, 5 employees
 - Café 110, restaurant, 10 employees
 - Behaven Kids, day care, 5 employees
 - For the Wild Bird, pet shop, 5 employees
 - Joe's Crab Shack, restaurant, 30 employees
 - Defy Gravity, children's bounce area, 5 employees
 - Italian Garden's Restaurant, restaurant, 10 employees
 - Bloom Salon, salon, 3 employees
 - SeQuire Salon & Spa, salon and spa, 4 employees
 - State Farm Insurance, insurance office, 3 employees
 - NE Colocation Center, data Center, 10 employees
- American Courier has closed their Lincoln operation and is planning a new location for their Omaha Operation. No lay-offs resulted as they transferred to Omaha.

- Mt Michael High School, private school
- Immanuel Trinity Village, Senior Apts
- Hope Center for Kids, non-profit agency
- OPPD new substation, Platteview Rd
- Legend Comics/Legend Coffee, store, 14 employees
- Sergeant's, Pet Care, 75 employees
- West Corporation, Service Center, 70 employees
- NE Furniture Mart, Furniture store, 50 employees
- Edible Arrangement, fruit bouquet
- Easy Way International, 5 employees
- The Universe Truck Line Company, trucking company, 25 employees
- Omaha Steel Castings Co., steel castings company, up to 150 employees

Southeast

Beatrice

- Beatrice's new Community Hospital is complete and ready to begin operations in February. Numerous new positions will become available with the larger facility.
- Allied Barton, a security business, will begin serving the Beatrice area with 10-15 security positions providing security the Koch Nitrogen Plant 24 hours a day.
- Duke's café in downtown Beatrice will be opening in late February with around 4-5 part-time positions.

Northeast

Norfolk

- The Bartlett Motel, Bartlett, NE, motel, 2 employees
- Xt Direct (call center from Omaha), Beemer, NE, 10+ employees
- Weddings to Go, Ewing, NE, Wedding and event planning and decorating along with tuxedo rentals, 2 employees
- Tracy's Hair Salon, O'Neill, NE, Full service salon, 2 employees

Fremont

- A local Fremont business, T-Square, opened. It is a retail store selling welding supplies to "do-it-yourself" individuals and businesses alike.

Panhandle

Scottsbluff

- Hibbert Sporting Goods store opened in January 2012 with 8 new employees.
- Gaslight Restaurant and Lounge reopened with new owner/manager.
- Heather Hausmann Photography, one employee, photography.

Facts Sheet

Note: Retail Sales figures are in billions of dollars. Median Employment Wages are OES 50th percentile Annual Wage for All Occupations. ECI is Employment Cost Index. PPI is Producer Price Index. CPI is Consumer Price Index.

| National Indicators | Date | Value |
|-------------------------|--------|------------------|
| GDP Growth | Q4-11 | 2.8% |
| Unemployment Rate | Jan-12 | 8.3% |
| Fed Interest Rate | Jan-12 | 0.25% |
| Current Account Balance | Q3-11 | -\$110.3 billion |

| Nebraska Indicators | Date | Value |
|------------------------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Unemployment Rate | Dec-11 | 4.1% |
| House Value Appreciation | Q3-11 | 2.43% |
| Average Weekly Manufacturing Hours | Dec-11 | 39.7 |
| Net Taxable Retail Sales | Nov-11 | \$2.059 billion |
| Median Employment Wages | Q4-11 | \$38,951 |

| Pricing Indicators | Date | Value |
|---------------------|--------|----------|
| Barrel of Crude Oil | Feb-12 | \$105.87 |
| ECI Change | Q4-11 | 0.40% |
| PPI Change | Jan-12 | 0.10% |

| January 2012 | Indexes | | | % Change From | |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------------|--------|
| | Jan-12 | Dec-11 | Jan-11 | Dec-11 | Jan-11 |
| U.S. All Items | 226.665 | 225.672 | 220.223 | 0.4% | 2.9% |
| Midwest Urban All Items | 216.368 | 215.173 | 210.388 | 0.6% | 2.8% |
| Northeast Urban All Items | 242.879 | 241.987 | 235.969 | 0.4% | 2.9% |
| South Urban All Items | 220.497 | 219.469 | 213.589 | 0.5% | 3.2% |
| West Urban All Items | 228.980 | 228.117 | 223.149 | 0.4% | 2.6% |

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

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.

Commissioner of Labor

Catherine D. Lang

LMI Administrator

Phil Baker

Editor

Scott Hunzeker

Editor

Jacob Liudahl

Graphic Designer

Kristin Brehmer

