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STILL COLLEGE AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

The percentage of the workforce requiring some college or above grew from 28% in 1973 to 59% in 2007, and is expected to increase to 63% by 2018 according to early projections.

"The demand for an increasingly skilled and educated workforce is growing steadily," according to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (CEW). "Unless we increase output from post-secondary institutions, the demand for college talent will exceed its supply."

The statement foreshadowed CEW's Dec. 2009 report, *Jobs and Education Requirements through 2018*, according to Director Anthony Carnevale. In 1970, high school dropouts were three times as likely to be unemployed as workers with college degrees. Today they are five times as likely. The report shows that when the recession is over most of the non-college jobs lost "will not be coming back," while a growing proportion of new jobs will require "some college."

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Governor O'Malley Appoints Sanchez New DLLR Secretary

On September 22, 2009, Governor Martin O'Malley appointed Alexander M. Sanchez the new DLLR Secretary. Secretary Sanchez joins the O'Malley-Brown Administration from United Way of America, where he served as Sr. VP for Community Impact Leadership.

In that role, Sanchez established the organization as the largest national partner of the Internal Revenue Service and created the Financial Stability Partnership, an economic self-sufficiency initiative for working families that last year increased the generation of Earned Income Tax Credit refunds to more than \$420,000,000 and earned additional multi-million dollar corporate and foundation investments.

"It is a privilege and an honor to serve the citizens of Maryland as the Secretary of the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation," said Sanchez. "Under the leadership of Governor O'Malley and Secretary Perez, the Department has earned a position of national prominence in its work to protect and empower the citizens of Maryland. I look forward to the challenge of continuing to build upon the Department's achievements. I want to thank Governor O'Malley for his continued commitment to the success of the Department and for his faith and confidence in selecting me to lead this important work."

Prior to joining the United Way in 2005, Sanchez served as President and CEO of United Neighborhood Centers of America,

where he developed job training and employment programs, and earned an Annie E. Casey Foundation national family strengthening award grant partnership during his tenure. He also served as Executive Director for the Hispanic National Bar Association and Foundation.

He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Boston College in 1990, a Masters of Government Administration degree from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Michigan Law School. Sanchez remains involved with the American Red Cross, Center for Families and Children, and the Center for Community Solutions.

Sanchez replaces Tom Perez, who left to join the Obama Administration as Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice.

More States Endorse Skills2Compete

California, Connecticut, Michigan, and Oregon recently joined other states in launching Skills2Compete (S2C) campaigns promoting post-secondary success to meet the demands for middle-skills jobs. Endorsed by the GWIB in 2008, S2C promotes the idea that workers should have access to the equivalent of 2 years of education or training past high school leading to a vocational credential or degree.

Career Readiness Credentialing Gains National Momentum

Nationally, there has been a great deal of credentialing attention focused on career readiness. States around the country are embracing this credential that certifies an individual has the “skills” required to succeed in the workplace.

The National Career Readiness Certificate (CRC), based on ACT, Inc.’s WorkKeys® employment system, a portable skills credential which assures an employer a job applicant actually has the basic skills they seek and is trainable for the job. Utilized as a workforce education and development tool, the CRC brings employers, student/jobseekers and education/workforce partners together in building a skilled workforce, keeping and attracting businesses with high-wage jobs to a state, and growing that state’s economy.

The CRC assesses three different WorkKeys skill areas: applied mathematics, reading for information, and locating information. These skill areas were determined because they were the most utilized assessments in the Occupational Profile Database at ACT, Inc. which contains about 15,000 job profiles. Four levels of CRCs (Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze) standardize skills that indicate the certificate holder is job ready. The four levels allow an individual to advance his/her skill level in order to qualify for more jobs.

There are now 37 states within the United States issuing the CRC, with more than 500,000 certificates issued

nationwide.

Recently, the GWIB convened key stakeholders for a briefing on this national trend. State and local workforce policymakers gathered at Anne Arundel Community College to hear presentations from national experts from the Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN) and Center for State Innovation (CSI), who offered their insights into other states’ use of this assessment tool. The briefing included discussions about the available skill development tools that might be of value as CRC is introduced in Maryland. More information is available at www.NationalCareerReadiness.org.



Source: NationalCareerReadiness.org

Maryland Seeks to Innovate One-Stops with “Universal Design”

In April of 2008, Maryland was selected as one of three states to participate in a State Leaders Innovation Institute, as part of a national effort to improve employment for adults with disabilities. The Institute identified the implementation of Universal Design across Maryland’s workforce system as a priority for the state. Universal Design is a way to produce successful employment outcomes for all Marylanders seeking employment, while ensuring cost effectiveness in serving a diverse pool of job seekers.

The health of Maryland’s economy depends upon its ability to meet the workforce needs of businesses. A critical component of GWIB’s strategy to meet these needs is to open the door to employment for a variety of underutilized and underemployed groups, such as people with disabilities. Given the complexity of the workforce development system and the wide range of services available, it is necessary for systems, agencies, and organizations to coordinate services across the community and make them accessible at multiple points in a seamless fashion.

To this end, GWIB members adopted a resolution calling for implementation of these principles in Maryland’s One-Stop Workforce Centers to provide inclusive access and services that benefit job seekers with a wide range of learning styles, languages, educational levels, intelligences, and abilities. This resolution was designed to assist workforce development system partners, One-Stop Workforce Centers, and other stakeholders to institute policies and practices that reflect these principles in the delivery of workforce development services. DLLR has provided leadership to local One-Stops through guidance on implementing Universal Design.

DLLR Awarded USDOL Grant to Help Define Green Economy

Secretary Alex Sanchez recently announced that a tri-state consortium, led by DLLR, has been awarded a \$4 million grant by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) to define the regional “green economy” and develop a workforce investment plan to support it.

“This grant provides a tremendous opportunity to define the regional green economy and allows us to identify where the green jobs are, and what skills people will need to qualify for them. This shows that Maryland’s *Smart, Green and Growing* initiative will offer real opportunities for Marylanders in the 21st century economy,” said Secretary Sanchez.

The grant was awarded to the Mid-Atlantic Regional Collaboration (MARC) Green Consortium, created two years ago with \$10 million in federal funds to develop regional workforce investment strategies tied to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). The consortium will conduct a regional survey to define the area’s green

economy by identifying green jobs, their requirements and other occupational characteristics at the regional, state, and local levels. This baseline measure, along with an estimate of the impact of green technology and other green investments on job creation, will be used to track job growth and contribute to the development of a regional green workforce development plan. MARC’s grant is the largest among approximately \$55 million in awards announced nationwide under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) initiative to help workers find jobs in expanding green industries and related occupations.

“The award of this grant provides a great opportunity to advance the Governor’s green economy/jobs initiative to the next level. It also enables the region to take a quantum leap in the area of labor market information and tracking,” said Andy Moser, DLLR Assistant Secretary.

Assistant Secretary Oates Addresses Maryland Workforce Conference

Over 800 workforce development professionals gathered for professional development and networking on December 5 - 6, 2009, at Turf Valley in Ellicott City, for the Workforce Investment Network of Maryland’s seventh annual Raising The Bar (RTB) Conference.

Frequent applause interrupted the opening keynote, delivered by Jane Oates, Assistant Secretary for the Employment and Training Administration at USDOL. Encouraging cross-agency partnerships, she cited Governor O’Malley as one of the few governors who understands the link between workforce and economic development. “The challenge for us is to help people recognize the gap between the skills workers have, and the skills employers want,” she continued. “Our mission is to put the customer first, provide excellent constituent service, and serve communities in new ways.”

Oates praised the One-Stops’ dual customer approach, but shared “we need to do better, especially in serving business customers” and chronically unemployed and underemployed constituencies, such as people with disabilities and Native Americans. She called for a closer working relationship between the federal Labor and Education departments. Additionally, much like what has recently been done with Pell grants, she supported efforts to base eligibility for various programs and services (including summer youth employment programs) on the person’s current financial situation, rather than their prior year’s income. Oates encouraged attendees to send her ideas for WIA reauthorization and overall system improvement. She plans to use on-line polling to best determine approaches to address a variety of issues ranging from GED preparation to job aggregating. Following the opening session, Assistant Secretary Oates participated in a listening session with the 12 local WIB Directors.



USDOL Ass't Secretary Jane Oates

Over 50 workshops addressed topics such as business and job seeker services, overcoming barriers, leadership and management, ARRA, program planning & design, youth, partnering for success, and technology. In summing up Raising The Bar 2009, Margo Woodward Barnett, of Montgomery College in Rockville stated, “Fantastic conference with top presenters.”

Future Meeting Dates

Quarterly Board Meeting
Anne Arundel Comm. College
March 10, 2010
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Quarterly Board Meeting
Anne Arundel Comm. College
June 16, 2010
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Quarterly Board Meeting
Anne Arundel Comm. College
September 15, 2010
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Quarterly Board Meeting
Anne Arundel Comm. College
December 15, 2010
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Governor Outlines Economic Agenda to Create Jobs

At the December 9th Small Business Summit, Governor Martin O'Malley outlined an economic agenda of access to credit, job creation and the unemployment trust fund, initiatives that the Administration plans to champion in the upcoming General Assembly session.

"Small and family-owned businesses are the heart and soul of our State and the key to how we're going to turn the corner from recession to recovery to prosperity," said Governor O'Malley. "...strengthening our small business community will help us grow and strengthen our middle class, fuel innovation, and create jobs in Maryland."

Governor O'Malley outlined three key initiatives as part of a broader economic agenda to help strengthen small business in Maryland and create jobs:

1. Streamline the loan approval process for small businesses and expand access to credit by creating the Maryland Small Business Credit Recovery Program.
2. Create jobs by establishing a Job Creation and Recovery Tax Credit, which would award businesses a \$3,000 tax credit for every unemployed worker it hires. The initiative, which is proposed for one year with a \$20 million cap, would boost job creation and take the pressure off the State's Unemployment Trust Fund.
3. Introduce emergency legislation to address the rate increase for small businesses to the Unemployment Trust Fund.

The Summit, which attracted more than 120 small business owners, brought together industry experts in banking, healthcare, technology and energy and featured panel discussions on the issues most impacting small businesses today, including access to credit and healthcare, the use of social media and Web sites in marketing and the costs associated with going green.

Maryland's Quarterly Labor Market Update

Employment and Unemployment: Maryland's unemployment increased to 7.3% in October, from 7.2% in September, the highest rate since June 1981-1983. During this time, the labor force declined by almost 12,000 people, indicating that more people have abandoned their job searches. The state's unemployment rate is the nation's 14th lowest.

Job Gains and Losses: Maryland gained 1,500 jobs between September and October, led by gains in the manufacturing, professional and business services and federal and local government sectors. The construction/natural resources sector posted the largest loss of 3,400 jobs over the month. Since the beginning of the most recent recession (December 2007), Maryland has lost 75,300 jobs, a decrease of 2.9 %.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claims: The number of initial unemployment claims increased to 34,105 in October, while the number of people exhausting their claims held steady at 8,250. Compared to October 2008, there were 17% more initial UI claims, and 96% more exhaustions.

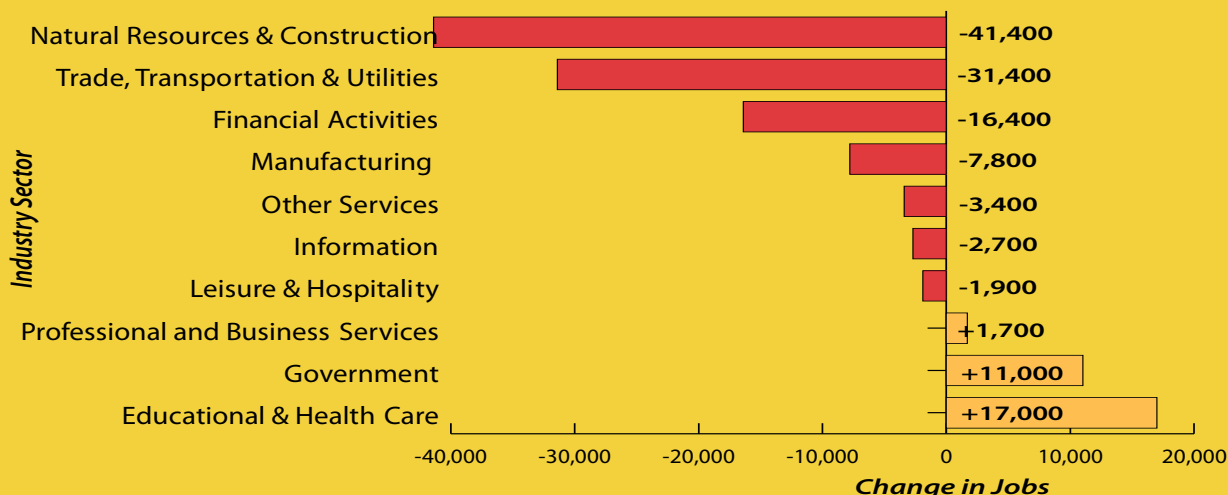


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Job Change by Major Industry Sector in Maryland: December 2007 - October 2009



Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
Current Employment Statistics, Seasonally Adjusted