

## Better-paying jobs gaining ground in Northeast Ohio

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### FACTORY JOBS ARE DISAPPEARING ... BUT MANY NEW JOBS PAY MORE

Many once-powerful factories in Northeast Ohio still sit silent, their burly workers gone years ago. But a future built on higher-paying jobs like health care and education is emerging.

**JOB GROWTH IN NORTHEAST OHIO:** Six of every 10 workers earn less than the region's average wage of \$37,817, data released by Team NEO shows. But the data shows impressive growth between 1992 and 2007 in jobs and wages for higher-wage occupations too, including medical professionals, teachers and librarians.

JOB GROWTH	Average annual wage	1992 employment	2007 employment	Change '02-'07
Education, training and library	\$49,051	26,956	37,178	38%
Personal care and service	\$21,421	37,027	49,810	35%
Health care support	\$23,796	49,924	65,886	32%
Food preparation and serving	\$17,096	123,015	154,653	26%
Community and social services	\$39,549	26,403	31,886	21%
Construction and extraction	\$42,895	59,973	71,686	20%
Health care practitioner and technical	\$60,888	93,917	111,762	19%
Legal	\$78,461	12,438	14,697	18%
Computer and mathematical science	\$61,968	34,164	39,831	17%
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	\$22,789	48,902	55,735	14%
Office and administrative support	\$29,473	309,242	344,632	11%
Business and financial operations	\$54,279	73,295	81,142	11%
Protective services	\$36,283	36,374	40,151	10%
Life, physical and social sciences	\$56,474	16,536	18,057	9%
Management	\$92,318	89,272	96,818	8%
Transportation and materials moving	\$29,656	126,388	135,940	8%
Sales	\$33,232	189,271	191,912	1%
Farming, fishing and forestry	\$23,941	14,979	14,982	—
<b>JOB LOSERS</b>				
Installation, maintenance and repair	\$39,217	79,188	77,381	-2%
Arts, design, entertainment, sports and media	\$41,024	22,670	20,074	-11%
Architecture and engineering	\$61,489	39,433	33,606	-15%
Production	\$32,967	246,798	196,522	-20%
<b>All occupations</b>	<b>\$37,817</b>	<b>1,756,166</b>	<b>1,884,338</b>	<b>7%</b>

SOURCE: Team NEO analysis of employment data from Moody's Economics and average annual wage from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (May 2008). KEN MARRAS/LISTEN PLAIN DEALER

[Click to see which fields are gaining and which are losing](#)

The latest evidence will be released today: a study concluding that higher-paying jobs actually are growing faster than lower-paying ones.

The work from the Team NEO economic development group underscores what had begun to appear around town in bits: A new medical facility one day. The spread of tech companies into downtown. The infusion of money for startup companies.

Northeast Ohio still has twice as many jobs that pay below average as above, but the Team NEO study adds to a sense that the region may have begun to move from the rust belt years to the age of technology and innovation.

"The fact is our job growth has been pretty modest . . . but the data is showing a steady trend toward higher-paying work," said Tom Waltermire, chief executive of Team NEO.

The analysis looked at job growth or loss in 22 occupations since 1992, in a 16-county region.

Those occupations employ 1.88 million workers, a 7.3 percent increase over job levels in 1992, according to the report.

About two-thirds 1,250,223 are employed in jobs paying less than the region's average salary of \$37,817. Two of those occupations - food preparation and service, and office and administrative support - have added 66,000 jobs since 1992.

Meanwhile, production jobs, the blue-collar kind that once thrived in the region, shrank by 50,000, Team NEO reports. And manufacturing may no longer be the path to a comfortable middle-class life. Production jobs now pay less than the regional average, according to the report.

On the flip side, two occupations demanding higher skills - health-care practitioners, and education, training and library workers - added some 28,000 jobs in the past 15 years. Those jobs pay well above the region's average wage.

Overall, jobs paying more than the average have grown 10 percent since 1992, compared with 6 percent growth for those paying less, according to the report.

The numbers were no surprise to National City economist Richard DeKaser.

Twenty years ago, average compensation in the Cleveland area ranked above the national average, he said. Now, it ranks below, due mainly to the loss of manufacturing jobs that required relatively little education, he said.

The New Economy demands higher skills. And team NEO's report underscores the widely held belief that "education pays," DeKaser said.

Business leaders are demanding better job-training strategies statewide.

"The conventional wisdom I hear . . . is that we are sinking huge amounts of money with limited payoff in our traditional work force programs," Waltermire said.

A state official confirmed that business leaders want job training to be the top priority of the Ohio Department of Development.

The department is directing millions of dollars into several new programs, including the Ohio Workforce Guarantee.

The \$5 million program offers up to \$3,000 per employee, and up to \$750,000 per business, for job training, said Lisa Patt-McDaniel, director of the Work Force and Talent Division in the Department of Development.

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