



30th Wisconsin Family Impact Seminar October 13, 2011

Positioning Wisconsin for the Jobs of the Future

Executive Summary

In August of 2011, Wisconsin's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 7.9%.¹ However, some workers have been hit harder than others. Nationally, compared to all workers over age 20, unemployment rates are four times higher among displaced workers (those who lost jobs because plants closed or moved, their position/shift was eliminated, or work dropped off).² The percent of teens and young adults who are working is now at the lowest level since the end of the Great Depression.³ However, high unemployment is not due entirely to lack of jobs, but also to the difficulty employers face in finding talent to fill vacancies. Families are key to producing the human talent that businesses require to remain competitive and innovative. This human talent is essential for efforts to attract and expand businesses in Wisconsin, so workers are prepared to step into these new jobs. This report discusses employment and wages in Wisconsin, projections for future jobs, and evidence-based jobs programs that can equip workers with the skills to meet current labor force needs and help businesses be more productive.

John Koskinen & Emily Camfield

In the first chapter, John Koskinen and Emily Camfield of the Wisconsin Department of Revenue examine employment and wages in Wisconsin. Occupations in Wisconsin reflect the state's economy, according to their analysis of data from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Survey of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Compared to the nation, Wisconsin has above-average employment in production, health care, transportation, personal care and service, and food preparation occupations; however, Wisconsin employment is below national averages in management, computer operations, construction, community and social service, protective service, legal, and farming/fishing/forestry occupations.

Wisconsin's average wage (\$40,980) ranks in the middle of the states, and is lower than the U.S. average (\$44,100). This

is explained, in part, because the average salaries tend to be lower for jobs where Wisconsin has higher-than-average employment compared to the nation: production (\$34,850), healthcare support (\$26,790), transportation and material moving (\$32,100), personal care and service (\$22,950), food preparation and serving (\$20,090), and healthcare practitioners and technical (\$72,290) occupations. In contrast, salaries tend to be higher for jobs where Wisconsin has lower-than-average employment: management (\$94,180), computer and mathematical (\$66,300), construction and extraction (\$47,210), community and social service (\$42,510), protective service (\$38,510), legal (\$79,070), and farming/fishing/forestry (\$28,930) occupations.

Across the last decade, several occupation groups have increased in Wisconsin by more than 20%: business and financial operations (45%), computer and mathematical (32%), personal care and service (31%), healthcare support (24%), and healthcare practitioners and technical (21%) occupations. In the last 10 years, three occupation groups have decreased by more than 20% in the state: construction and extraction (29%), production (29%), and management (24%) occupations.

Seminar Presenters

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Jonas Prising

In the second chapter, Jonas Prising, Executive Vice President and President of the Americas for ManpowerGroup, reviews the changing world of work and its impact on jobs in the future. Unemployment is persistently high, yet 1 in 3 employers worldwide are unable to find the talent they need to fill vacancies. Talent has become the key competitive advantage. Business strategy is immaterial without the people to carry it out. Many of the jobs most difficult to fill in 2011 were middle-skill occupations including technicians, sales representatives, skilled trades workers, engineers, laborers, management/executives, accounting and finance staff, IT staff, production operators, and secretaries/administrative assistants/office support staff. The talents in shortest supply include experience, technical skills, soft skills, and the skills critical to productivity and innovation—collaboration, critical thinking, and agility. In response to this talent mismatch, employers are hiring fewer employees, and employees are experiencing increasing workloads. A long-term workforce strategy is needed because talent cannot be manufactured in the short term.

William Symonds

The third chapter is written by William C. Symonds of the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He directs the Pathways to Prosperity project that aims to prepare young Americans for the jobs available in today's economy. For over a century, the U.S. has been a leader in most measures of educational success. In the 1970s, the U.S. was #1 in high school graduation rates among its peer industrialized countries, but has fallen to 13th in the first decade of the

21st century. As the U.S. has lost its educational leadership, virtually all the growth in new jobs has required some postsecondary education. For example, well-paying, middle-skill jobs such as electricians, law enforcement officers, and many positions in the healthcare industry require an associate's degree or occupational certificate. To produce prepared, highly motivated workers requires school reform based on a vision of multiple pathways to a meaningful career. Also, employers need to become fully engaged partners, and opportunities need to be expanded for work-linked learning.

Ron Haskins

The fourth chapter on evidence-based jobs programs is written by Ron Haskins, Senior Fellow of Economic Studies and Co-Director of the Center on Children and Families at the Brookings Institution, and Family Impact Seminar staff. Government funds a number of social programs, but many of them fall short. In this time of fiscal austerity, policymakers are turning to evidence to guide their decisions more than at any other time in U.S. history. One of the main motivations for evidence-based policymaking is to build a foundation for economic prosperity. This chapter covers several evidence-based jobs programs that help equip workers with the skills to meet current labor force needs (i.e., Career Academies, preschool education, sector strategies) and to help businesses improve productivity (i.e., Manufacturing Extension Programs). If policymakers use evidence to eliminate programs that don't work and expand programs that do, government will be more efficient and individuals, families, and the nation will be better positioned to prosper. ■

Where research meets family policy

The Wisconsin Family Impact Seminars are a continuing series of policy forums that provide policymakers with objective, high-quality research on issues such as evidence-based budgeting, growing the state economy, cost-effective corrections programs, long-term care, prisoner reentry, health care quality and cost, and workforce development. The Seminars aim to increase the use of research in policy decisions and to encourage policymakers to view policies and programs through a family impact lens. Check out the Seminar website (www.familyimpactseminars.org) for audio of speakers at previous seminars (click on "State Seminars"), and for 164 briefing reports from 23 states written specifically for state policymakers (click on "Publications"). The briefing report described here, "Positioning Wisconsin for the Jobs of the Future" accompanied the 30th Wisconsin Family Impact Seminar. The full report, edited by Karen Bogenschneider, Director, and Kristi Slack, Associate Director, can also be downloaded from our website. Hard copies are available to state legislators at no charge by contacting Seminar Coordinator, Jennifer Seubert, at (608) 263-2353 or jseubert@wisc.edu.