

Connecticut Career Resource Network UPDATE

Connecticut gained 1,200 jobs in December 2006; Employment expansion continues in 2006

WETHERSFIELD, 1/22/07—CT's nonfarm employment, on a seasonally adjusted basis, saw a gain of 10,600 jobs from December 2005 to December 2006.

"While the job gains we saw in 2006 certainly represent good news for the citizens of CT, our goal of attracting new business to our State and expanding those already operating here must continue," said Gov. M. Jodi Rell. "We must make every effort to ensure that our workforce has the education and skills needed to fill these new jobs now, as well as those in the future."

"The 2006 holiday season proved profitable for the State's economy," said State Labor Economist John Tirinzonie. "With the noticeable increase in jobs for December, we now are up 5,000 over the last three months. This brings our total employment gain for the year to an estimated 10,600 jobs. The State has now posted an additional 39,400 new jobs since our low point in September of 2003, with many key industry sectors showing positive growth." Tirinzonie goes on to say that the employment outlook for 2007 should come close to the increase we experienced in 2006.

The *professional and business services* sector showed the largest gain with 1,200 new jobs. Increases were also found in *construction* (+600 jobs), followed by *information* (+300 jobs), and *financial activities* (+300 jobs). There were only two industry sectors that showed a decline of jobs in 2006, *educational and health services* (-1,000) and *manufacturing* (-400).

Warm weather helped keep the seasonal decline in *construction* at a lower than average level between November and December. Overall employment in this sector, however, is down more than 1,200 jobs from 2005, with the majority of job-loss within the *specialty trades contractors* area. The slowdown in the housing market accounts for much of the employment decline in this industry, down 1,900 over the year to settle at 43,100 jobs. Still, overall employment remains at a healthy level in this sector.

Labor Market Areas: Hartford, the largest of CT's labor market areas (LMAs), added the most jobs (+6,400) from December 2005 to December 2006. The Bridgeport-Stamford labor market area added 2,600 jobs, followed by New Haven (+2,000), Willimantic-Danielson (+300) and Danbury (+100). The remaining four LMAs saw job losses over the year. Torrington (-1,100 jobs) had the biggest decrease, followed by Enfield and Norwich-New London (-900 each), and Waterbury (-700).

SAVE THE DATE!!

Connecticut Learns and Works Annual Conference

Friday—May 18, 2007

Water's Edge Resort and Spa—Westbrook, CT

Check the CL&W website early and often for all the
latest Conference news and registration info:

www.ctlearnsandworks.org

CONNECTICUT LABOR MARKET INFORMATION December 2006

Total nonfarm employment increased 0.6% from
December 2005 to December 2006.

*Net business formation in CT, as measured by starts
minus stops registered with the Secretary of State,
was up 1.4% over the year.*

The unemployment rate fell from 4.6% in
December 2005 to 4.2% in December 2006.

*Personal income for the second quarter of 2007 is
forecasted to increase 4.7% from a year earlier.*

Connecticut Labor Market Information is available
online at: www.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi

InDemand—Connecting Today's Students with the Careers of Tomorrow

Published by the U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Education, this magazine explores different high-growth industries. Each issue will provide students as well as guidance counselors, parents and teachers with interesting and relevant information about career opportunities, education and the skills needed for various jobs. It offers resources to explore careers and tips about how to help students build successful futures.



There are opportunities for young people with *all kinds of interests* from art to math, from sports to science, and from design occupations to the trades. These magazines will give you an introduction to the different career paths in construction, energy, advanced manufacturing, and health care along with commentary from young professionals who have chosen these careers.

Visit <http://www.careervoyages.gov/indemandmagazine-main.cfm> to view this publication. The Career Voyages website is a valuable resource for students, parents, job seekers, and career advisors.

TRAIN TO TEACH—regardless of your major

So, you want to teach but don't have a degree in education? **Teach For America** can get you to the front of the class—no education courses or experience required. **Teach For America** is a national program that prepares and helps place college graduates in teaching positions. Participants train in a 5-week Summer program and start teaching that Fall. They even receive the same starting salary and benefits as other entry-level teachers with formal training. Following a 2-year teaching commitment, many **Teach For America** participants decide to earn their credentials and continue teaching; others pursue careers in such fields as business, healthcare, public policy, and law. **Teach For America** seeks applicants who have a bachelor's degree, leadership ability, and perseverance.

To learn more or to request an application, write to Teach For America, 315 West 36th Street, 7th floor, New York, NY 10018, or call toll-free at 1-800-832-1230. You may also visit www.teachforamerica.org, to apply online.

Connecticut's Growing Economy = MORE JOBS!

Attention All Students and Job-Seekers!! Leaders in Connecticut's state and local government, higher education, and business are heeding the call for action to effectively prepare our future workforce for the challenges ahead. Gov. M. Jodi Rell signed the "Jobs for the 21st Century" bill into law that will help to spark innovation, entrepreneurial efforts, and create a 'business-friendly' environment for our State's small and large businesses. Connecticut's public/private universities and community colleges are expanding their academic offerings and hiring additional staff to address the impending labor shortages in occupations requiring a background in science, engineering, and mathematics. Connecticut businesses continue to financially support the "up-skilling" of their employees, as a means of adjusting to the latest technological trends and position their firms to grow and expand. Collectively, economic development efforts such as these can augment job creation efforts among our State's businesses and narrow the impending skills gap associated with tomorrow's jobs.

"... our current and future workforce must not only gain proficiency in particular subject areas, but also acquire a working knowledge of the technical skills necessary to adapt to technological changes to meet employer demand."

The Global Arena: Connecticut's Challenge in the 21st Century
By: Brandon T. Hooker, M.P.A., Connecticut Department of Labor

The Connecticut Department of Higher Education survey, **Employer Satisfaction with 2003 Public Higher Education Graduates in CT**, found that while some Connecticut firms spoke positively of their new hires, others found them lacking the "professional skills" necessary for career advancement. The vital skills and knowledge sets employers seek include: active listening; critical thinking; active learning; complex problem identification; judgment and decision making; systems evaluation; and technology design.

Connecticut businesses are looking for people who can create and adapt to a collaboration-based workplace. Teamwork is founded on the ability to **actively listen**, and give full attention to what other people are saying and ask the questions that can open the door to creative solutions. Tomorrow's workforce will not only be apt at finding solutions, but will also be capable of applying **active learning** skills to analyze the short and long-term implications of incoming information, legislation, market trends, etc. for effective problem solving and decision-making.

The **critical thinking** and logical reasoning skills just may be an employer's most coveted and sought-after traits when looking for potential employees. The ability to effectively weigh the pros and cons of specific approaches and solutions to complex problems, may save a company bundles in wasted time and money. Job applicants that are efficient in **complex problem identification** and display the ability to review pertinent information and data to develop, evaluate, and implement solutions will most likely have great success in their job search.

Tomorrow's jobs in Connecticut, entry-level and beyond, will require an ability to **evaluate systems** of production and identify measures, indicators, and actions needed to enhance or correct productivity and output. Furthermore, as employers ready themselves for the future, they will need employees that are forward thinkers, skilled at adapting and generating equipment, products, and services (technology design) that will help set them apart from their competitors and effectively satisfy the consumer's ever-changing needs and demands.

Connecticut's 'High Demand' Jobs*

| High Demand Jobs | New Jobs Created by 2014 |
|--|--------------------------|
| Registered Nurses | +4,000 |
| Accountants and Auditors | +2,800 |
| General Managers | +2,400 |
| Computer Software Engineers | +2,200 |
| Sales Reps., Wholesale & Manufacturing | +2,000 |
| Computer Systems Analysts | +1,700 |
| Securities and Financial Sales Agents | +1,600 |
| Computer Network Systems Analysts | +1,250 |
| Management Analysts | +1,000 |
| Network Systems Administration | +1,000 |
| Financial Analysts | +1,000 |
| Physical Therapist | +800 |
| Electricians | +700 |
| Plumbers | +600 |

*Based on the CT DOL 'Forecast 2014' report

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF LABOR CAREER FAIRS ~ CT EMPLOYERS' #1 CHOICE

At each fair, attendees have the chance to meet with prospective employers, as well as take advantage of the following services:

- Resume critiquing—by nationally certified resume writers
- Access to *Connecticut's Job Bank*—which is part of the nation's largest online employment service
- Veterans Services—representatives are available to provide assistance and guidance
- Information on educational and job training programs
- Information on employment and unemployment services

Stop procrastinating and take action today toward finding that really great job you wish you had. Whether you are currently working in a dead-end job, or out of work and need some help finding the right job, or looking to re-enter the workforce ... a great job is NOT going to come and find you. You need to go out and find 'IT.'

Attending a Connecticut Career Fair is a great first step toward achieving your career goals.

| | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Saturday, March 31 | Manchester Career Fair | 9am-1pm |
| Thursday, April 12 | North Haven Career Fair | 11am-3pm |
| Tuesday, May 1 | Norwich Career Fair | 11am-3pm |
| Wednesday, June 6 | Bridgeport Career Fair | 11am-3pm |
| TBA | Cromwell Career Fair | 11am-3pm |

Visit <http://www.ctjobfairs.com> for Career Fair schedule updates, list of employers who will be attending, Locations and directions to each Fair.

Don't have access to a computer? Call the CT Department of Labor's Job Development Unit (860-263-6280) for more information.

CCRN Grab Bag

Herman Trend Alert: Lifestyle and Health

From "The Herman Trend Alert" by Roger Herman and Joyce Gioia (Jan. 24, 2007) <http://www.hermangroup.com>

Based on a study recently released by the Purdue University—Fort Wayne (IPFW) in Indiana, we believe more employers will put more pressure on their employees to live healthier lifestyles. This study found that lifestyles play a greater role in health insurance claims than was previously believed. To determine the results, grad students in the university's business school studied insurance claims data as well as the blood-test results to determine the cost of lifestyle choices. Bio-markers chosen for the study included blood pressure, body mass, tobacco use, and cholesterol levels. The study found a direct correlation between these indicators of a person's general health and well-being, and their health care claims. Not so surprising.

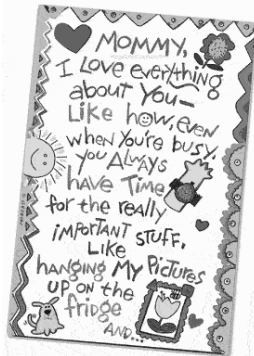
But here's the kicker—over 87% of the claims' costs were attributable to the individual's lifestyle. The more closely those bio-markers fell into acceptable guidelines, the lower the individual's health care claims. The results will have national implications, especially as the world's developed nations continue to battle rising health care costs and companies ask employees to shoulder some of the burden. Lately, we have witnessed an increasing number of employers becoming 'smoke-free.' Some of the employees of these organizations shared with us their fears that "maintaining a healthy weight" might be next...that they are concerned about the trend towards employers dictating all of the employee's lifestyle choices.

As we have watched and wondered about the many unhealthy lifestyle choices people make, we can't help but expect that employers facing huge increases in health care costs will begin to be more forceful with their employees. This trend will cause more overall churning in the labor marketplace, as employees rebel against this 'Big Brother' movement on the part of employers.



You're A What?

Trips to the mailbox are happier because of Nicole Fraser's work. As a greeting card writer at American Greetings in Cleveland, OH, Nicole has been a part of millions of birthdays, special occasions, and everyday hellos. "I use my creativity to bring people closer together," she says. "That's a great feeling." Greeting card writers help people express thoughts and sentiments. "Greeting cards have to feel very personal, as if the words apply to you specifically," says Nicole. "But they also have to feel very personal to thousands of other card shoppers." To accomplish this feat, writers look for emotions many people share, such as the feeling of freedom after graduating from school. Card writers like Nicole usually write to fill a specific request. Their editors tell them the types of cards the company needs, such as cards for a birthday or a Mother's Day line. Editors give writers information about the card's sender and receiver, including details about their ages, genders, and relationship to each other. To find common themes to write about, Nicole follows the latest cultural trends. She reads modern poetry, looks through magazines and comic strips, and skims popular novels, most of which are in her company's library. Other card writers in her office read sociology and psychology books and watch TV shows. "We have to know the language people are using today," she says. Nicole often writes short, pithy phrases or other pieces of prose, but her favorite style is greeting card poetry. "I love writing long verse," she says. "I like the challenge of finding just the right word to match the rhyme and meter. It's like a puzzle." What makes the challenge even greater is that the poetry has to sound conversational and modern. "We don't want anything stilted or sing-songy," says Nicole. Greeting card writers choose their prose to fit the sender, whose style of speech is often different from their own. "One of the hardest things for me to learn was how to write for male card senders,"



Nicole identifies the feelings the sender will want to express. "You have to understand and care about people and make sure that comes through in your writing," she says. Nicole usually spends between a day to a week working on each card, but she develops some card concepts over months. And in a pinch, she can finish a card in an hour. Even after working to find the perfect words, however, card writers might never see their original text in print. They submit their work to editors who make or recommend changes. Being open to these changes is part of the job. "This isn't a career for writers who are too protective of their writing," says Nicole. "Lots of people make suggestions and change your work." Sometimes, suggestions from others make finishing a card easier and more fun. In Nicole's company, as in most large greeting card companies, writers brainstorm for inspiration. Humor card writers spend much of their time building on each other's ideas and jokes. To make collaboration easier, writers work in cubicles arranged in a bullpen configuration or migrate to common sitting areas. But writers can also retreat to quieter areas while composing. When they're not working on a particular card, writers are experimenting with new styles or different types of card senders. They work with marketers, editors, and graphic artists to create additional card lines. Some innovations

GREETING CARD WRITER

require an entirely different kind of writing. Computerized cards, for example, are meant to be adjusted and personalized by the sender. Writers give senders options by composing flexible verses. Other writers create e-cards, which are short and often are paired with animation, for sending over the Internet. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), at least 210 salaried employees wrote and designed for greeting card companies in 1999; they earned an average annual wage of \$36,620. Many more greeting card writers worked as freelancers, self-employed workers who sold their work to greeting card publishers for a fee. The BLS does not have data on these writers. But according to industry sources, most work part-time and earn between \$50 to \$150 per card. In general, humor brings in a higher amount than contemporary prose or traditional poetry. Nicole began as a freelance writer. After studying English in college, she worked in another field and wrote cards in her spare time. Nicole got her current job by sending American Greetings a portfolio that included copies of her freelance work.

Today there are over 2,000 greeting card publishers in America, ranging from small family businesses to major corporations, many of which buy verse from freelance writers. The greeting card industry is an excellent place for first-time writers to test their freelance writing skills. The competition is stiff, but not impossible. It's also a terrific genre for the professional writer who wishes to take a break from longer, more involved types of writing. Some greeting card companies use 100% freelance writing and always welcome new talent. Greeting card writing is so to-the-point that there's simply no fudging. Make every word count and start out with your favorite occasions. Doing so will make your writing sparkle. In greeting card writing, **SPARKLE = SALES!**

Visit www.greetingcard.org for more information.

CCRN Update
Winter 2006-07

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The big secret in life is that there is no secret. Whatever your goal, you can get there if you're willing to work for it.
- Oprah Winfrey

Manufacturing Outlook: MANY JOBS!

Many people still think of manufacturing as it existed a half-century ago. However, today's manufacturing processes are more sophisticated and high-tech.

Skilled manufacturing workers are needed for everything from production to accounting to design. In fact, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects job growth in many occupations within the manufacturing industry over the 2004-14 decade.

The National Association of Manufacturers has launched a new career awareness campaign, "Dream It. Do It." The association offers career exploration tools, including a Web site that has a self-assessment test, occupational descriptions, and videos that show work in the manufacturing sector.

For more information or to get career information, write to the association at 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20004, or call toll-free, 1 (800) 814-8468. Or visit www.dreamit-doit.com.



Employment Change in Selected Occupations
Within Manufacturing Industries, projected 2004-14 (U.S.)

| High Demand Jobs | New Manufacturing Jobs, 2004-14 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Engineers | +24,500 |
| Computer Specialists | +13,600 |
| Team Assemblers | +10,200 |
| Carpenters | +7,600 |
| Engineering Technicians | +3,600 |
| Miscellaneous Assemblers & Fabricators | +2,500 |
| Aircraft Structure, Surfaces, Rigging, and Systems Assemblers | +1,100 |
| Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders | +1,000 |



**ERIC ARCHIVES
GO DIGITAL**

Archives of a major resource for educational information are being made available electronically. The Education Resources Information Center, better known as ERIC, has begun digitizing more than 300,000 microfiche documents related to education, including counseling research.

These articles, indexed from 1966 to 1992, will be in PDF image format, making them more readily available to the public. The project began in December 2006 and is expected to be completed in March 2009. All Government documents, and any documents for which ERIC has copyright-holder permission, will be available online. And just like ERIC's newer content, access to these archived documents is free.

ERIC, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, calls itself "the world's largest digital library of education literature." The reason: ERIC provides free access to more than a million bibliographic records of journal articles and other education-related materials in its database.

Visit www.eric.ed.gov to begin a search, register for personalized ERIC features, or get descriptions of current and past research results.

**For more information, call ERIC toll-free,
1 (800) LET-ERIC (538-3742).**