

ALASKA ECONOMIC **TRENDS**

APRIL 2011

Juneau at a Glance

WHAT'S INSIDE

Hiring on the Rise in Alaska

A look at patterns and seasonality

Civil Engineering in Alaska

Education, wages, and employment outlook



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Governor Sean Parnell
Commissioner Click Bishop

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Training and education will support hiring growth



**By Commissioner
Click Bishop**

This month's *Alaska Economic Trends* features Juneau, Alaska's capital city, which includes more than 3,200 square miles but has fewer than 40 miles of state highway. Separated from the rest of Alaska and Canada by the Juneau Icefield, the city is still the transportation hub of Southeast Alaska via water and air. Although the largest impact on the local economy is government, it's the water surrounding Juneau that provides strong seasonal employment in the visitor and fishing industries.

Also featured in this issue is a look at hiring patterns. Hiring is on the rise again in Alaska, following a brief dip during the recent recession. Employers are looking for workers, and workers are staying with their current employers — new hires in the third quarter of 2010 were up 5.7 percent, and Alaska's unemployment rates are falling.

While this is promising news, we will continue to focus on providing more employment opportunities for all Alaskans, which is good for our economy. According to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's most recent report, in 2009 our economy lost up to \$1.8 billion in earnings due to nonresident hire. The report is available online at <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/reshire/NONRES.pdf>.

With input from the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, we are training Alaskans for jobs in high-demand industries. This serves businesses looking for qualified workers, unemployed Alaskans looking for jobs, and incumbent workers wanting to upgrade their skills in a changing work environment.

In 2008, the Department of Labor published and implemented a plan to ensure

Alaskans have opportunities to work on the design, construction, and maintenance of an Alaska natural gas pipeline. The impetus for the plan, as supported in legislation, was to ensure Alaska's workforce is trained and skilled for future jobs in the construction and maintenance of a gas line.

The strategies ensure that many Alaskans, including rural residents, are the beneficiaries of training now for today's careers in construction, operations, management, and other occupations in natural resource development across the state.

In conjunction with the award-winning oil and gas training plan, we are implementing the first-ever Alaska Career and Technical Education Plan, which supports a connected system of statewide resources that focuses on both the education and training needs of students, and the workforce needs in the state. CTE enhances students' education by providing rigor and relevance to academic and career preparation.

The plan is a unified effort by the Alaska Department of Labor, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, and the University of Alaska.

Together, these two plans identify workforce challenges including worker shortages and skill gaps, generate strategies to building a skilled workforce, and provide means for implementation. However, real progress will come from strong partnerships with Alaska's employers. We will continue to identify every possible resource, particularly through public and private partnership, to encourage economic viability across Alaska.

Juneau at a Glance

Government, natural resources buoy capital city



Millions of years ago, the collision of tectonic plates, accretion of exotic terranes,¹ and volcanoes built the mountains near present-day Juneau. Over time, gold mineralized in the young Boundary Range as fluids, heat, and pressure moved through the earth. Glacial ice advanced and retreated, carving the mountains and exposing gold in rock outcrops and streambeds.

In the late 1800s, Tlingits found these gold nug-

¹A *tectonostratigraphic terrane* is a fragment of crust formed on, or broken off from, one tectonic plate and accreted or "sutured" to crust lying on another plate. The fragment preserves its own distinctive geologic history, which is different from that of the surrounding areas – hence the term "exotic" terrane. The suture zone between a terrane and the crust it attaches to is usually identifiable as a fault.

gets and presented them on commission to gold-hungry prospectors. The town sprang up quickly through the availability of innovative mining technology, a cutting-edge hydroelectric power supply, and high wages. In 1906, the Alaska Territorial Government made the recently founded Juneau its home.

Mining has changed drastically in the last century, and now government shapes the local economy. The Alaska Legislature meets in the capital city every winter, and many state agencies are also based in Juneau.

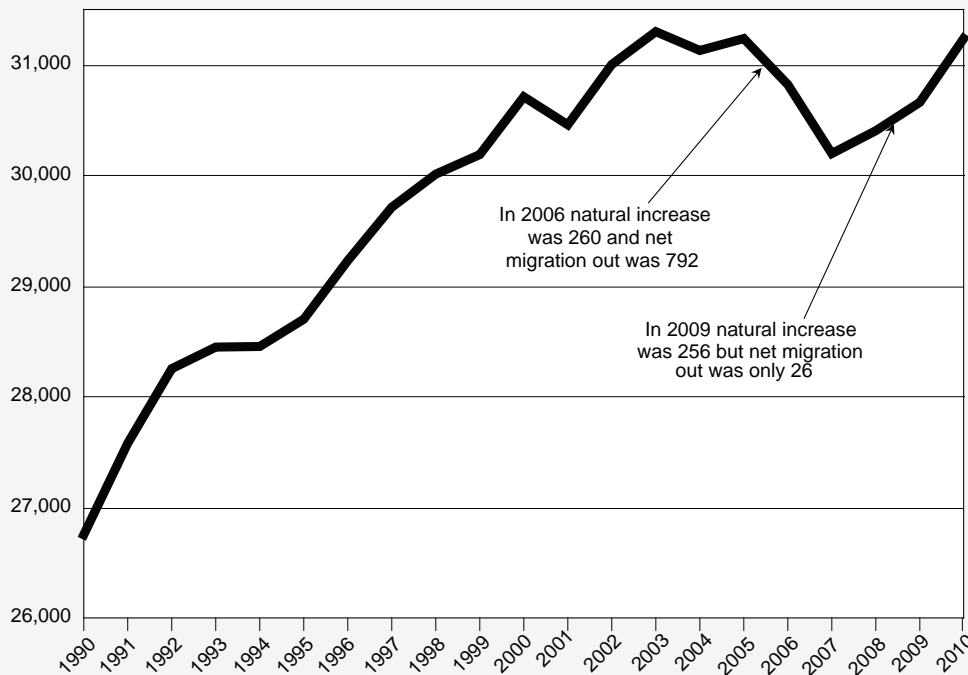
A snapshot of the land and its traffic

The City and Borough of Juneau is 3,248 square miles: about one-half of 1 percent of the entire state. Water covers 704 square miles of that total and includes Lynn Canal, Berners Bay, and Stephens Passage. The Juneau Icefield, a popular flightseeing destination, makes up another 928 square miles of the land.

The area that remains has fewer than 40 miles of state highway, yet Juneau is a transportation hub for all of Southeast Alaska.

Alaska Airlines provides direct jet service to and from Seattle, Anchorage, Sitka, Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, and Yakutat. Local air carriers serve the region's smaller communities, and the Alaska Marine Highway System transports people and freight to destinations as far flung as Bellingham and Dutch Harbor.

1 Population's Ups and Downs City and Borough of Juneau, 1990 to 2009



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

A Demographic Snapshot **2**

City and Borough of Juneau, 2005 to 2009

2009 Population Estimates

	Juneau	Alaska
Population	30,661	692,314
Percent female	49.7%	49.0%
Median age	38	33.5
Age under 5	6.9%	8.4%
Age 18+	74.9%	71.1%
Age 65+	8.4%	7.5%
White	71.7%	68.5%
Black or African-American	0.7%	3.7%
American Indian/Alaska Native	11.2%	13.5%
Asian	5.6%	4.7%
Pacific Islander	0.5%	0.6%
Some other race	1.8%	1.7%
Two or more races	8.6%	7.4%

Note: Race information is from the American Community Survey.
¹Although the American Community Survey produces population, demographic, and housing unit estimates, it is the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program that produces and disseminates the official estimates for the nation, states, counties, cities, and towns; and estimates of housing units for states and counties.

Source: United States Census Bureau

American Community Survey, 2005 to 2009¹

	Juneau	Alaska
Average household size	2.6	2.8
Average family size	3.1	3.4
Born in Alaska	40.2%	39.5%
Median household income	\$76,437	\$64,635
Median family income	\$88,429	\$75,439
Living in poverty	6.7%	9.6%
Less than ninth grade education	1.6%	3.5%
Ninth to 12th grade education	2.8%	5.8%
High school grad or equivalent	25.3%	28.5%
Some college, no degree	28.4%	27.8%
Associate degree	6.1%	7.9%
Bachelor's degree	23.7%	17.1%
Graduate/professional degree	12.1%	9.5%
Veterans	15.0%	10.7%
Owner-occupied housing units	63.7%	63.8%
Median home value, owner-occupied	\$284,000	\$221,300
Renter-occupied housing units	36.3%	36.2%

The regional education center is also based in Juneau. As of spring 2011, 1,856 part-time and 615 full-time students attend the Juneau campus of the University of Alaska Southeast.

An older, more educated population

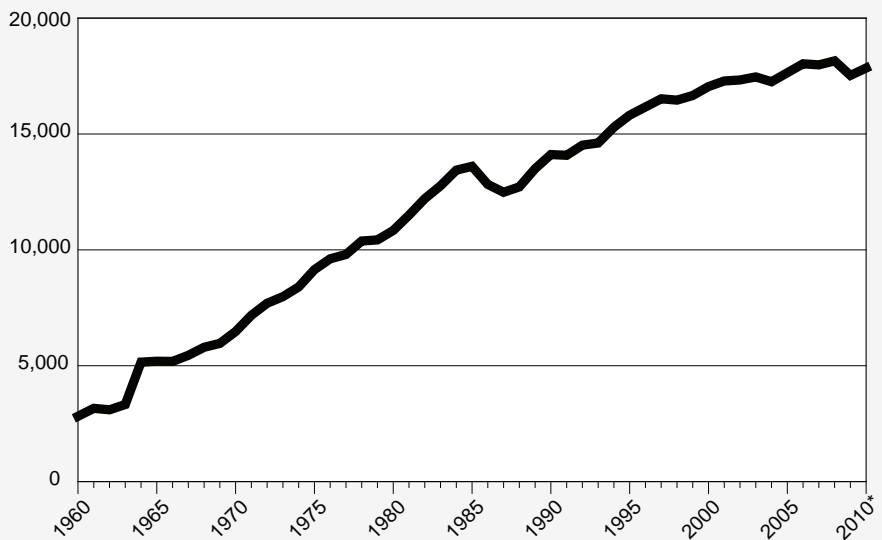
The recently released census shows Juneau's 2010 population at 31,275: about 600 more than 2009 estimates, and nearly as high as the 2003 peak population of 31,300. (See Exhibit 1.)

The 2010 census marks the third year of population recovery for Juneau as the numbers of births and deaths have remained typical but fewer people have moved out.

The 2010 count is a 2 percent increase since the 2000 census. This is counter to the trend for the rest of

50 Years of Juneau Employment History **3**

Wage and salary jobs, 1959 to 2010



*preliminary estimate

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Southeast Alaska, whose population has declined by 5 percent since 2000.

Compared to Alaska as a whole, Juneau has similar race, sex, and housing characteristics. But Juneau residents are older and tend to have higher education and income than the average Alaskan. (See Exhibit 2.)

The median age in Juneau is 38: four-and-a-half years older than statewide. The city's median income is about \$12,000 higher, and over 41 percent of residents have a college degree, compared to only 34 percent statewide.

Jobs and population growth

Employment and population are closely tied and, for most of the last 40 years, both have grown. (See Exhibit 3.) Employment shrunk by 3.5 percent in 2009, and rebounded with 1.8 percent growth in 2010.

Overall, the minor ups and downs from year to year in both population and employment translate into a flat trend. (See Exhibit 4.)

Government dominates

Government is by far the largest employer in the borough, representing over 40 percent of jobs compared to the 25 percent government share of statewide employment. (See Exhibit 5.) In 2009, state government employed 4,221 workers in Juneau. Another 2,231 jobs were in local government: city and borough agencies, tribal government, local public schools, and Bartlett Regional Hospital. Federal agencies employed another 832 in the same year.

Private sectors bolster growth

The private industry with the highest employment was retail trade, with slightly more than 2,000 jobs in 2009. The health care and education services industry came in second with 1,696 jobs: roughly 60 percent in health care and 40 percent in social assistance. (See Exhibit 6.)

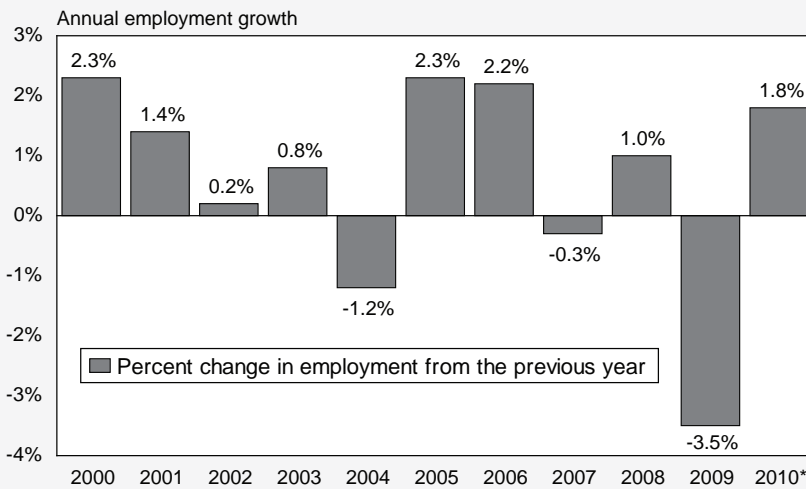
Health care and social assistance are high-growth industries in Juneau and statewide, gaining about 100 jobs locally in 2010. Health care providers and social service networks are also some of the largest employers in Juneau, making up four of the ten largest firms. (See Exhibit 7.)

The mining industry also grew by about 100 jobs in 2010 because of a new extraction operation at Kensington Mine, showing that even a small industry can contribute to sporadic growth patterns.

Lower wages than statewide

Wage levels haven't changed much in recent history when adjusted for inflation. Average annual earnings for all employment in Juneau were \$43,000 in

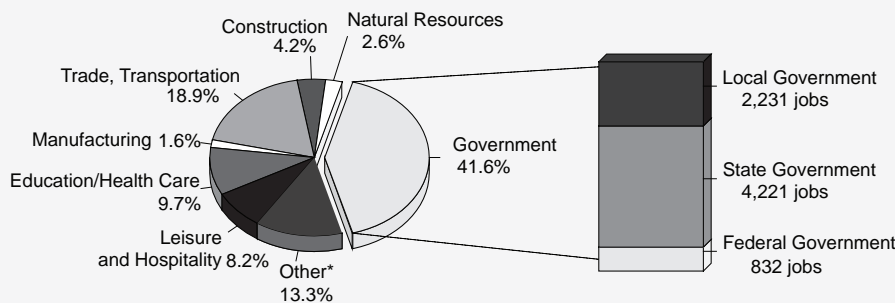
4 Small and Sporadic Changes Juneau wage and salary employment, 2000 to 2010



*preliminary estimate

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

5 Government Jobs in Juneau Wage and salary employment, 2009



*Other industries include Information, Finance, and Professional and Business Services.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

6 Monthly Employment Juneau, 2009

Total	17,528
Natural Resources and Mining	450
Construction	742
Manufacturing	275
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	3,315
Information	275
Financial Activities	604
Professional and Business Services	848
Education and Health Services	1,696
Leisure and Hospitality	1,438
Other Services	602
Federal Government	832
State Government	4,220
Local and Regional Government	2,231

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

7 Top Ten Private Employers in Juneau Average monthly employment, 2009

Employer	Range of Jobs	Industry
1. Hecla Mining Company, Greens Creek	250-499	Mining
2. Fred Meyer	100-249	Retail Trade
3. REACH, Inc.	100-249	Social Assistance
4. Walmart	100-249	Retail Trade
5. Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium	100-249	Health Care
6. Alaska Airlines	100-249	Transportation
7. The Alaska Club	100-249	Recreation
8. Southeast Regional Resource Center	100-249	Social Assistance
9. Safeway	100-249	Retail Trade
10. Catholic Community Services	100-249	Social Assistance

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

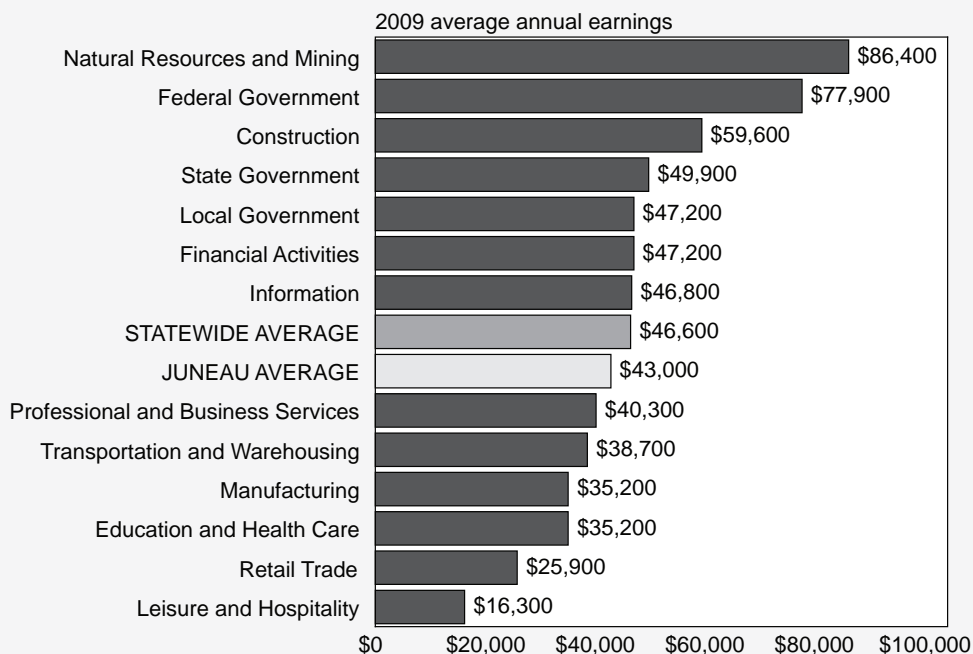
2009, ranging from \$16,300 in leisure and hospitality to \$86,400 in mining. (See Exhibits 8 and 9.)

On average, private-sector workers in Juneau earn less money than government workers, with annual wages of about \$36,500. Government wages are typically higher, as most of the jobs are full-time and have higher education requirements. Federal jobs garnered the highest average annual wage at \$77,900, followed by state government at \$49,900, and local government at \$47,200.

The distribution of wages among the sectors shows the variety of employment and its impact on local economic health. (See Exhibit 8.)

For instance, retail earnings are low on average, but it's likely because there are more part-time workers; it doesn't mean there are no full-time, well-paying jobs in that sector. Seasonality also plays a role in wages, as many jobs are only for a few months during the year.

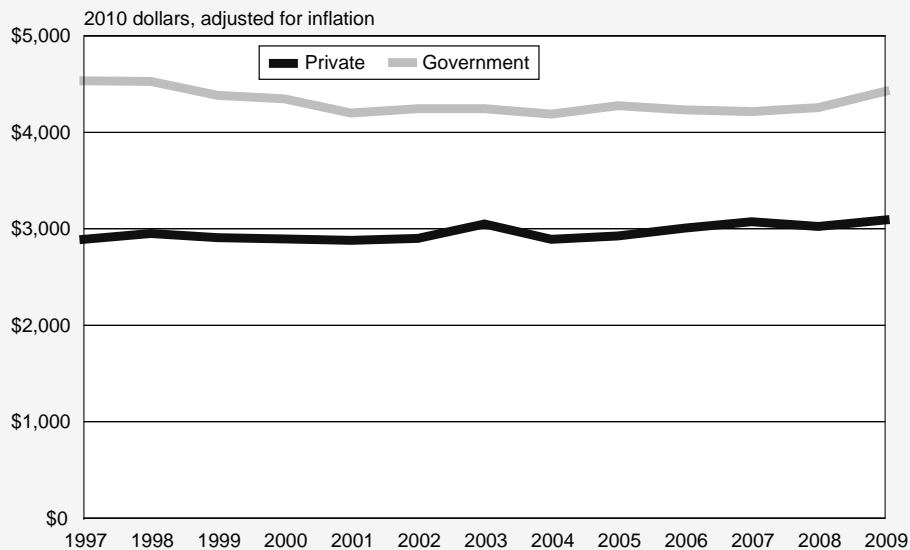
8 A Broad Range of Earnings Juneau select industries



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

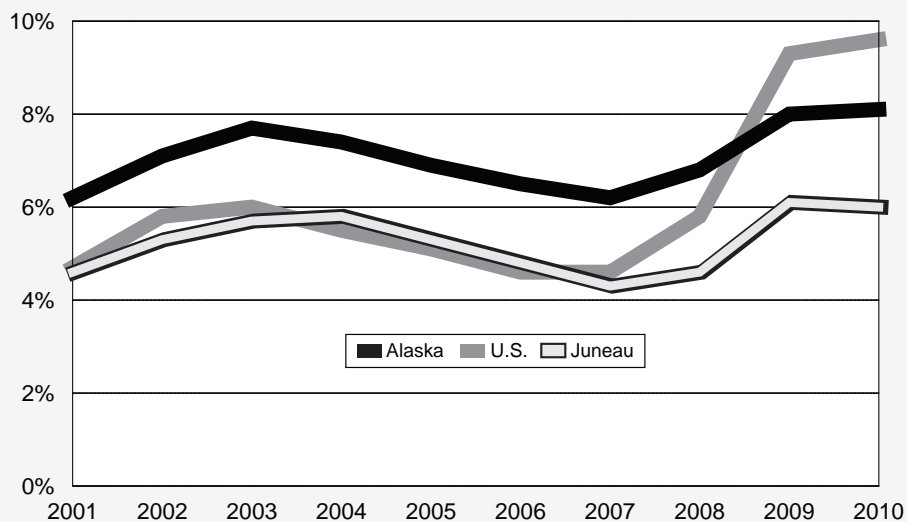
On the other end of the spectrum, natural resource and mining employees earn more than \$80,000 a year, but those jobs represent fewer than 3 percent of borough employment. (See Exhibits 6 and 8.)

9 Government vs. Private Monthly Earnings Juneau, 1997 to 2009



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

10 Unemployment Rate Comparisons Juneau, Alaska, and the U.S.; 2001 to 2010



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Income versus wages

It may be puzzling to see that Juneau's annual median household income shown in Exhibit 2 is higher than the state average, yet Juneau's average annual wages are lower than the Alaska average. This is because the American Community Survey measures a household's entire income from multiple jobs, the permanent fund dividend, or investments.

"Average annual wages" only describes what a firm pays for a specific job. For example, if someone works at Eaglecrest Ski Area in the winter and at the Mount Roberts Tramway in the summer, the income will be the pay received for both jobs. The earnings for those jobs are counted separately, so both the ski area and the tram occupations will show lower wages, effectively lowering the regional average wages shown in Exhibit 8.

Juneau has a higher incidence of part-time workers, seasonal jobs, and people who work multiple jobs, which also brings down the average annual wage and increases the difference between average wages and median income.

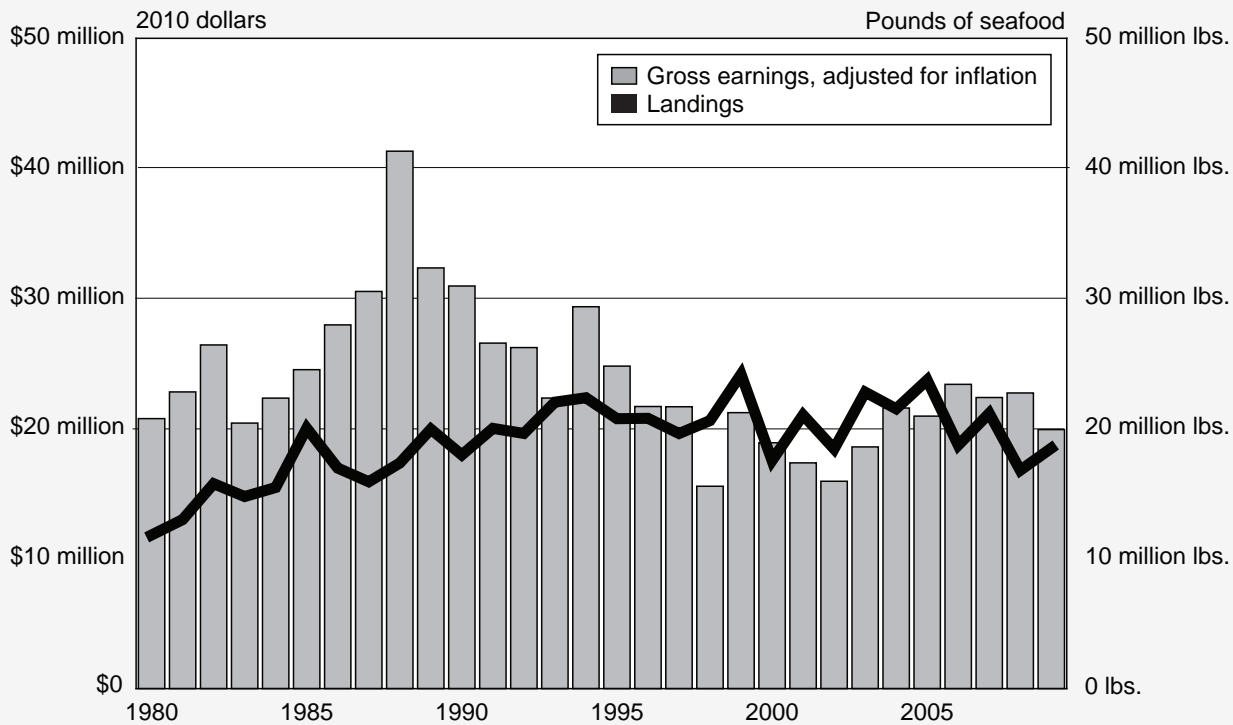
Unemployment stays low

The stability of government jobs in Juneau has led to generally low levels of unemployment. Though the jobless rate hit a new peak in 2009, Juneau has lower unemployment than the state as a whole, and it has largely escaped the global recession that led to persistently high unemployment in the Lower 48. (See Exhibit 10.)

While Juneau has strong seasonal employment in visitor and service industries, continued traffic by legislators and lobbyists keeps winter unemployment low in Juneau, too. This is a sharp contrast to other communities with a strong reliance

Estimated Fishery Landings and Earnings **11**

Juneau permit holders, 1980 to 2009



Source: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission

on tourism, which leads to high unemployment when the season winds down.

A fishing community

Fishing also represents a substantial slice of Juneau's economy. The Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission estimated in 2009 that Juneau permit holders grossed over \$17 million and caught more than 18 million pounds in all fisheries. Seafood prices were favorable in 2010, and though it is difficult to predict fishery success, the industry remains a sustainable and important source of income in the area. (See Exhibit 11.)

Visitors increase aggregate demand

Leisure, trade, hospitality, transportation, and many other sectors serve two masters in Juneau. Residents require goods and services on a daily basis, from groceries to cab rides to child care. A high volume of visitors also come to see the natural beauty and history of the capital city, as anyone who has seen downtown on a sunny June day will know. Whether arriving by boat or plane, these people also require goods and services.

The Juneau Economic Development Council estimates that more than 1.3 million people visited Juneau in 2009. It is impossible to tell how much total employment is attributable to visitors, but seasonal swings indicate they have a big impact. Jobs in transportation more than doubled from a low of 722 in January 2009 to a high of 1,505 in July of that year. Jobs in arts, entertainment, and recreation also roughly doubled during that period, from 268 jobs to 527.

A strong foundation

The economy of Juneau is a diverse arrangement of industries largely contingent on two factors: year-round demand for goods and services, and the stability of a large government sector that sustains year-round employment at good wages.

Despite its relative isolation, the role Juneau plays as Southeast Alaska's service hub is also crucial to many industries. Juneau creates network benefits by providing cheap hydroelectric power to a nearby mine, enough moorage to accommodate thousands of feet of cruise ships, and a hospital that can provide care to the smaller regional communities.

Hiring on the Rise in Alaska

A look at patterns and seasonality

The number of new hires, rehires, and continuously employed workers is an important measure of the health of Alaska's economy, and these numbers have risen over the past few years.

While the nation has not fully recovered from the recent recession, Alaska's numbers show that hiring has picked up after a brief dip in 2009, the worst part of the downturn.

Data calculated from the state's unemployment insurance records indicate that more workers are being hired in Alaska, and more people are staying with the same employer. (See Exhibit 1.) The oil industry in particular has shown a strong uptick in hiring.

Definitions

Because the terms in this article are based on worker-employer relationships, it is possible for a worker with multiple employers to be counted in multiple categories.¹

New hires are those who have not worked for an employer within the four quarters prior to the reference quarter. *Rehires* have worked for an employer at some point in the previous four quarters, but not in the most recent quarter — the exclusion of the most recent quarter means only those who just resumed employment are counted. Finally, *continuous workers* have worked for the same employer in all four quarters prior to the reference quarter.

New hires

The growing demand for labor following the recession's brief dip is evident in the increase in new hires in the third quarter of 2010 compared to the same quarter the year before. (See Exhibit 2.)

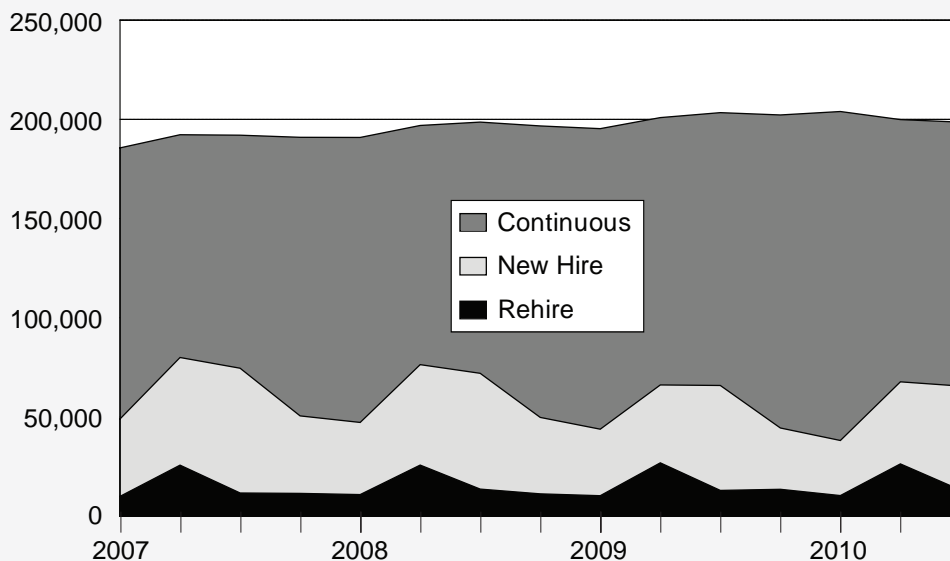
The last quarter of 2009 and first quarter of 2010 still show the effects of the recession, with a strong drop in newly hired workers year over year.

Comparing the first quarter of 2010 to the first quarter of 2009 shows a decrease of 5,690 new employees.

The industry with the strongest growth in new hires has been oil and gas, which represented 29.7

¹For more information on these worker-employer relationships and complete definitions, see our Web site at laborstats.alaska.gov/newhire/newhire.htm.

1 Hiring Levels Across All Industries Alaska, 2007 to 2010



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

percent of the total third-quarter employment growth in 2010. Retail trade was the only sector whose new hires declined in every quarter for more than a year.

The accommodations industry had the largest year-over-year decrease in quarterly new hires, with the number declining by 1,500 workers between the first quarter of 2009 and the first quarter of 2010. Although the accommodations sector's new hires grew in the second and third quarters of 2010, they still were not enough to equal net growth.

Among occupations, construction trade posted the most new hires between the fourth quarter 2009 and third quarter 2010. (See Exhibit 3.) As in prior years, the two other occupations to fill the top three spots are retail salespeople and food and beverage service workers, occupations typical in seasonal industries such as construction and tourism. Hiring in these top occupations reached a peak during 2010.

Overall, 61.8 percent of new positions in third quarter 2010 went to Alaskans. Industries with the highest resident hire rates included public administration; real estate, rental, and leasing; management of companies and enterprises; and local government. The industry with the highest nonresident hire rate was manufacturing — primarily influenced by seafood processing — with 82.2 percent of new workers coming from outside Alaska. (See Exhibit 2.)

Most new hires and rehires are seasonal; the downside is they only result in temporary employment. Of the employees hired in the third quarter of 2009, only 20.7 percent had been working continuously for that employer a year later.

Rehires

Seasonal jobs are a sizeable share of the state's wage and salary employment, and some people bounce from job to job and return to the same employer every year as seasonal work picks up. These

New Hires by Industry 2

Alaska, third quarter 2009 and third quarter 2010

Industry	3rd qtr 2009	3rd qtr 2010	Residents	Year-over-year Change
Local Government	6,165	5,744	77.0%	-6.8%
State Government	1,778	1,746	71.6%	-1.8%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	432	605	35.5%	40.0%
Mining	947	2,015	49.0%	112.8%
Oil and Gas	636	1,420	47.7%	123.3%
Utilities	233	171	76.0%	-26.6%
Construction	6,594	6,560	72.5%	-0.5%
Manufacturing	6,521	6,942	17.8%	6.5%
Wholesale Trade	972	978	69.4%	0.6%
Retail Trade	4,233	4,084	68.6%	-3.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	2,355	2,446	60.8%	3.9%
Information	590	612	74.3%	3.7%
Finance and Insurance	757	902	75.7%	19.2%
Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	1,538	1,475	80.7%	-4.1%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,999	2,524	65.5%	26.3%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	82	74	79.7%	-9.8%
Administrative Support/Waste Management and Remediation	3,778	3,820	66.9%	1.1%
Educational Services	455	579	66.8%	27.3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	5,081	5,454	72.9%	7.3%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,515	1,678	68.2%	10.8%
Accommodations and Food Services	10,038	10,209	59.5%	1.7%
Other Services	2,109	2,203	74.4%	4.5%
Public Administration	123	61	91.8%	-50.4%
Total	58,931	62,302	61.8%	5.7%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

people are rehires, and they represent the smallest number among the three categories.

Rehires primarily work in industries and positions whose employment spikes in one or two quarters of the year. As with new hires, a majority of rehires return to work for the same employer in the second quarter of the year.

Manufacturing rehires the most employees, followed by local government, construction, and accommodations and food services. (See Exhibit 4.) Mirroring those industries, the top two occupations for rehires are in construction trade and food processing. (See Exhibit 3.)

While the state shows a modest 2.1 percent overall increase in rehiring, the largest gains were in a mostly nonseasonal industry. Health care and social assistance rehires increased 59.2 percent when comparing the third quarter of 2009 to the third quarter 2010. In contrast, information in-

3 Top Occupations by Hiring Classification

Alaska, fourth quarter 2009 to third quarter 2010

NEW HIRES

Occupation	Four-Qtr Total	4th Qtr 2009	1st Qtr 2010	2nd Qtr 2010	3rd Qtr 2010
Construction trade workers	16,683	3,627	2,605	6,089	4,362
Retail sales workers	16,235	4,588	2,702	5,785	3,160
Food and beverage service workers	13,226	3,289	2,431	4,957	2,549
Materials moving workers	7,190	1,610	1,160	2,544	1,876
Other office and administrative support workers	7,308	1,682	1,511	2,470	1,645

REHIRES

Occupation	Four-Qtr Total	4th Qtr 2009	1st Qtr 2010	2nd Qtr 2010	3rd Qtr 2010
Construction trade workers	6,393	1,022	981	3,149	1,241
Food processing workers	6,302	155	2,232	2,207	1,708
Retail sales workers	5,165	548	2,533	1,414	670
Materials moving workers	3,007	497	511	1,310	689
Food and beverage service workers	2,855	424	710	1,217	504

CONTINUOUS

Occupation	Four-Qtr Total	4th Qtr 2009	1st Qtr 2010	2nd Qtr 2010	3rd Qtr 2010
Retail sales workers	42,837	10,641	10,517	10,574	11,105
Construction trade workers	32,790	8,546	7,887	8,099	8,258
Information and record clerks, all other	32,681	8,395	8,201	7,990	8,095
Other office and administrative support workers	32,000	8,288	8,072	7,579	8,061
Teachers: Primary, secondary, and special education	29,269	7,392	7,369	7,193	7,315

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

4 Rehires by Industry

Alaska, third quarter 2009 and third quarter 2010

Industry	3rd Qtr 2009	3rd Qtr 2010	Year-Over-Year Change
Local Government	1,824	1,803	-1.2%
State Government	544	650	19.5%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	101	96	-5.0%
Mining	248	211	-14.9%
Oil and Gas	163	164	0.6%
Utilities	25	36	44.0%
Construction	1,310	1,284	-2.0%
Manufacturing	2,089	1,962	-6.1%
Wholesale Trade	212	248	17.0%
Retail Trade	472	426	-9.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	645	608	-5.7%
Information	334	80	-76.0%
Finance and Insurance	77	108	40.3%
Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	217	253	16.6%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	326	388	19.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	7	5	-28.6%
Administrative Support/Waste Management and Remediation	592	554	-6.4%
Educational Services	145	112	-22.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	684	1,089	59.2%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	465	507	9.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	1,303	1,402	7.6%
Other Services	290	344	18.6%
Total	12,073	12,330	2.1%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

dustry rehires decreased by 76.0 percent, or 254 workers: the most dramatic drop among all sectors. The loss was largely offset by a gain of 168 continuous workers the same year.

Continuous workers

People employed all four quarters of the year are by far the largest group of workers, and they seem largely unaffected by the recession, with only small changes in some industries and a minor gain overall.

The largest group of continuous employees works in local government. (See Exhibit 5.) The only two industries to come close to local government's employment levels are health care and social assistance, and state government. It isn't surprising that those industries have the largest number of continuous workers, as they are all large employers with little

seasonal fluctuation.

However, the individual occupations with the highest numbers of continuous employees were not in health care and government, probably because those sectors contain so many distinct occupations.

Among employees who have held their jobs for at least four quarters, retail sales and construction trade workers led the pack. (See Exhibit 3.) Information and record clerks were right behind them, probably because they are part of the largest industries.

Of the three types of hires, continuous jobs are the most stable in both quarter-to-quarter and year-to-year employment numbers, and only one industry moved more than 10 percent in either direction. Because continuous workers exclude the seasonal workforce by definition, there is less chance of large employment swings.

In all the state's industries combined, there was an increase of only 1,297 employees working continuously: not enough to equal a 1 percent gain. However, if the job market continues to improve and recent new hires keep their positions, continuous employment is likely to improve significantly in third quarter 2011.

Oil and gas

The biggest jumps in new hires and continuous workers were in the oil and gas-related industries, both of which reached a four-year peak in 2010. While continuous jobs peaked in the first quarter of 2010 with 11,522 jobs, the top total employment came in the second quarter of 2010 with 13,390 jobs in the industry: the result of 1,837 new hires that quarter. (See Exhibit 6.)

By region, new hires increased the most in the North Slope Borough, primarily due to the spike in the oil and gas industry. However, because it is not possible to differentiate between workers hired to maintain the current fields and those in new exploration, it is unclear if the jump in employment will continue.

Continuous Employment by Industry 5

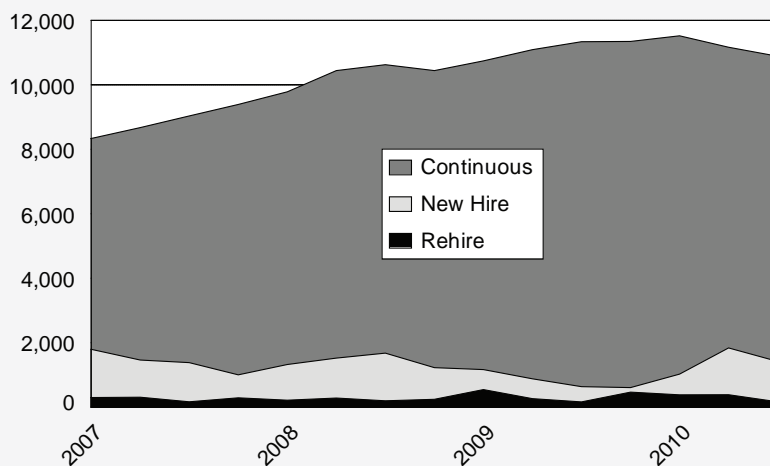
Alaska, third quarter 2009 and third quarter 2010

Industry	3rd Qtr 2009	3rd Qtr 2010	Year-over-Year Change
Local Government	31,352	31,318	-0.1%
State Government	20,590	20,841	1.2%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	410	462	12.7%
Mining	13,039	12,930	-0.8%
Oil and Gas	11,339	11,128	-1.9%
Utilities	1,652	1,599	-3.2%
Construction	9,267	8,796	-5.1%
Manufacturing	4,915	4,763	-3.1%
Wholesale Trade	4,560	4,531	-0.6%
Retail Trade	12,727	13,015	2.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	11,288	11,325	0.3%
Information	5,109	5,277	3.3%
Finance and Insurance	6,694	6,593	-1.5%
Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	3,116	3,255	4.5%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	8,786	8,961	2.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	345	311	-9.9%
Administrative Support/Waste Management and Remediation	7,018	6,656	-5.2%
Educational Services	1,247	1,152	-7.6%
Health Care and Social Assistance	27,250	28,900	6.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,035	1,940	-4.7%
Accommodations and Food Services	11,716	12,159	-3.8%
Other Services	6,331	6,162	-2.7%
Public Administration	243	252	3.7%
Total	201,029	202,326	0.6%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Oil and Gas Industry Hires 6

Alaska, 2007 to 2010



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Civil Engineering in Alaska

Education, wages, and employment outlook

Simply put, a civil engineer is a professional problem solver — and one who plays a bigger part in everyday life than we often realize. They are responsible for planning, design, construction, and maintenance of much of Alaska's infrastructure.

A civil engineer's solutions to technical problems encompass a variety of environments, both natural and man-made. Skyscrapers, stadiums, hospitals, roads, bridges, dams, tunnels, and water resources are just a few examples of the everyday conveniences that civil engineers make possible while ensuring they are economical, safe, and able to withstand the forces of nature.

Civil engineers work in a variety of environments, from offices to project work sites. The versatility of the duties and environment creates a fast-paced and fluid profession for creative, inquisitive, and detail-oriented minds.

Education and training

Obtaining an undergraduate degree is the first



Civil engineers helped design and construct the 800-mile Alyeska Pipeline, shown near Livengood in this 1959 Alyeska photo. The pipeline crosses three mountain ranges and more than 800 rivers and streams. Soil that shifted due to permafrost was just one problem engineers had to solve during construction.

step to becoming a civil engineer. It's possible to major in mathematics or one of the hard sciences, but the quickest way to get a foot in the door is a bachelor's degree in engineering.

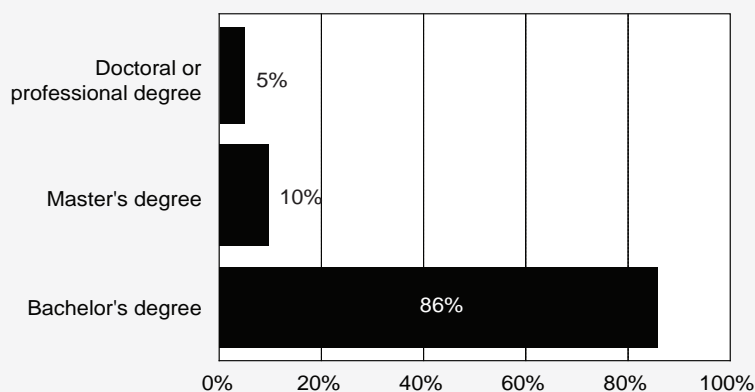
While that's a start, continuous learning is essential for staying on top of the latest technological advancements. Many entry-level engineers also get a crash course in real-world execution by working directly under an established civil engineer.

Civil engineers advance in two main ways. The first and most common is to obtain additional certifications or licensing. A license is not necessary to be a working civil engineer, but it is required for those who deal with the public.

Civil Engineers at Work in Alaska

- Alyeska Pipeline
- Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel
- Norton Sound Regional Hospital
- Miles Glacier Bridge
- Salmon Creek Dam and Powerhouses
- Ted Stevens International Airport
- Seward Docks and Intermodal Facility
- Chester Valley Elementary School

1 Education Distribution Alaska Civil Engineers, 2008



Source: O*NET database

Civil Engineering Employment Statistics **2**

Alaska and United States, 2008 to 2018

Occupation	2008 Employment	2018 Employment	Growth	Rate of Growth	Total Openings ¹	Workers 45 and Older ²	Workers 50 and Older	Nonresident Workers ³
Alaska civil engineers	700	800	100	14.3%	214	41.4%	31.3%	10.2%
All Alaska occupations	321,770	355,440	33,670	10.5%	122,639			
U.S. civil engineers	278,400	345,900	68,000	24.27%	114,600			
All U.S. occupations	150,932,000	166,206,000	12,274,000	10.12%	50,929,000			

¹Includes openings from growth and replacements

²2009 worker demographics

³2009 nonresident workers

Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

The second route to career advancement is a graduate degree in engineering, which opens doors to research and management positions. (See Exhibit 1.)

High average wages

Civil engineers' wages are among the highest for entry-level workers. The average wage in Alaska, \$41.05 per hour, is higher than the national average of \$39.03. (See Exhibit 3.)

Higher earnings are possible through experience, higher levels of education or training, and further specialization.

Promising outlook for employment

As Alaska's infrastructure continues to mature, civil engineers will be crucial to projects' success. The architecture and engineering group as a whole is projected to grow 10.5 percent between 2008 and 2018, which is on par with the expected increase in all of Alaska's occupations. Civil engineering employment is expected to increase by 14.3 percent during that period. (See Exhibit 2.)

Job openings will come from growth as well as from workers who retire, change careers, or move out of state. These are expected to add 214 jobs by the year 2018.

Engineers' Hourly Wages **3**

Alaska and U.S. averages, 2009

Occupation	Alaska Wage ¹	National Wage ¹
Aerospace engineers	n/a	\$46.29
Agricultural engineers	n/a	\$35.89
Biomedical engineers	n/a	\$39.69
Chemical engineers	\$60.49	\$44.07
Civil engineers	\$41.05	\$39.03
Computer hardware engineers	n/a	\$48.75
Electrical engineers	\$48.20	\$41.47
Electronics engineers, except computer	\$39.95	\$44.01
Engineers, all other	\$45.97	\$43.56
Environmental engineers	\$36.73	\$38.82
Health and safety engineers, except mining safety engineers and inspectors	\$42.96	\$36.45
Industrial engineers	\$47.50	\$37.06
Marine engineers and naval architects	n/a	\$38.10
Materials engineers	\$52.01	\$41.18
Mechanical engineers	\$47.49	\$38.74
Mining and geological engineers, including mining safety	\$45.77	\$39.46
Nuclear engineers	n/a	\$48.25
Petroleum engineers	\$74.28	\$57.67

¹Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) May 2009 Wages

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Employment Scene

Unemployment rate at 7.6 percent in February



Alaska's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for February fell to 7.6, from January's revised rate of 7.8 percent. December's revised rate was 7.9 percent.

Unemployment rates continue to fall

The comparable national jobless rate for February was 8.9 percent, down from 9.0 percent in January and 9.4 percent in December. Last year in February, the national unemployment rate was 9.7 percent, compared to 8.2 percent for Alaska.

Unemployment rates in Alaska and the nation are apparently improving in concert, and three months of steady recovery in the U.S. rate should bode well for Alaska's job seekers. As the employment picture improves in the Lower 48, fewer job seekers will venture to Alaska to look for work. More opportunities in the Lower 48 might also attract more Alaskan job seekers south.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, joblessness fell in 282 of the nation's 372 metropolitan areas in January, while it increased in 72 and remained steady in 17.

The year 2009 was the first in Alaska's history that the annual unemployment rate was lower than the

nation's. This trend continued in 2010, and it appears to be in effect in 2011 as well. However, if the nation's jobless rate continues to recover and approaches normal levels, the differences between Alaska and the rest of the U.S. will likely narrow, and could eventually reverse.

Area rates climb, but are lower this year

Not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates normally climb at least through February in most areas, and this year is following that pattern. January's rates increased in a majority of the state, but there were a number of exceptions. Unemployment fell in Kodiak, the Aleutians East Borough, and the Aleutians West census area as they entered the groundfish and opilio crab seasons.

In January, the North Slope Borough and Juneau had the lowest unemployment rates, and the Hoonah-Angoon census area and Skagway had the highest.

Compared to January, the not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates in February moved very little in most areas of the state.

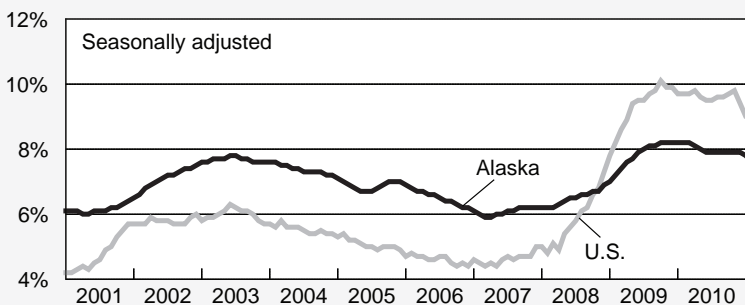
However, as with the statewide February unemployment rate, nearly all of the state's area rates are slightly below year-ago levels, an indicator that Alaska's job market is improving.

Jobs up in most state areas in 2010

Recently, the third-quarter 2010 Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages data became available for Alaska and all 28 boroughs and census areas in the state. (See Exhibit 2.) The third quarter of each year is significant because it represents the peak quarter for employment and economic activity around the state.

With three quarters of data available, the trend for the full year is in place. After modest statewide employment losses in 2009, these same numbers

1 Unemployment Rates Alaska and U.S., Feb. 2001 to Feb. 2011



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis

turned slightly positive in 2010 and were also up in 16 of the state's 28 boroughs and census areas.

The year-to-year changes in most places were modest, and there is no apparent geographic pattern. In most cases, the larger urban areas in the state grew more robustly than the more rural parts — a trend that has been in place for more than a decade.

Although employment nationwide was down by approximately 1 percent in the same time period, there are strong preliminary signs of growth in U.S. employment. The big question is how Alaska will compare in the future.

Average Monthly Employment Around Alaska **2**

First three quarters of 2009 and first three quarters of 2010

	Employment First 3 Quarters 2010	Employment First 3 Quarters 2009	Changes 2009 to 2010
Statewide ¹	324,729	322,609	2,120
Aleutians East Borough	2,017	2,095	-78
Aleutians West Census Area	3,840	3,917	-77
Anchorage, Municipality of ¹	149,640	149,115	525
Bethel Census Area	6,674	6,658	16
Bristol Bay Borough	1,611	1,564	47
Denali Borough	2,153	2,211	-58
Dillingham Census Area	2,723	2,753	-30
Fairbanks North Star Borough	38,663	37,811	852
Haines Borough	1,051	1,067	-16
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	531	529	2
Juneau, City and Borough of	16,233	15,902	331
Kenai Peninsula Borough	19,423	19,011	412
Ketchikan-Gateway Borough	5,515	5,587	-72
Kodiak Island Borough	6,207	6,116	91
Lake and Peninsula Borough	768	760	8
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	19,790	19,280	510
Nome Census Area	3,378	3,669	-291
North Slope Borough	13,844	13,923	-79
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,889	2,854	35
Petersburg Census Area	1,274	1,319	-45
Prince of Wales Census Area	1,456	1,382	74
Sitka, City and Borough of	4,475	4,385	90
Skagway, Municipality of	672	682	-10
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	2,644	2,694	-50
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,937	5,067	-130
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,324	2,291	33
Wrangell, Borough of	837	820	17
Yakutat, City and Borough of	331	332	-1
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,253	2,191	62

Note: These represent Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, comparing the first three quarters of 2009 to first three quarters of 2010.

¹Adjusted for Anchorage local education

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

3 Statewide Employment Nonfarm wage and salary

	Preliminary		Revised		Year-Over-Year Change	
	2/11	1/11	2/10	2/10	90% Confidence Interval	
Alaska						
Total Nonfarm Wage and Salary¹	315,800	310,500	307,200	8,600	1,217	15,983
Goods-Producing ²	39,700	38,600	38,500	1,200	-1,684	4,084
Service-Providing ³	276,100	271,900	268,700	7,400	-	-
Mining and Logging	15,300	15,100	14,200	1,100	307	1,893
Mining	15,100	14,900	14,000	1,100	-	-
Oil and Gas	12,900	13,000	12,000	900	-	-
Construction	12,200	12,300	12,700	-500	-3,083	2,083
Manufacturing	12,200	11,200	11,600	600	-394	1,594
Seafood Processing	8,700	7,500	8,300	400	-	-
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	60,600	60,600	58,600	2,000	-372	4,372
Wholesale Trade	5,900	5,900	5,900	0	-556	556
Retail Trade	34,000	34,200	33,700	300	-1,728	2,328
Food and Beverage Stores	6,000	5,900	6,100	-100	-	-
General Merchandise Stores	9,900	9,800	9,700	200	-	-
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	20,700	20,500	19,000	1,700	662	2,738
Air Transportation	5,400	5,100	5,300	100	-	-
Truck Transportation	3,200	3,000	2,900	300	-	-
Information	6,400	6,300	6,300	100	-481	681
Telecommunications	4,200	4,200	4,100	100	-	-
Financial Activities	15,200	15,000	14,500	700	-1,243	2,643
Professional and Business Services	25,600	24,800	25,100	500	-1,293	2,293
Educational⁴ and Health Services	43,500	42,800	41,200	2,300	1,032	3,568
Health Care	31,200	30,900	29,500	1,700	-	-
Leisure and Hospitality	28,300	27,600	26,900	1,400	-637	3,437
Accommodations	6,200	6,300	6,000	200	-	-
Food Services and Drinking Places	18,500	17,400	17,200	1,300	-	-
Other Services	11,400	11,400	10,900	500	-2,676	3,676
Government	85,100	83,400	85,200	-100	-	-
Federal Government ⁵	16,400	16,200	16,500	-100	-	-
State Government	26,300	25,200	26,200	100	-	-
State Government Education ⁶	8,600	7,500	8,500	100	-	-
Local Government	42,400	42,000	42,500	-100	-	-
Local Government Education ⁷	25,400	24,700	25,300	100	-	-
Tribal Government	3,500	3,500	3,600	-100	-	-

5 Regional Employment Nonfarm wage and salary

	Preliminary		Revised		Changes from		Percent Change	
	2/11	1/11	2/10	1/11	2/10	1/11	2/10	
Anch/Mat-Su	167,500	167,100	165,800	400	1,700	0.2%	1.0%	
Anchorage	148,100	147,650	146,950	450	1,150	0.3%	0.8%	
Gulf Coast	27,400	27,000	27,100	400	300	1.5%	1.1%	
Interior	43,250	42,250	42,400	1,000	850	2.4%	2.0%	
Fairbanks ⁸	37,000	36,500	36,700	500	300	1.4%	0.8%	
Northern	20,750	20,450	19,800	300	950	1.5%	4.8%	
Southeast	33,200	32,400	32,700	800	500	2.5%	1.5%	
Southwest	19,650	18,550	19,500	1,100	150	5.9%	0.8%	

A dash indicates that confidence intervals aren't available at this level.

¹ Excludes the self-employed, fishermen and other agricultural workers, and private household workers. For estimates of fish harvesting employment, and other fisheries data, go to labor.alaska.gov/research/seafood/seafood.htm.

² Goods-producing sectors include natural resources and mining, construction, and manufacturing.

³ Service-providing sectors include all others not listed as goods-producing sectors.

⁴ Private education only

⁵ Excludes uniformed military

⁶ Includes the University of Alaska

⁷ Includes public school systems

⁸ Fairbanks North Star Borough

Sources for Exhibits 1, 2, and 3: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Sources for Exhibit 4: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; also the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, for Anchorage/Mat-Su and Fairbanks

4 Unemployment Rates Borough and census area

	Prelim.			Revised		
	2/11	1/11	2/10	2/11	1/11	2/10
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED						
United States	8.9	9.0	9.7			
Alaska Statewide	7.6	7.8	8.2			
NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED						
United States	9.5	9.8	10.4			
Alaska Statewide	8.5	8.6	9.5			
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	7.4	7.4	8.5			
Municipality of Anchorage	6.5	6.6	7.7			
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	10.3	10.5	11.2			
Gulf Coast Region	10.7	10.9	12.0			
Kenai Peninsula Borough	11.5	11.7	13.0			
Kodiak Island Borough	6.6	6.6	7.5			
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	12.3	12.2	12.7			
Interior Region	8.6	9.0	9.7			
Denali Borough	20.7	23.1	21.6			
Fairbanks North Star Borough	7.5	7.8	8.5			
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	12.3	13.2	14.1			
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	17.8	18.7	19.6			
Northern Region	9.7	9.4	10.6			
Nome Census Area	12.6	12.5	13.9			
North Slope Borough	4.4	4.2	5.5			
Northwest Arctic Borough	15.2	14.4	15.1			
Southeast Region	9.0	9.4	10.1			
Haines Borough	13.0	13.9	14.8			
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area ¹	26.2	25.5	27.1			
Juneau, City and Borough of	5.9	6.0	7.0			
Ketchikan Gateway Borough ¹	9.2	9.8	10.4			
Petersburg Census Area ¹	13.8	16.4	-			
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area ¹	19.1	18.5	-			
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan CA ¹	-	-	19.6			
Sitka, City and Borough of ¹	7.1	7.9	7.9			
Skagway, Municipality of ¹	27.8	29.9	29.4			
Wrangell Borough ¹	10.9	11.7	-			
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area ¹	-	-	14.6			
Yakutat, City and Borough of	14.9	15.2	16.5			
Southwest Region	12.9	13.7	13.2			
Aleutians East Borough	7.5	9.3	7.4			
Aleutians West Census Area	4.0	6.3	4.5			
Bethel Census Area	16.1	16.0	16.2			
Bristol Bay Borough	10.9	11.0	11.6			
Dillingham Census Area	11.3	11.5	12.0			
Lake and Peninsula Borough	13.1	12.4	13.2			
Wade Hampton Census Area	22.0	22.4	22.2			

¹ Because of the creation of new boroughs, this borough or census area has been changed or no longer exists. Data for the Skagway Municipality and Hoonah-Angoon Census Area became available in 2010. Data for Wrangell Borough, Petersburg Census Area, and Prince of Wales-Hyder went into effect January 2011. Prior to January, data were published for Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area and Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area.

Changes in Producing the Estimates

The production of state and metropolitan area Current Employment Statistics estimates will transition from state workforce agencies to the BLS with the production of preliminary estimates for March 2011, to be released on April 19, 2011. Concurrent with this transition, the BLS will implement several methodological changes to standardize the estimation approach across states. While these changes will reduce the potential for statistical bias in state and metropolitan area estimates, they may increase the month-to-month variability of the estimates. More detailed information on the changes to procedures for producing CES estimates is available on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm>.

For more current state and regional employment and unemployment data, visit our Web site: laborstats.alaska.gov

Employer Resources

Labor seeks nominations for Veteran's Performance Incentive Awards

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development is now accepting nominations for the 2011 Veterans Employment and Training Service Performance Incentive Awards. These awards will be presented at the annual Veterans' Job Fair in Anchorage this November.

The state encourages your participation in recognizing people and organizations in DOL that have provided quality employment opportunities, training, and placement services to United States veterans and military personnel. Those eligible are veterans' representatives, job center staff, or others who serve veterans at Alaska Job Centers. Selection criteria are based on performance or activities from July 1, 2010, through June 30, 2011.

This incentives program draws attention to veterans

with special employment needs, and reinforces federal regulations that support priority of services for veterans. Gov. Sean Parnell presented the first Alaska Veterans Incentive Award and four honorable mentions at the Veterans' Job Fair last November, which is National Hire a Veteran Month. The awards were donated to local charities in the recipients' honor.

Nomination information is available from Veterans Coordinator Mary Rodman-Lopez (mary.rodman-lopez@alaska.gov) or by calling (907) 465-5953. Awards will be accepted through June 30 and may be submitted by mail to: Veterans Program, ETTU, P.O. Box 115509, Juneau, AK 99811-5509; or by FAX to (907) 465-8753.

A Safety Minute

Proper training helps employers meet OSHA's safety standards

One of the first questions an accident investigator will ask is, "Was the injured employee trained to do the job?" Records of all safety and health training can provide evidence of the employer's good faith and compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards.

OSHA requires employers to train workers in how to perform their jobs safely, and makes it the employer's responsibility to limit certain assignments to employees who are "certified, "competent," or "qualified" — meaning they have had special training. OSHA's requirements reflect the belief that training is an essential part of every employer's health and safety program for protecting workers from illnesses and injuries.

Instruction in the proper performance of a job is

time and money well spent, and employers should regard it as an investment rather than an expense. Because many researchers conclude that those new on the job have a higher rate of accidents, an effective safety and health training program can result in fewer illnesses and injuries, better morale, and lower insurance premiums.

The Consultation and Training Branch of the Alaska Occupational Safety and Health Section at the Department of Labor and Workforce Development provides free training to help workers and employers meet these requirements. By getting this help now, an employer can reduce the chances of accidents and costly enforcement actions.

For a free, no-obligation consultation, call (800) 656-4972 or (907) 269-4955.