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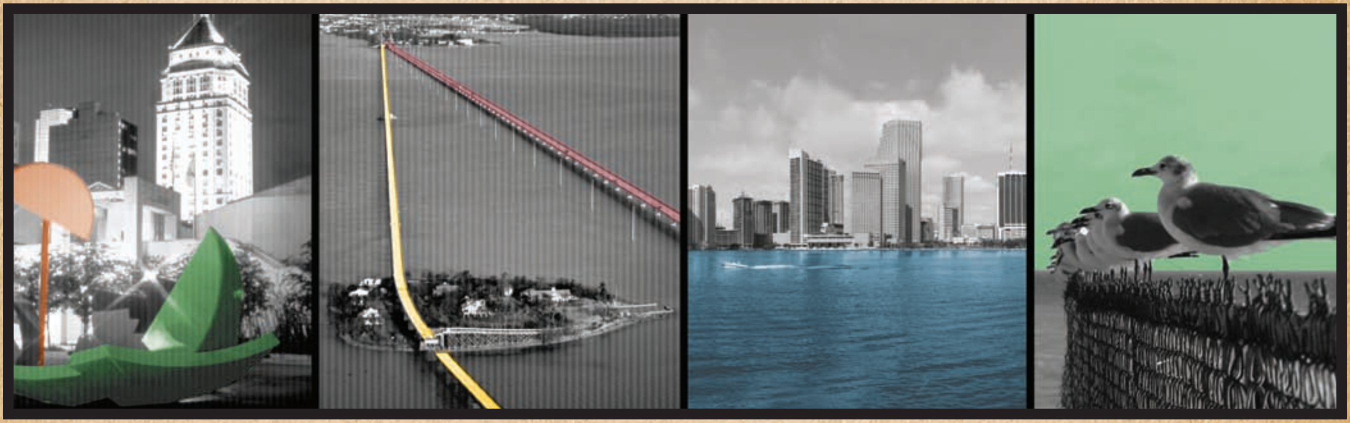
STATE OF THE WORKFORCE

A Projection of Occupational and Industry Growth In South Florida's Workforce Region 23



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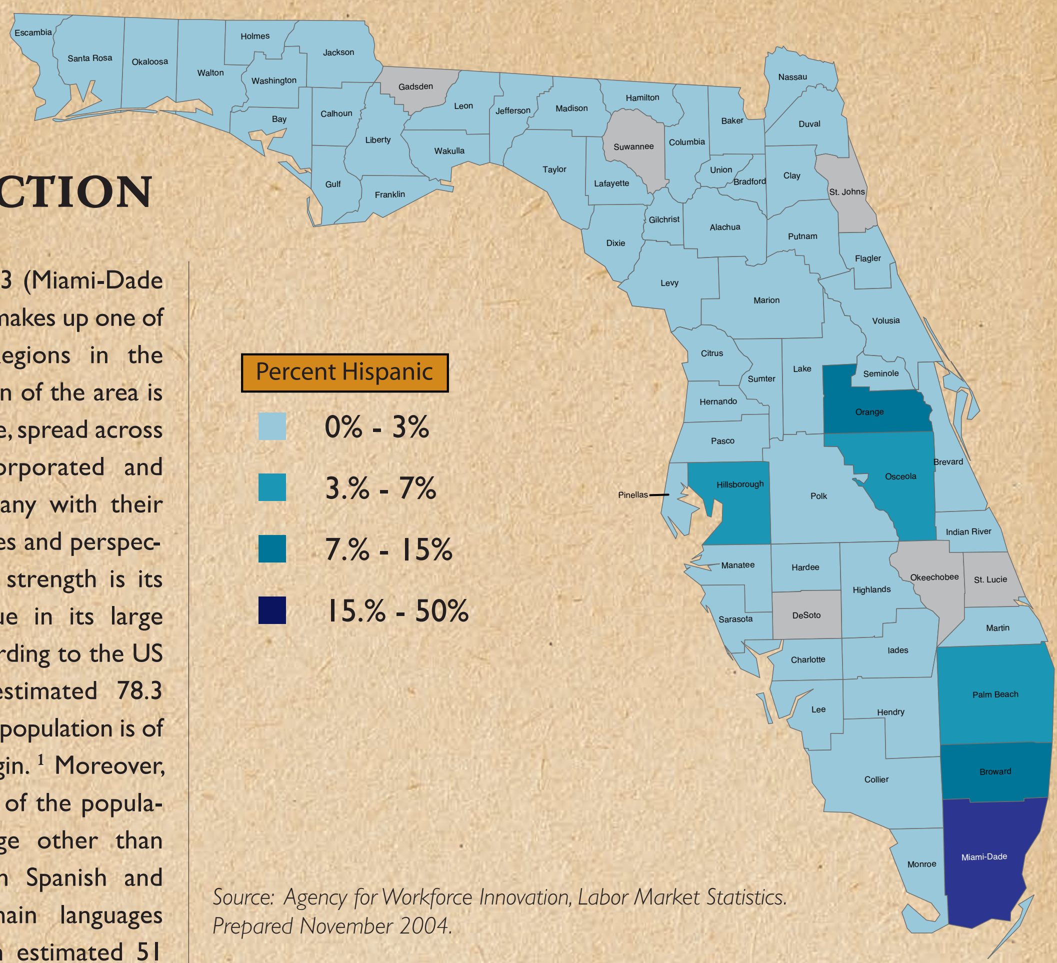
State of the Workforce

A Projection of Occupational and Industry Growth In South Florida's Workforce Region 23

Introduction

Workforce Region 23 (Miami-Dade and Monroe counties) makes up one of the most dynamic Regions in the country. The population of the area is about 2.4 million people, spread across a number of un-incorporated and incorporated areas, many with their own distinctive identities and perspectives. South Florida's strength is its diversity, and is unique in its large Latin population. According to the US Census Bureau, an estimated 78.3 percent of the Region's population is of Hispanic or Latino origin. [1] Moreover, more than 89 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home, with Spanish and Creole being the main languages spoken. [2] In 2006, an estimated 51 percent of Miami-Dade County's population was reportedly foreign born compared to only 16.7 percent statewide. In Monroe County, the number averaged around 14.7 percent.[3]

Because many companies choose to establish their Latin American and Caribbean headquarters in Southern Florida, the Region has established itself as an important gateway for hemispheric trade and commerce. Nearly 79 percent of all imports from Latin America and the Caribbean pass through Miami International Airport (MIA). [4] MIA, the largest commercial airport in the Region, is the number one airport in the U.S. for international freight, and number four in the U.S. for total cargo. MIA's estimated economic impact on the Region is approximately \$25.6 billion. [5] The Port of Miami, which is the largest containerized



Source: Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics. Prepared November 2004.

Regional Population Breakdown By Race / Ethnicity

Population	Miami-Dade County	Monroe County
Total	2,402,208	74,737
Caucasian	274,219	53,115
African American	485,164	4,300
Hispanic	1,471,709	13,539
American Indian and Alaska Native	6,977	481
Asian	44,466	1,168
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	797	n/a
Other Ethnic Group	158,136	2,550

Note : n/a Data for the following geographic area cannot be displayed because the number of sample cases is too small.

Data is based on a sample and is subject to sampling variability. The degree of uncertainty for an estimate arising from sampling variability is represented through the use of a margin of error. The value shown here is the 90 percent margin of error.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey port in the state, contributes another $16 billion dollars to the Region's economy.[6]

As a cosmopolitan tourist destination, the Region continues to attract over 11million visitors a year and also continues to be the most important regional location for businesses and major institutions doing business in the state.[7]

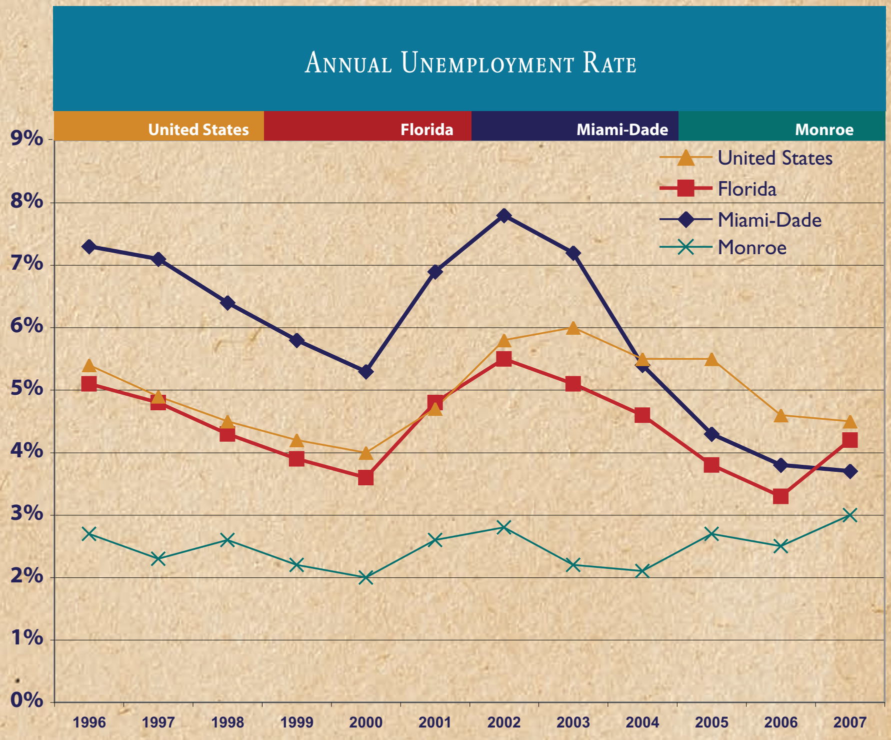
But the good news doesn't end there. Although there are pockets of persistently high unemployment in Miami-Dade County, unemployment in the Region is still at historical lows. The unemployment rates in South Florida are now less than that of the nation as a whole and slightly lower than the statewide average due in large part to the construction boom that began in 2001 and peaked in 2005.[8] In March 2008, data released by the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation reflected these trends. Here, unemployment rates in Miami-Dade County were around 3.8 percent, up 0.9 percent from the previous year. Monroe County on the other hand, continues to have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state with unemployment at 3.1 percent, up 0.6 percent from the previous year.[9]

Indeed, the growth in business and employment activity has brought us tangible benefits such as relatively higher wages, improved living standards and higher foreign investment. Some visible signs are: new homes, glittering office towers, shopping centers, new and expanded roads, and an influx of new residents.

Unemployment Estimates For Selected Zip Codes
Region 23

South Florida Workforce Career Centers	Zip Code	Rate
Northside	33147	7.5%
Miami Edgewater	33137	6.9%
Little Havana	33135	5.9%
Hialeah Downtown	33010	5.0%
North Miami Beach	33162	5.0%
Carol City	33055	4.8%
Hialeah Gardens	33016	4.5%
Homestead	33030	4.0%
West Dade	33165	3.3%
Miami Beach	33139	3.1%
Perrine	33157	3.0%
Marathon	33050	2.8%
Key Largo	33037	2.7%
Key West	33040	2.3%

Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics, Local Area Unemployment



Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center, December 2007.

The Way We Were

During the 1970s and early 1980s, the Region's economy experienced positive economic expansion due to an unprecedented level of growth in services, construction and a revitalized manufacturing sector. Small - and medium-sized companies, producing food and food related products, clothing, textiles, machine tools for export and fabricated metals led the boom.

From 1970 to 1971, the largest employers in Miami-Dade County were the apparel and textile manufacturing industries which employed 14,000 and 18,400 workers respectively. The second largest industry was food and food-related products, employing an estimated 7,400 and 7,700 workers in 1970 and 1971, respectively.

From 1976 to 1986, employment in the service sector increased by 97.6 percent, while the construction sector grew by an estimated103.8 percent due in large part to rapid expansions in the housing market during the 1980's.

What was true about the Region's economy during the 1970s and 1980s remains true today with the service sector not only growing faster than the goods producing sector, but also generating the most new jobs in the local labor market.


According to 2006 Census estimates, the median price of a home in Miami-Dade County was $360,000.00 and $480,000.00 in Monroe County.

Too Much, Too Soon?

Maybe. Although South Florida has seen substantial and sustained economic growth as a result of the residential construction market, affordable housing continues to be a challenge for the Region's workers and a particular challenge for economic development stakeholders to recruit businesses and talent from outside the Region. In our economy, relative housing prices exceed relative wages. Here is an example. According to 2006 Census estimates, the median household income in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties was $46,731.00 and $52,069.00 respectively. [10] Yet, during the same period, the median price of a home in Miami-Dade County was $360,000.00 and $480,000.00 in Monroe County. [11] As we have indicated earlier, this relative disparity has made it difficult for local businesses to retain talent, particularly in Monroe County where businesses are dependent upon a steady influx of hospitality workers.

The recent "softening" of the residentjal construction market has also signaled a change in fortune for the Region. The local housing industry which was primarily driven by the thousands of well-paying jobs related to the real estate market, continues to decline in the wake of the sub-prime mortgage crisis. As a result, banks have continued to reduce their risk exposure to borrowers, invariably resulting in a "tightening" of the credit markets. With defaulted borrowers unable to keep up with mortgage payments, foreclosures in the Region and the state in general have gone up dramatically. According to Realty Trac, Florida's foreclosure rate of one foreclosure filing for every 282 households ranked second highest among all states with a total of 29,238 foreclosure filings being reported in November 2007. [12]

And it's not just housing that will pose a challenge for our community in the near future. Given the Region's position as the hemispheric hub for trade and investment, a historical reliance on tourism and agribusiness has given way to a more diversified and specialized economy. Interestingly, adapting to this diversity is now creating demand for skills to create, organize and apply knowledge. Given the direct linkages between education and labor market outcomes, one of the key challenges for the future will be improving the Region's low rate of educational attainment, particularly in the age group 25 years and older.

Here's why. According to the current Census data, 51 percent of the Region's 1,650,047 population in the age group 25 years and older had high school diploma or less. [13] Comparably, an estimated 818,244 or 52 percent of Miami-Dade County's age group of 25 years and older had a high school diploma or less. [14] The story is not much different in Monroe County. The county's total population for the age group 25 years and over is 58,132. Of this amount, an estimated 36 percent had a high school diploma or less. [15]

Our Report

The State of the Workforce Report is intended to provide a number of strategies to address workforce development in the context of the challenges presented with a particular focus on promoting a culture of life-long learning. This report also identifies the employment prospects for particular occupations over the next seven years.

Key elements of this report include:

> an analysis of occupational and industrial growth trends in the Region and concludes with a number of strategies aimed at ensuring that our short and long term workforce development initiatives support of the broad skill requirements of our unique economy. The fore-casted projections in our report were prepared to provide guidance primarily to those seeking labor market and career information. Our projections present a balanced view of the likely trajectory of occupational and industry growth in the State of Florida's Workforce Region 23. The moderate growth of our economy and the increasing challenges posed by the global economy will combine to present a unique set of opportunities for those seeking employment and unique challenges for economic development policymakers and educators.

For the purposes of our analysis, educational / skill levels will be presented in six categories: 1) Less than High School; 2) High School / GED; 3) Post-Secondary Adult Vocational (PSAV); 4) Associates Degree; 5) Bachelors and 6) Masters / Ph.D. Be reminded, that because of the uncertainty built into the assumptions outlined in the following sections, actual outcomes will likely differ from our projections. ■

Educational Attainment in South Florida

51 percent of the Region's 1,650,047 residents in the group 25 years and older had a high school diploma or less.

Educational Attainment by County		
	Miami - Dade	Monroe
Graduate Degree / Ph.D.	9.6%	12.4%
Bachelor's Degree	16.8%	17.2%
Associate's Degree	8.0%	10.5%
Some College No Degree	14.1%	23.8%
High School Graduate (Including Equivalency)	27.6%	25.0%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	11.1%	8.4%
Less Than 9th Grade	12.7%	2.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

Industry Employment Projections through 2015

While employment will grow across most industries, the current pattern of employment growth is projected to continue the trends of the past, with growth occurring more strongly in service sector industries such as professional services, health, retail and hospitality. As illustrated in the accompanying table, growth is expected to continue falling in the goods-producing sector. Labor-saving techniques and productivity improvements in manufacturing and other goods-producing sectors have historically played a prominent role in these declines and will continue to be a driving force in the reduction of employment in this sector. The goods-producing sector consists of agriculture, mining, construction, and manufacturing.

Rate of Growth				
	Workforce Region 23		Florida	
	Annual Change		Annual Change	
Industry Sectors	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Agriculture	9	0.10	-517	-0.56
Mining	-38	-7.41	-178	-3.53
Construction	-410	-0.75	5,239	0.87
Manufacturing	-541	-1.12	195	0.05
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	2,527	0.93	26,437	1.63
Information	-66	-0.27	1,680	0.98
Financial Activities	569	0.75	10,019	1.82
Professional & Business Services	4,803	2.95	46,141	3.33
Education & Health Services	3,180	2.16	28,895	2.89
Leisure & Hospitality	2,097	1.85	21,205	2.30
Other Services, (except government)	359	0.87	6,714	2.03
Government	2,006	1.26	16,650	1.50
Self-Employed & Unpaid Family Workers	134	0.14	7,231	0.92
Total, All Industries	14,630	1.21	169,710	1.89

Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center, 2007

Agriculture. This sector consists of two major industries: production of crops and production of animals, in addition to four smaller industries: forestry, logging, fishing, and agricultural support activities. Overall, employment in this sector is expected to increase slightly from 9,229 jobs in 2007 to 9,300 jobs by 2015; a growth rate of about 0.10 percent annually. Technological improvements in farming equipment will continue to reduce the number of workers needed in the sector. Other industries expected to contribute to the slow growth in agricultural employment are animal production and fishing. The fishing industry and support activities for agriculture and forestry are also expected to show only moderate gains in employment. Support activities for agriculture for instance, is expected to only create 1,709 jobs by 2015, declining by -1.45 percent per year over the projection period.

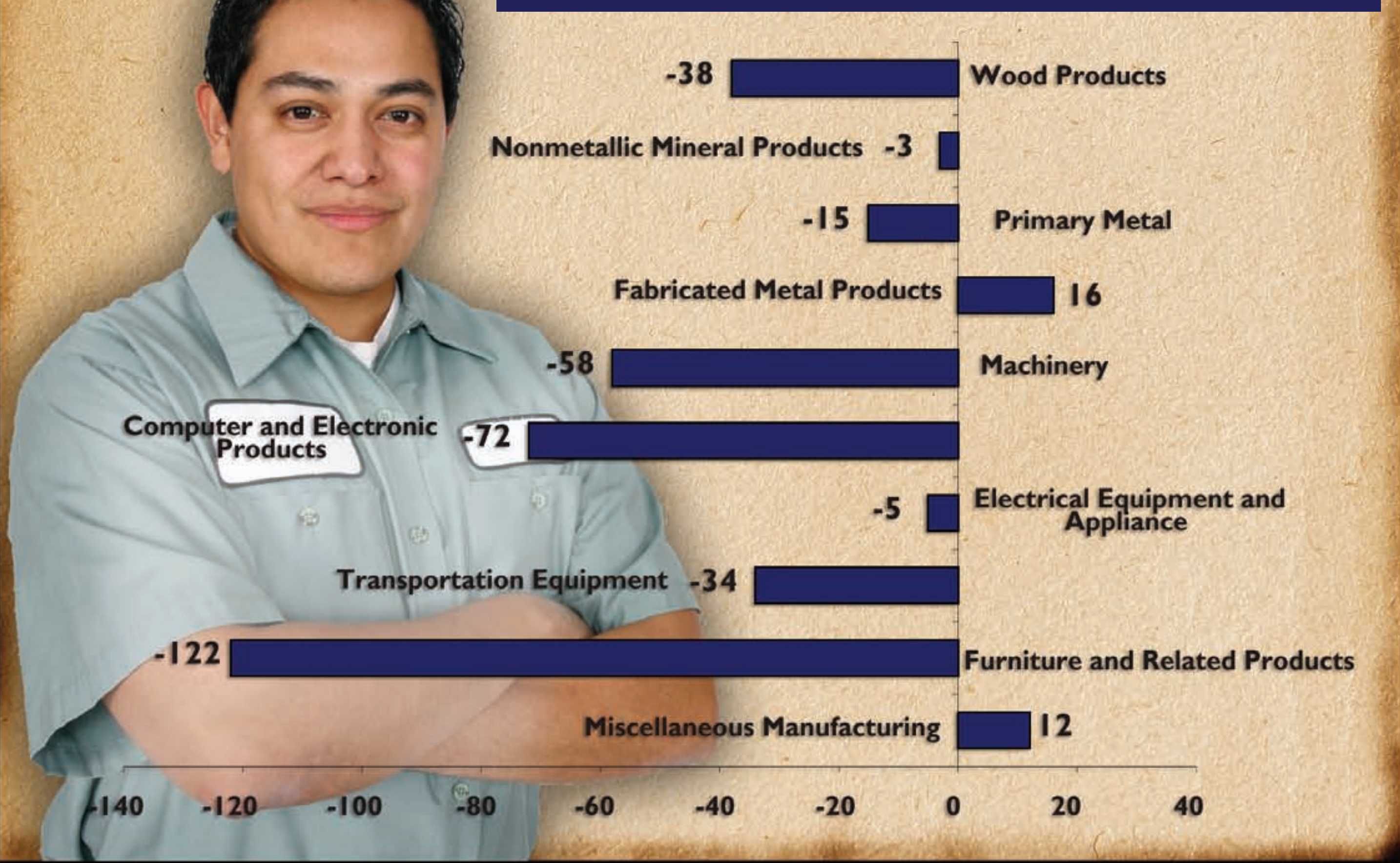
Mining. Employment in the mining sector is expected to only generate 208 jobs per year by 2015, down 303 jobs from its 2007 level. As a whole, the mining sector is expected to experience an average annual decline in employment of -7.41 percent. The growth of the construction industry however, has and will continue to support the demand for production and employment in the area's Limestone quarrying industry.

Construction. The construction sector which had driven much of the employment gains in the Region over the last several years has cooled dramatically and is only projected to add 51,256 jobs to the Regional economy by 2015 (-0.75 percent annually). However, long-term growth is still expected to continue and will be strongly influenced by demographic trends, including an aging population and the economic impact of the Region's high cost of living on local residents. The building of new retirement communities, as well as remodeling and home improvement, is expected to continue throughout the projection period. Also, continued work to improve roads and the area's strained transportation infrastructure is expected to provide further support for the expansion of construction output over the long term.

Manufacturing. Falling employment has characterized the Region's manufacturing sector particularly that of Miami-Dade County and that trend is expected to continue over the projection period. The average annual decline is expected to be -1.12 percent through 2015. However, fabricated metal product manufacturing and miscellaneous manufacturing will both grow slightly by an average of 16 jobs per year (0.30 percent) and 12 jobs per year (0.25 percent) respectively by 2015.

Service Sector. Almost all of the growth in non-agricultural wage and salary employment is projected to occur in the service-providing sectors of the Region's economy. The service-providing sectors are expected to account for the largest source of employment gains, making up the vast majority of all jobs by 2015. Professional, business services and health care and social assistance services—the sectors with the fastest-growing employment, will add about half of the new jobs over the projection period.

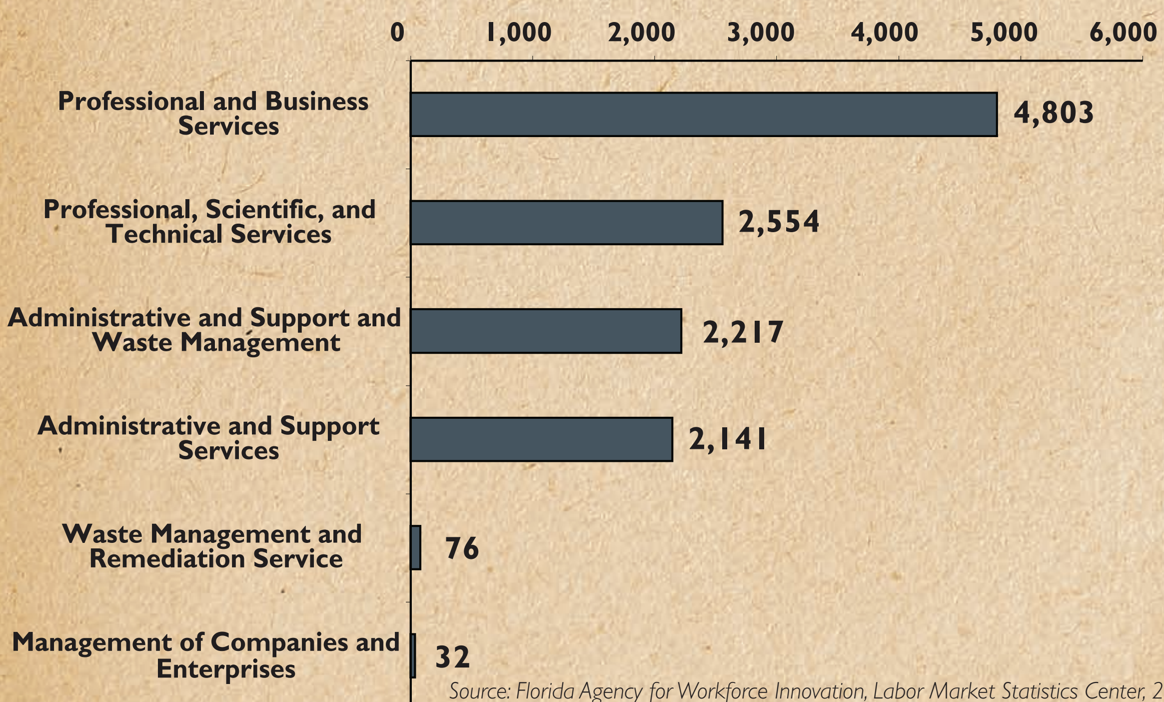
Manufacturing (Durable Goods)



Professional and Business Services. Employment in the Professional and Business Services sector is projected to reach 201,249 jobs by 2015, an increase of 38,426 jobs—more than in any other sector. Much of the employment growth in the professional and business services sector will be seen in the professional, scientific and technical services industries. Collectively, these industries will produce 91,495 jobs by 2015, an increase of 2,554 per year over the projection period. Business demand for consultants, sophisticated computer networks, and a variety of employment services to address complex business issues is expected to generate much of the expected demand. Employment is projected to grow at an average of 3.59 percent annually over the projection period. Administrative and support services will also generate strong job growth by adding an estimated 2,141 jobs per year, or grow by an estimated 2.61 percent annually to produce 99,231 jobs by 2015.

Information. The information sector is projected to decline at an average annual rate of -0.27 percent, losing an estimated - 66 jobs per year over the projection period. Job growth will decline from 24,107 jobs in 2007 to an estimated 23,580 in 2015. Most of this projected decline is expected in three industries: telecommunications, publishing, and broadcasting.

Professional and Business Services



Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center, 2007

Leisure and Hospitality

Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center, 2007

Leisure and Hospitality. The Leisure and Hospitality sector is projected to have the fourth largest employment increase among all sectors in the Regional economy. The Accommodation and Food Services & Drinking Places sub-sectors will account for more than half of the projected employment growth by 2015. The Food Services & Drinking Places sub-sector will generate 82,551 jobs by 2015 growing at an average of 1,455 jobs peryear, or 2.05 percent. The Accommodation sub-sector on the other hand, is expected to generate 447 jobs per year or grow by 1.56 percent annually. This sub-sector will produce 32,225 jobs by 2015. Factors driving growth in these industries include continued growth in the Region's tourism sector and growing demand for more diverse dining options.

Government. Public sector employment is expected to grow from 159,082 jobs in 2007 to an estimated 175,131 in 2015. This represents an average annual growth rate of 1.26 percent or 2,006 jobs per year over the projection period. Local government in particular will grow by an estimated 1.53 percent or 134 jobs per year. State and local government is projected to experience employment growth during the projection period due to increasing demand for services, particularly public safety and health services. The Region's increasingly elderly population, combined with state and local assumption of responsibility for services previously provided at the Federal level, are driving growth in these services.

While simply finding people willing to fill hospitality jobs is a task in itself, "the biggest concern we have as an industry is finding skilled employees"...

Joseph West, Dean, Florida International University School of Hospitality and Tourism Management commenting in Miami Today, December 27, 2007

Local Government. Employment in this sub-sector is expected to grow by 1,842 jobs over the projection period, reaching a level of 135,159 in 2015. This represents an average annual growth rate of 1.53 percent. As projected tax revenues decline as a result of the continued impact of the housing crisis, current employment levels are not expected to be sustained.

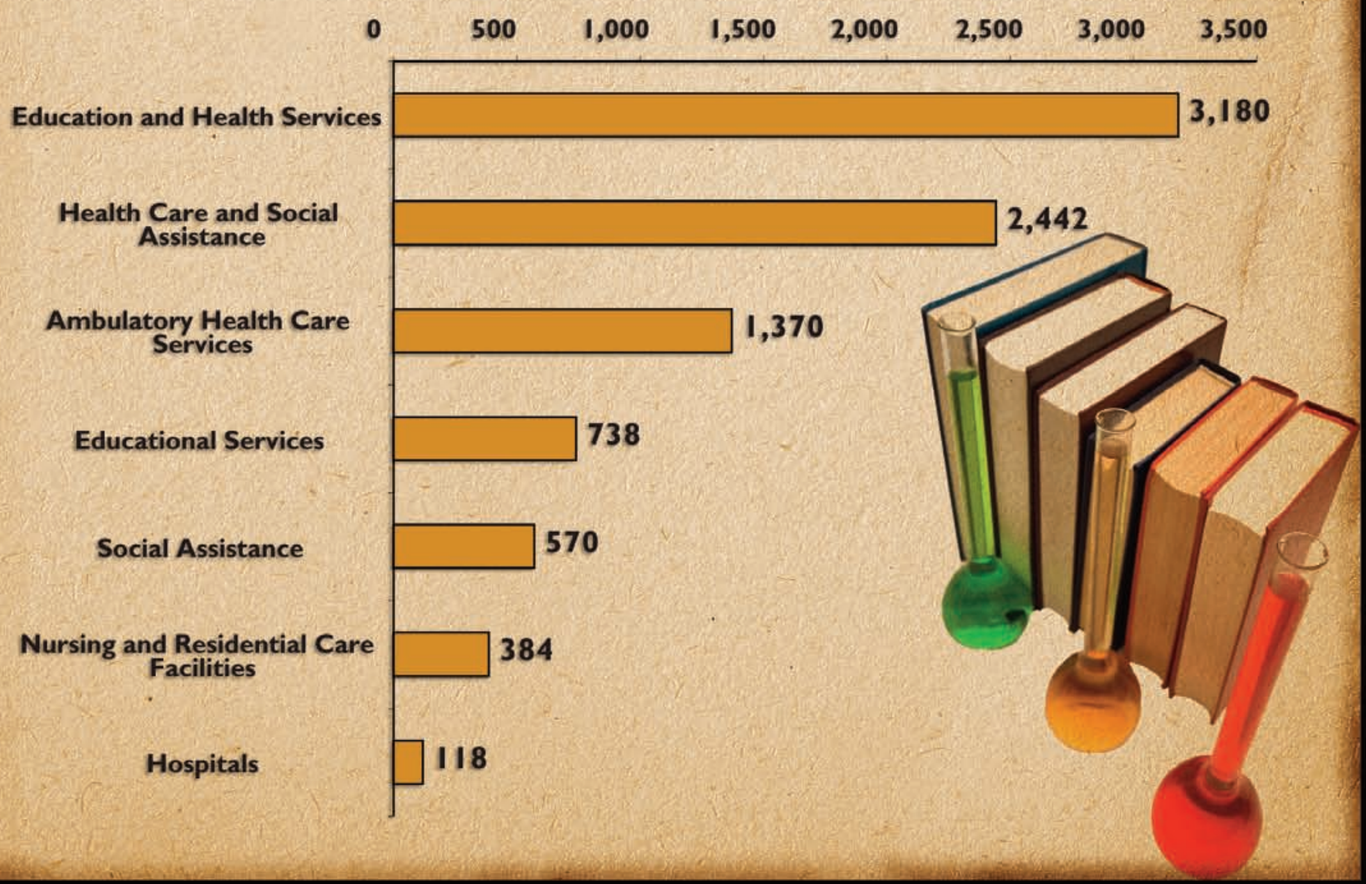
Financial Activities. This sector includes industries related to finance, insurance, real estate, and renting and leasing. Employment in this sector is expected to increase by 0.75 percent per year and add 80,294 jobs to the Regional economy by 2015. The securities, commodity contracts, and other financial investments sub-sector is made up of a diverse group of companies that manage the issue, purchase, and sale of financial instruments. Employment is projected to grow at a 2.57 percent average annual rate, or 124 jobs per year through 2015.

Education and Health Services. Overall, this sector is expected to grow from 147,519 jobs in 2007 to 172,961 jobs in 2015, growing by 2.16 percent annually. The Educational Services sector includes private education at elementary and secondary schools, colleges, and training centers. Employment is projected to grow at a 2.62 percent average annual rate, adding 738 jobs per year to reach 34,081 jobs by 2015.

Employment in the ambulatory health care services sub-sector is projected to reach 57,978 jobs in 2015, growing at an average annual rate of 2.91 percent. The nursing and residential care industry is also expected to add 384 new jobs and reach an employment level of 19,320 by 2015. This is an average annual growth rate of 2.37 percent over the projection period. Residential care facilitiesprovide social and personal care to children, the elderly, and others who have limited ability to care for themselves. The increasing share of elderly persons in the population is expected to drive growth among these facilities. As life expectancy continues to increase, so does the number of people who will require residential care.

In the social assistance sub-sector, employment is projected to grow at a 3.30 percent average annual rate and will add 570 jobs per year to reach 21,849 jobs by 2015.

Education and Health Services



Trade, Transportation and Utilities. South Florida's ports traded an estimated $72 billion dollars in goods to foreign ports primarily to Latin America.[19] Within this context, employment in the trade, transportation and utilities sector is projected to increase at a 0.93 percent average annual rate and add 2,527 jobs per year over the projection period. The merchant wholesalers and durable goods sub-sector is projected to add about 281 jobs peryear reaching an employment level of 38,028 in 2015. Food and beverage stores, motor vehicle and parts dealers and clothing and accessories stores will add an estimated 787 jobs annually to the Regional economy by 2015.

In sum, by 2015, jobs in accounting finance, marketing, hospitality, education and business services are expected to exceed the average rate of employment growth. Conversely, manufacturing industries will face strong international competition and are expected to employ a smaller percentage of workers.

As such, post secondary education and training has and will continue to play an important role in the Region's economic performance. Higher education and skill levels contribute to improved productivity by raising worker's output and increasing the rate of innovation.

As mentioned in previous sections of our report, the future success of individuals, communities, and our Region as a whole, will increasingly depend on high-level knowledge and skills that are transferable between industries. High-quality, accessible and innovative vocational education and training has never been more important. ■

"Strong economic growth in Asia, particularly China and India, will boost Asia-Latin American trade and thus the movement of goods through Miami-Dade."

Tony Ojeda, Executive Director, Jay Malina International Trade Consortium commenting in Miami Today, January 17, 2008

INDUSTRIES GAINING THE MOST NEW JOBS

Workforce Region 23 - Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties

Industry Sub-Sectors		Employment		Annual Change	
Code	Title	2007	2015	Total	Percent
540	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	71,060	91,495	2,554	3.59
561	Administrative and Support Services	82,102	99,231	2,141	2.61
930	Local Government	120,423	135,159	1,842	1.53
722	Food Services and Drinking Places	70,910	82,551	1,455	2.05
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	47,019	57,978	1,370	2.91
610	Educational Services	28,179	34,081	738	2.62
624	Social Assistance	17,291	21,849	570	3.30
721	Accommodation	28,649	32,225	447	1.56
813	Membership Associations and Organizations	19,767	22,968	400	2.02
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	16,244	19,320	384	2.37
445	Food and Beverage Stores	27,216	30,167	369	1.36
424	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	31,122	33,895	347	1.11
452	General Merchandise Stores	18,101	20,664	320	1.77
423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	35,780	38,028	281	0.79
441	Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	16,652	18,757	263	1.58
483	Water Transportation	9,286	11,095	226	2.44
446	Health and Personal Care Stores	11,969	13,655	211	1.76
523	Securities, Commodity Contracts, and Other Investments	7,138	8,605	183	2.57
920	State Government	17,452	18,774	165	0.95
448	Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	19,816	21,056	155	0.78

Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center - September 2007

You Better Do Your Homework!

Remember your mother's insistance to get your homework done? She may have been on to something. There is little argument about the broad array of benefits to both individuals and society that can be derived from investments in higher learning. Studies have consistently shown that higher education has broad and quantifiable outcomes that include higher salaries, improved health, increased volunteerism, reduce crime rates and a reduced reliance on welfare and other social support programs. Higher education will also be fundamental to maintaining and developing the Region's competitiveness and the continued diversification of its economy. Higher educational attainment will not only encourage diversity in our way of thinking, but will also stimulate innovation and creativity.

Benefits of Post-Secondary Education

	Public	Private
Economic	Increased Tax Revenue	Higher Salaries and Benefits
	Greater Productivity	Employment
	Increased Consumption	Higher Savings Levels
	Increased Workforce Flexibility	Improved Working Conditions
	Decreased Reliance on Government Financial Support	Personal / Professional Mobility
Social	Reduced Crime Rates	Improved Health / Life Expectancy
	Increased Charitable Giving / Community Service	Improved Quality of Life for Offspring
	Increased Quality of Civic Life	Better Consumer Decision Making
	Social Cohesion / Appreciation of Diversity	Increased Personal Status
	Improved Ability to Adapt to and use Technology	More hobbies, Leisure Activities

SOURCE: Institute for Higher Education Policy. 1998. Reaping the Benefits: Defining the Public and Private Value of Going to College Washington, DC: Institute for Higher Education Policy.

As we have shown in the previous section, the trade in goods and services will continue to be at the core of the Region's interactions both domestically and internationally. The customer bases for these industries are increasingly sophisticated and have rapidly rising expectations of value. Competition and the dynamic nature of these industries will continue to put pressure on the skills acquisition process by demanding higher level technical skills for new entrants to the maintenance skills required for the existing workforce. This situation will continue to be compounded by the Region's continued demand for labor at the lower end of the education spectrum.

Indeed, data provided by the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI), Labor Market Statistics Center bears this out. An estimated 60 percent, of the Region's average annual openings will require an educational attainment level of a PSAV Certificate or higher. This equates to approximately 26,743 average annual openings out of 44,757. Approximately, 8,987 or 20 percent of Region's annual openings will require a high school diploma. Additionally, another 9,027 annual openings will require less than a high school diploma.

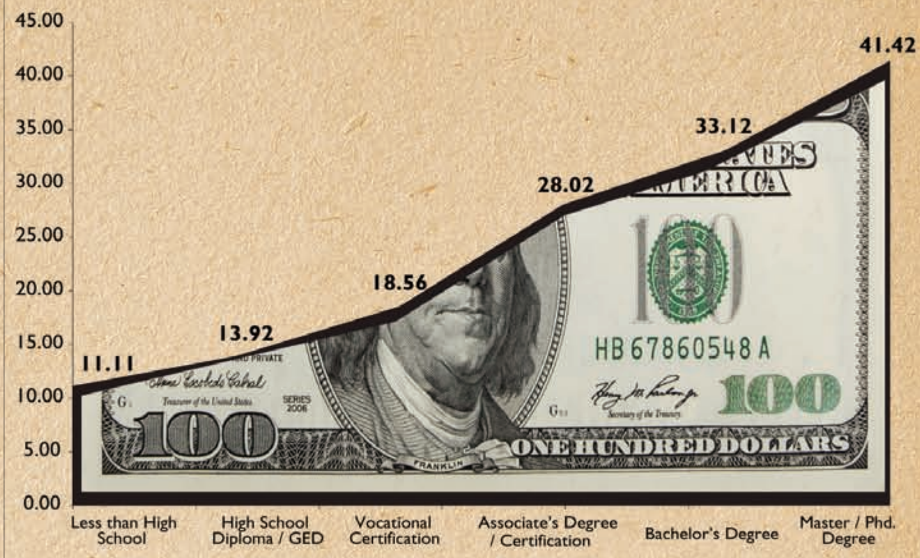
Comparably, nearly 25,893 or 61 percent of Miami-Dade County's average annual openings will require an educational attainment level of a PSAV Certificate or higher. Similar to Regional statistics, 8,322 or 20 percent of the county's annual openings will require a high school diploma. Another 8,085 or 19 percent of Miami-Dade County's average annual openings will require an educational attainment level of less than a high school diploma. Our analysis suggests that Miami-Dade County will experience faster growth in all occupations that require a PSAV certificate or higher. Particularly those occupations in the technology industry.

The available data tells a different story for Monroe County. The county will experience slower growth in all occupations requiring a Bachelor's degree or more (growth in the Master's / Doctorate educational attainment cluster is negligible). Occupational growth will take place in all occupations requiring a lower level of education. AWI's Labor Market Statistics Center estimates that 850 or 34 percent of Monroe County's average annual job openings will require a PSAV certificate or higher. Another 665 or 27% of Monroe County's average annual openings will require a high school diploma. Additionally, 942 or 38 percent of Monroe County's annual average openings will require less than high school diploma. ■

The Key is Education

As the aforementioned indicates, in terms of both hourly and average annual income, an individual's ability to earn more is directly correlated to higher levels of educational attainment. For example, the average annual income of workers 25 years and older with a Masters or Ph.D. is $86,153.60, roughly $17,263.40 more than those with a bachelor's degree and $47,548.80 more than those with a vocational certificate. Roughly 5.3 percent of the employment in the Region will require a Masters or Ph.D. The Education sector accounts for 35 percent of the top 20 occupations that require a Masters or Ph.D. with an average annual income of $79, 528. While the Medical sector accounts for 25 percent of the top 20 occupations that require a Masters or Ph.D.

Average Hourly Wage by Educational Attainment



Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center, 2007

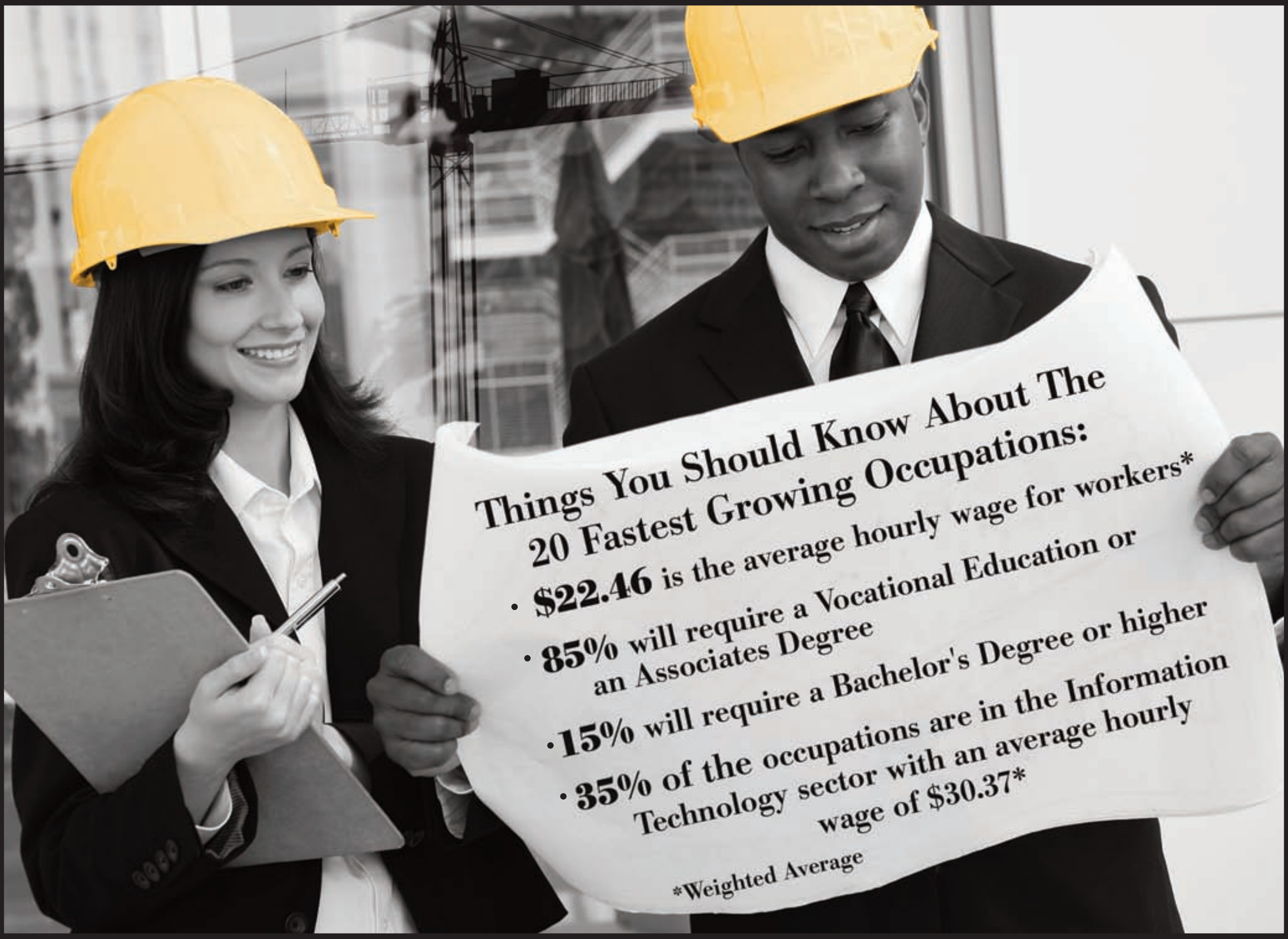
Nearly 60 percent, of the Region's average annual openings will require an educational attainment level of a PSAV Certificate or More.

FASTEST-GROWING OCCUPATIONS

Workforce Region 23 - Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties

Occupation		Employment		
Code	Title	2007	2015	2007 Average Hourly* Wage ($)
151032	Computer Software Engineers, Systems Software	1,294	2,051	41.84
151031	Computer Software Engineers, Applications	1,539	2,269	31.04
232011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	4,407	5,912	20.78
151081	Network Systems and Data Communications Analysts	2,088	2,795	30.78
512011	Aircraft Structure, Surfaces, and Systems Assemblers	649	867	17.66
151071	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	1,954	2,601	33.13
151061	Database Administrators	669	882	31.45
319092	Medical Assistants	3,550	4,639	13.21
292021	Dental Hygienists	1,224	1,598	26.81
311011	Home Health Aides	3,762	4,905	9.09
319091	Dental Assistants	2,101	2,729	12.93
399021	Personal and Home Care Aides	1,085	1,403	9.47
131022	Wholesale and Retail Buyers, Except Farm Products	4,067	5,257	22.18
151051	Computer Systems Analysts	3,550	4,588	31.77
251071	Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	1,617	2,070	35.63
252011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	3,644	4,650	11.44
151041	Computer Support Specialists	3,810	4,844	19.50
535031	Ship Engineers	2,109	2,662	31.90
436012	Legal Secretaries	6,026	7,573	18.79
251081	Education Teachers, Postsecondary	719	902	40.97

Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center - September 2007



Workers holding a PSAV Certificate can expect to earn about $18.56 per hour or $38,604.80 annually, roughly $9,651.20 more than a worker holding only a high school diploma and $15,496.00 more than a worker with no formal high school education. Workers 25 years and older with a high school diploma can expect to achieve average hourly earnings of $13.92 per hour or $28,953.60 annually. Similar workers with no High School or GED equivalency can only expect to earn about $11.11 per hour or $23,108.80 annually; $5,844.80 less than their counterparts in high school.

Average annual openings that require an Associates Degree / Certificate and/or Bachelors Degree will account for the remaining 23.1 percent of the occupational growth projected through 2015. The average annual income of individuals holding an Associates Degree is $58,281.60 annually, or $28.02 per hour. While the average annual income of individuals holding a Bachelors Degree is $68,890 annually, or $33.12 per hour.

In sum, the need for action to improve post secondary adult literacy and technical competency in South Florida is urgent and addressing it will require a long-term strategy over several years. Particularly in Monroe county, where the demand for hospitality workers remains strong and the escalating cost of living has dampened availability. Upgrading obsolete skill sets in order to adapt to accelerating technological change and a fluid global marketplace will continue to pose significant challenges for businesses in recruiting, developing and retaining qualified staff. While the Region's competitive advantage lies in the continued diversification of its economy, promoting higher educational attainment particularly in Miami-Dade county will be key to increasing the Region's overall productivity and competitiveness. ■

The Way Forward

As we mentioned earlier, increasing workforce participation will become a key challenge for economic development and workforce training stake olders in the Region. This complex challenge is compounded by the growing significance of knowledge and the ability to develop and apply new technologies and processes. Because jobs are not as narrowly defined as in the past, the number and variety of pathways into post secondary education and training needs to be increased in order to adapt to these changes.

South Florida Workforce is well placed to meet these challenges. Through collaborative partnerships with our economic development and education and training partners, we can work to ensure that our workforce will have the technical and employability skills necessary to succeed in the knowledge based economy. The Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Act of 2007 was a great step forward in executing this mission.

The Act was primarily created to provide a statewide planning partnership between the education and business communities in order to expand and retain targeted high-value industries in the State of Florida. The Act also highlights a number of high level strategies essential to meeting the emerging skills needs of industries in the state. This unprecedented level of consultation and collaboration with those involved in education and vocational training sets a new standard for inclusion and involvement and one that will be continued as a strategic plan is developed and implemented over the next year. Each step along the way, the partners to the strategy will report on their progress in achieving specific priorities and evaluated throughout its life, in order to maintain the Act's currency and relevance.

Be reminded that meeting skills needs is not confined to teaching and learning systems, but also includes the way work is organized, employer recruitment policies and practices, employee relations and job design. Ensuring that employees have appropriate skills requires consideration of all these elements. In addition, remedying skills shortfalls within some occupations may only be possible through in-house training due to the specific nature of skills required. As such, we believe the aforementioned can be accomplished through the following:

A. Strengthening existing partnerships with the business and educational communities to implement "just in time" training initiatives such as our Employed Worker Training Program;

B. Developing industry and occupational pipelines that train and develop a skilled labor force in high-demand and emerging industries;

C. Developing career ladders for the Region's targeted industries;

D. Leveraging resources with other agencies to provide support services for the workforce and

E. Providing comprehensive data, informed by cutting-edge research, about current, emerging and future industry and occupational skill needs.

Through the adoption of these strategies, communities in the Region will be strengthened economically and socially through learning and employment. Integrated learning and employment solutions will support Regional economic development and sustainability. Post-secondary education and training will stimulate interest in learning. In the end, it will encourage innovation and help our communities deal with change and take advantage of opportunities for growth beyond 2015. ■

Notes and Sources

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