



# St. Joseph Labor Basin Labor Availability Analysis - 2006

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## Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	ii
List of Figures .....	iii
List of Maps.....	iv
Executive Summary .....	1
The St. Joseph Labor Basin.....	2
The St. Joseph Labor Basin’s Available Labor Pool .....	3
Current Skills and Experience.....	7
Considerations for Employment.....	12
Wage Demands .....	14
Underutilization Among Available Labor Pool Workers .....	17
Methodology .....	20
<i>Explaining the Civilian Labor Force</i> .....	20
<i>Defining the Available Labor Pool</i> .....	20
<i>Survey Research Methods</i> .....	21
Appendix I: Current Employment Status of Available Labor Pool.....	22
Appendix II: Hourly Wage to Annual Salary Conversion Chart.....	23

## List of Tables

Table 1: Age, Gender, and Education Levels of Available Labor Pool .....	5
Table 2: Major Occupational Categories of Available Labor .....	6
Table 3: Current Work Experience plus Previous Work or Training Experience .....	8
Table 4: Available Labor by Commute Minutes .....	12
Table 5: Desired Benefits and Current Benefits Offered.....	13
Table 6: Cumulative Wage Demands for Occupational Sectors.....	15
Table 7: Cumulative Wage Demands Allowing Mobility between General Labor and Service Sector .....	16
Table 8: Highest Level of Education Achieved Among Underutilized .....	18

## List of Figures

Figure 1: The Available Labor Pool for the St. Joseph Labor Basin .....	3
Figure 2: Occupational Sectors of Available Labor (Employed Only) .....	6
Figure 3: Strong Work Skills .....	7
Figure 4: Current Work Experience plus Previous Work or Training Experience .....	9
Figure 5: Work Experience / Willing to Work in Field.....	10
Figure 6: Undergraduate College Major.....	11
Figure 7: Willing to Work Outside of Primary Field .....	12
Figure 8: Available Labor by Commute Minutes .....	12
Figure 9: Benefits Very Important to Change Employment.....	13
Figure 10: Available Labor by Hourly Wage (Controlling for Willing to Commute).....	14
Figure 11: Employed Members of the Available Labor Pool.....	17
Figure 12: Underutilized Workers .....	17
Figure 13: Reasons for Underutilization.....	18
Figure 14: Occupational Sectors of Underutilized Workers .....	19
Figure 15: Willing to Change Job to Better Use Skills/Education .....	19

## List of Maps

Map 1: St. Joseph Labor Basin.....	2
Map 2: Percent of Total Available Labor in Basin by Zip Code.....	4

# St. Joseph Labor Basin Labor Availability Analysis

## Executive Summary

The St. Joseph Labor Basin includes portions of Andrew, Buchanan, Clinton, De Kalb, Holt, and Platte Counties in Missouri and Atchison and Doniphan Counties in Kansas. The purpose of this report is to assess the “Available Labor Pool” in this labor basin. The “Available Labor Pool” represents those who indicate that they are looking for employment or would consider changing their jobs for the right employment opportunity.

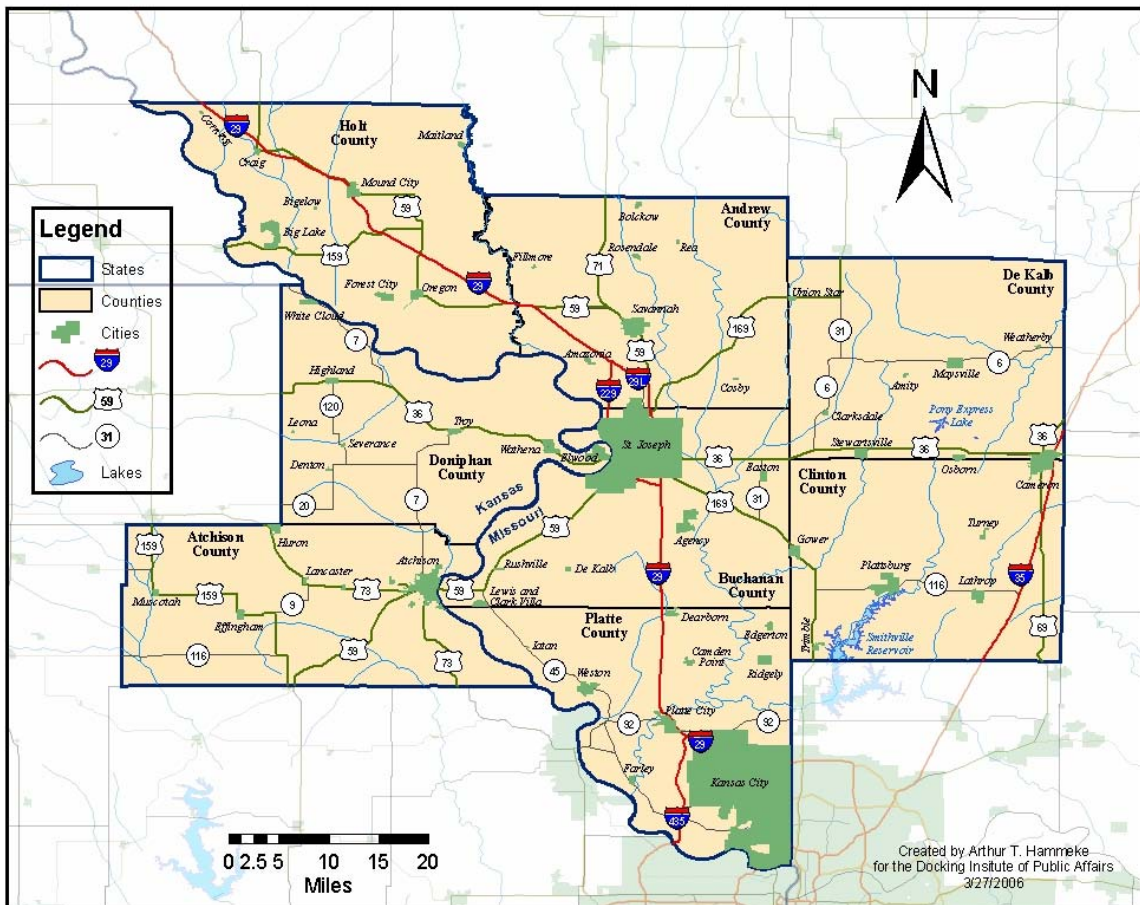
The Docking Institute’s independent analysis of this labor basin shows that:

- The population of the St. Joseph Labor Basin is estimated to be 224,581. About 30% of the population (or 69,843 individuals) is considered to be part of the Available Labor Pool (ALP).
- Of the ALP, an estimated 9,249 (13.2%) non-working and 14,351 (20.5%) working individuals are *looking* for new employment, while 5,422 (7.8%) non-working and 40,821 (58.4%) working individuals would *consider* new and/or different employment for the right opportunities.
- Almost 63% of the ALP has at least some college experience and about 93% has at least a high school diploma. The average age for members of the entire ALP is about 42 years old, and women make up 52% of the ALP.
- Majorities of ALP members report having “strong work skills” when it comes to working in groups and interpersonal relations (92.6%), math (76.4%), writing (75.9%), management and supervision (71.0%), and computers (62.9%).
- Approximately 4,774 members of the ALP are currently employed as general laborers, construction workers, or cleaners. An additional 6,192 report having experience or training in these fields.
- Slightly more than 81% (56,586) of the ALP indicate that they are “willing to work outside of their primary field of employment for a new or different employment opportunity.”
- About 43% of the members (or 30,025 individuals) of the ALP will commute up to 45 minutes, one way, for an employment opportunity. Slightly more than 83% (or 58,140 individuals) will commute up to 30 minutes for employment.
- The most important desired benefits are good retirement benefits, good health benefits, good salary or hourly pay, and on-the-job or paid training.
- Among the ALP that are willing to commute the necessary distance to the labor basin center, about 29,385 people (42%) are interested in a new job at \$16 an hour, 20,729 (30%) are available at \$12 an hour, and 7,327 (11%) are available at \$8 an hour.
- Of the 54,253 members in the subset of *employed members* of the ALP, 20,844 (38%) consider themselves underutilized. About 60% of this subset of the ALP has some college experience, and a majority (85%) is willing to change jobs to improve their underutilized status.

## The St. Joseph Labor Basin

The St. Joseph Labor Basin includes eight counties, four in northwest Missouri and two in northeast Kansas (see Map 1 below). The criterion used to include a county in this labor basin is whether it contains communities from which, it can be reasonably assumed, individuals may commute to the center of the labor basin (St. Joseph) for an employment opportunity. In the case of the St. Joseph Labor Basin, it can be reasonably assumed that individuals may commute from one of the seven neighboring counties (and within Buchanan County) because these counties contain: 1) communities that are sufficiently isolated but with adequate transportation access leading to St. Joseph, and 2) communities that are within an hour's commute time to the center of the labor basin.

Map 1: St. Joseph Labor Basin



The St. Joseph Labor Basin has a total population of approximately 224,581, and a Civilian Labor Force (CLF) of 124,640. There is an unemployment rate of 4.29%, and this research effort suggests that there is an ample supply of available labor for a new employer and/or expanded employment. The Docking Institute's superior analysis suggests that the basin contains an Available Labor Pool (ALP) of 69,843 individuals.

The Available Labor Pool is composed of workers categorized as either 1) currently not working *but* looking for employment, 2) currently employed (full- or part-time) *and* looking for other full-time employment, 3) currently not working in any manner *but* willing to consider different employment for the *right opportunity*, and 4) currently employed and not looking, *but* willing to consider different employment for the *right opportunity*. Please see the Methodology section – page 20 – for more information about the Institute’s ALP analysis methodology and the survey research methods used for this report.

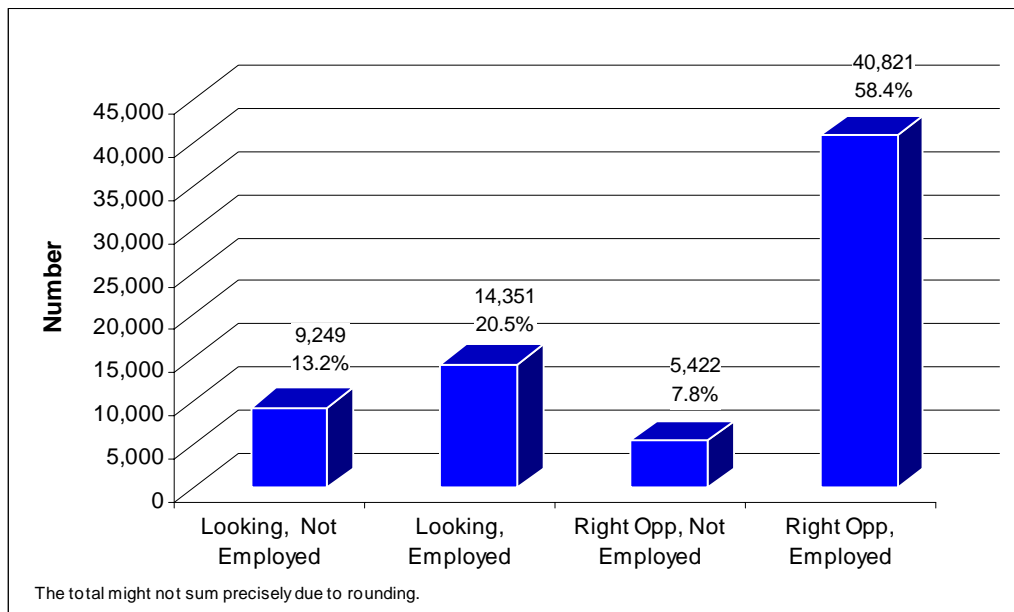
### The St. Joseph Labor Basin’s Available Labor Pool

This section of the report assesses the characteristics of the Available Labor Pool in the St. Joseph Labor Basin by answering the following questions:

- What proportion of the labor force – employed, unemployed, homemaker, student, retired, and disabled – would seriously consider applying for a new employment opportunity?
- What skills do those who would consider a new employment opportunity have?
- What type of jobs have these workers and potential workers had in the past?
- What types of considerations (pay, benefits, commute time) shape their decision-making?
- What are some of the characteristics of the general laborers, skilled blue-collar workers, service and support workers, and professional white-collar workers?
- What proportion of those workers among the available labor pool is considered “underutilized”?
- What are some of the characteristics of those underutilized workers?

It is estimated that 9,249 (13.2% of the ALP) non-employed<sup>1</sup> and 14,351 (20.5%) employed individuals are *currently looking* for new or different employment, and 5,422 (7.8%) non-employed individuals and 40,821 (58.4%) employed individuals *would consider* changing employment for the right opportunities.

**Figure 1: The Available Labor Pool for the St. Joseph Labor Basin**



<sup>1</sup> The terms “non-employed” and “non-working” refer to officially unemployed members of the Civilian Labor Force as well as any non-employed/non-working full-time students, homemakers, retirees, and disabled individuals.



Table 1 shows the gender, age, and education levels of the 69,843-member ALP. Fifty-two percent are women, and the average age is about 42. Many (93.2%) have at least a high school diploma, almost two-thirds (62.7%) have at least some college education, and more than a quarter (26.8%) have at least a bachelor's degree.

**Table 1: Age, Gender, and Education Levels of Available Labor Pool**

<b>Age</b>	Age in 2006		
Range	18 to 67		
Average	42		
Median	42		
<b>Gender</b>	Number	Percent	
Female	36,295	52.0	
Male	33,548	48.0	
Total	69,843	100.0	
<b>Highest Level of Education Achieved</b>	Number	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Doctoral Degree	2,061	3.0	3.0
Masters Degree	4,034	5.8	8.7
Bachelors Degree	12,637	18.1	26.8
Associates Degree	5,042	7.2	34.0
Some College (including current students)	20,016	28.7	62.7
High School Diploma Only	21,288	30.5	93.2
Less HS Diploma	4,765	6.8	100.0
Total	69,843	100.0	
<b>"Do you speak Spanish?"</b>	Number	Percent	
"Yes"	12,380	17.7	
<i>Speak Very Well</i>	1,024	8.3	} <i>These percentages represent portions of 17.7%</i>
<i>Speak Fairly Well</i>	1,319	10.7	
<i>Speak Only a Little</i>	10,037	81.1	
		100.0	

The totals might not sum precisely due to rounding.

Table 2 (next page) shows the various occupational categories of the 69,843 members of the ALP. General labor occupations represent 16.27% of the entire ALP, including 6,112 (8.75%) general laborers/cleaners/delivery drivers/maintenance workers. High-skilled blue-collar jobs make up 7.96% of the ALP, with 4,180 (5.98%) technicians/mechanics/welders. Traditional service-related or "pink-collar" occupations represent 36.73% of the ALP, including 8,705 (12.46%) customer service workers/receptionists/food service workers. Finally, government and business professionals and sales operatives make up 5,033 (7.21%) of the ALP.

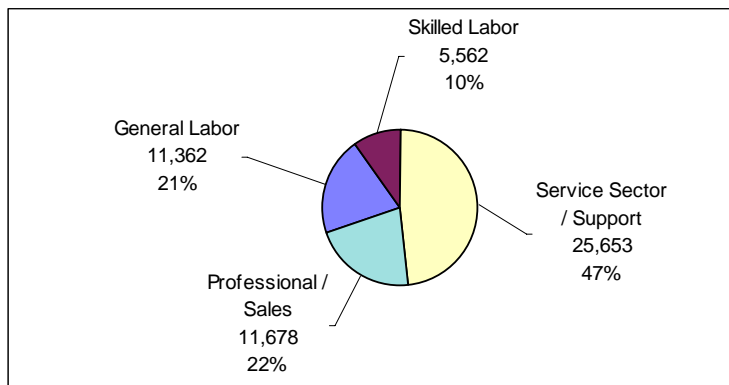
**Table 2: Major Occupational Categories of Available Labor**

	Number	Percent	Years at Job	
			Mean	Median
General Labor/Cleaning/Delivery	6,112	8.75	9.7	5.00
Maintenance/Factory Work	1,941	2.78	6.73	3.00
Trucking/HEO/Other BC	3,309	4.74	12.8	9.40
<b>Total General Labor</b>	<b>11,362</b>	<b>16.27</b>	<b>9.74</b>	<b>5.80</b>
Gov't Service/Protective Service	1,382	1.98	10.37	10.85
Technician/Mechanic/Welder	4,180	5.98	13.59	12.35
<b>Total Highly-Skilled Labor</b>	<b>5,562</b>	<b>7.96</b>	<b>11.98</b>	<b>11.60</b>
Customer Service/Receptionist/Food Service	8,705	12.46	6.39	3.31
Clerical/Secretarial	3,993	5.72	6.97	4.27
Social Service/Para-Professional/Nursing	6,196	8.87	6.17	4.00
Office Manager/Small Business Owner/Other WC	6,759	9.68	8.59	7.00
<b>Total Service Sector</b>	<b>25,653</b>	<b>36.73</b>	<b>7.03</b>	<b>4.65</b>
Gov't & Business Professional/Sales	5,033	7.21	11.77	8.00
Educator/Researcher/Doctor	6,645	9.51	7.29	8.00
<b>Total Professional</b>	<b>11,678</b>	<b>16.72</b>	<b>9.53</b>	<b>8.00</b>
Homemakers/Unemployed	10,103	14.46	n/a	n/a
Students	3,661	5.24	n/a	n/a
Retired/Disabled	1,825	2.61	n/a	n/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,843</b>	<b>100</b>		

The totals might not sum precisely due to rounding.

Figure 2 shows the occupational sectors of the *employed members* of the ALP only. The percentages shown in Figure 2 differ from those presented in Table 2 because the table includes non-working ALP members. Appendix I provides a detailed list of occupations.

**Figure 2: Occupational Sectors of Available Labor (Employed Only)**



## Current Skills and Experience

To gain perspective on the types of workers that are available for new and/or different employment in the St. Joseph Labor Basin, survey respondents were asked questions assessing work skills and previous work experience.

Figure 3 shows that 64,694 (or 92.6%) members of the Available Labor Pool report having “strong work skills” when it comes to working in groups and interpersonal relations. About three-quarters of the members of the Available Labor Pool members also report having “strong work skills” in math (53,335 or 76.6%), writing (52,232 or 75.9%), and management and supervision (48,963 or 71%) each. More than 60% report having strong computer operation skills (42,805 or 62.9%), and less than half report having strong public speaking skills (32,371 or 46.8%).

**Figure 3: Strong Work Skills**

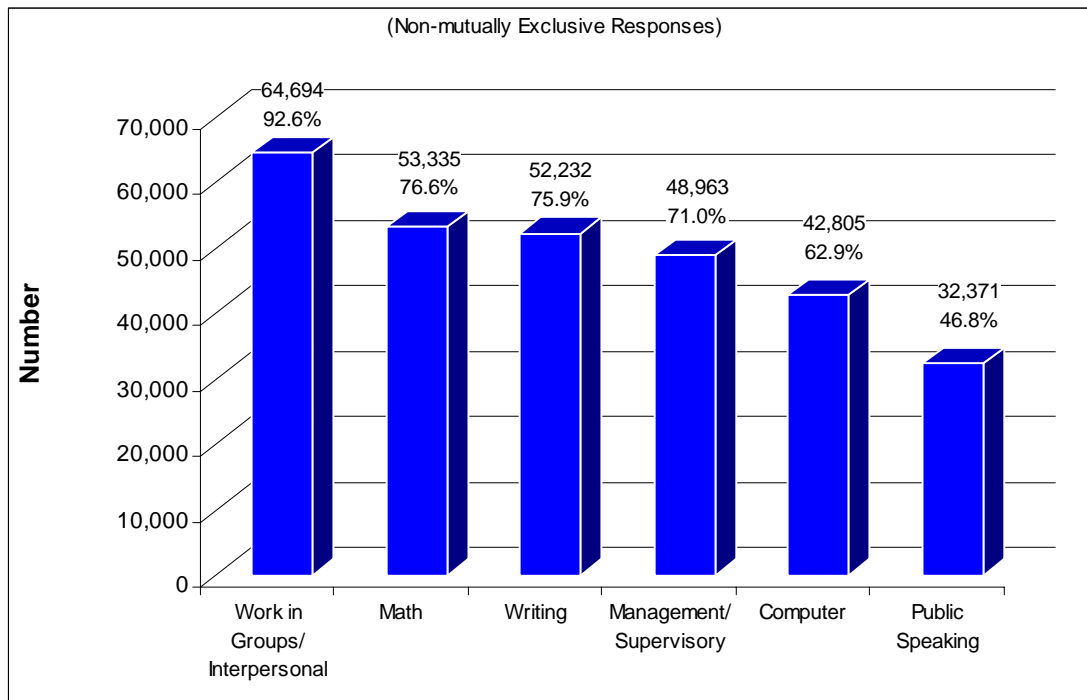


Table 3 and Figure 4 (next page) show the results of analysis performed on data collected regarding the current employment status and previous work or training experience of ALP members. Table 3 shows the number of workers currently employed in various job categories, as well as the number of workers that have previous work or training experience. The table also shows the sum of working ALP members currently employed in a job category *plus* those that indicate previous training or experience in that particular field.

It is estimated, for example, that 8,705 members of the ALP in the St. Joseph Labor Basin are currently employed as general customer service workers, retail sales clerks, receptionists, waitresses, and similar positions. An additional 6,569 ALP members in the basin indicate previous employment experience or training in one of those jobs, for a total of 15,274 individuals.

**Table 3: Current Work Experience plus Previous Work or Training Experience**

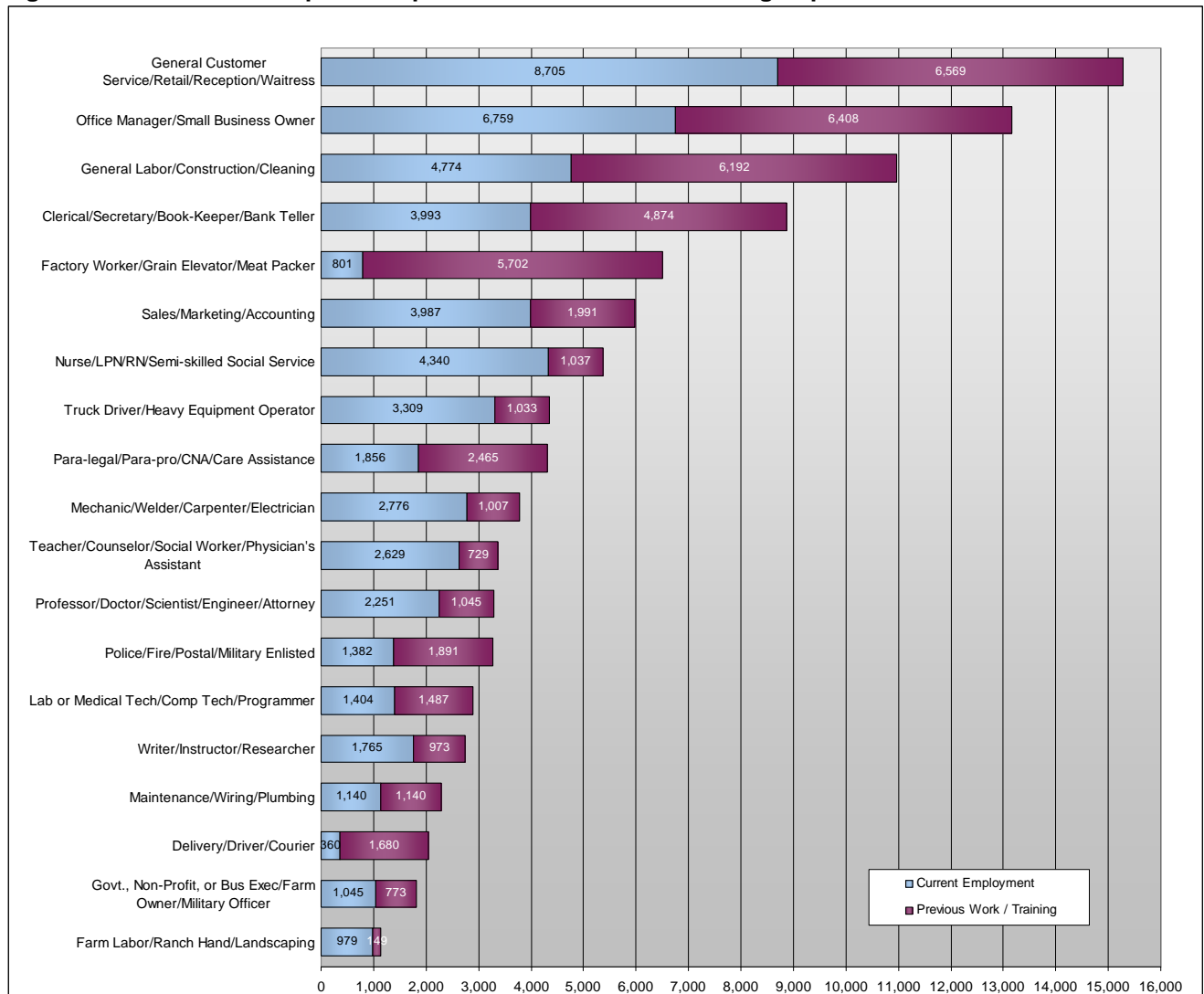
	Current Employment*	Previous Work/Training*	Current plus Previous Work or Training**
	Number	Number	Number
General Labor/Construction/Cleaning	4,774	6,192	10,966
Farm Labor/Ranch Hand/Landscaping	979	149	1,128
Delivery/Driver/Courier	360	1,680	2,040
Maintenance/Wiring/Plumbing	1,140	1,140	2,279
Factory Worker/Grain Elevator/Meat Packer	801	5,702	6,503
Truck Driver/Heavy Equipment Operator	3,309	1,033	4,342
Police/Fire/Postal/Military Enlisted	1,382	1,891	3,273
Lab or Medical Tech/Comp Tech/Programmer	1,404	1,487	2,890
Mechanic/Welder/Carpenter/Electrician	2,776	1,007	3,783
Other Blue Collar	0	0	0
General Customer Service/Retail/Reception/Waitress	8,705	6,569	15,274
Clerical/Secretary/Book-Keeper/Bank Teller	3,993	4,874	8,866
Para-legal/Para-pro/CNA/Care Assistance	1,856	2,465	4,321
Nurse/LPN/RN/Semi-skilled Social Service	4,340	1,037	5,377
Office Manager/Small Business Owner	6,759	6,408	13,166
Writer/Instructor/Researcher	1,765	973	2,738
Sales/Marketing/Accounting	3,987	1,991	5,978
Govt., Non-Profit, or Bus Exec/Farm Owner/Military Officer	1,045	773	1,818
Teacher/Counselor/Social Worker/Physician's Assistant	2,629	729	3,358
Professor/Doctor/Scientist/Engineer/Attorney	2,251	1,045	3,297
Other White Collar	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>54,253</b>		

\* Retired, disabled, non-working students, homemakers are not included.  
\*\* An individual member of the ALP is counted only once within a training/experience category.

The total might not sum precisely due to rounding.

Figure 4 shows the same information as that presented in Table 3, but in graphic format. Again, many ALP members report current work experience or previous work/training as general customer service workers, retail sales clerks, receptionists, waitresses, and similar positions that require interaction with the public. There are 8,705 working ALP members currently employed in this category and 6,569 previously employed/trained in this category, for a total of 15,274.

**Figure 4: Current Work Experience plus Previous Work or Training Experience**



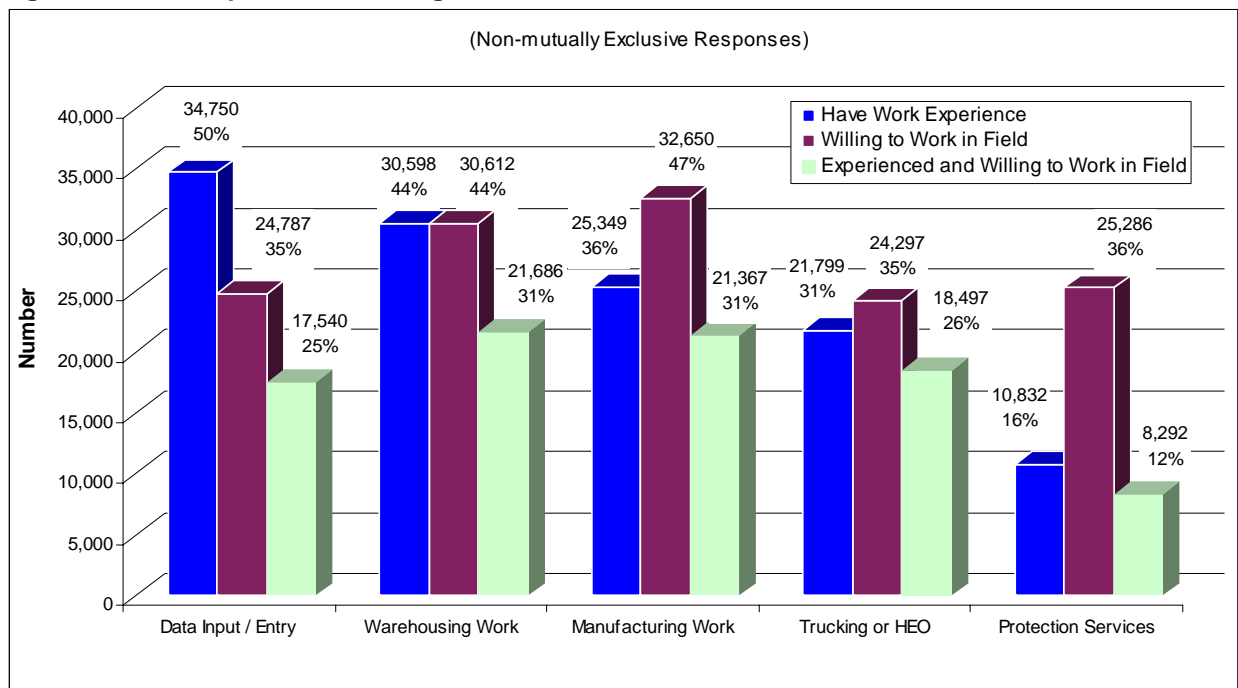
In addition to collecting data regarding the current employment status and previous work or training experience through a series of “open-ended” survey questions (the results of which are shown in the previous table and figure), respondents were asked about the five specific employment areas listed in Figure 5. Respondents were first asked if they had training or work experience in a specific field and then if they would take a job in that field regardless of their prior training or experience.

The figure indicates that 34,750 (50%) ALP members report having training and/or experience in data entry with telephone operation, while fewer (24,787 or 35%) would consider employment in that field. Between 44% and 31% of the Available Labor Pool members also have training and/or experience in warehousing/distribution work, manufacturing, and trucking/HEO work. Fewer have training or experience in work relating to protection services (10,832 or 16%).

The most popular employment option of those listed is Manufacturing Work, with 32,650 (47%) of the members of the ALP reporting that they would be interested in a job in that field. Warehousing Work was the second most popular employment field with 30,612 (44%) interested. More than a third of the ALP in the labor basin is interested in a job in the protection services, trucking, and data entry fields.

The third column show the number and percent of ALP members that have experience or training in a field **and** are willing to work in that field again.

**Figure 5: Work Experience / Willing to Work in Field**

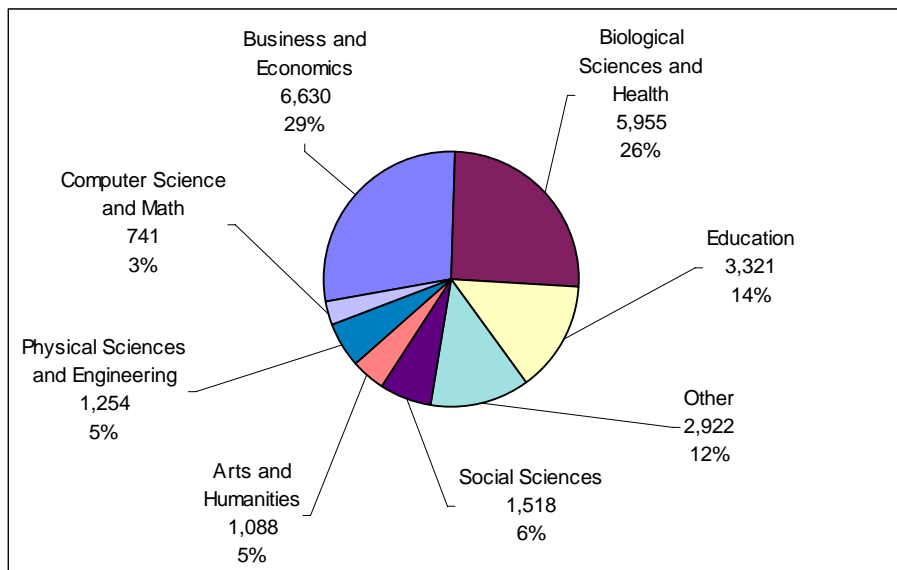


Respondents that have completed college or are currently enrolled in a college or university were asked to provide their undergraduate college major. Answer options included:

- A. Social Sciences
  - Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Politics, and Social Work.
- B. Biological Sciences and Health
  - Biology, Agriculture, Nursing, Pre-med, Pre-vet, and Human Performance.
- C. Physical Sciences and Engineering
  - Physics, Geology, Chemistry, and Engineering.
- D. Business and Economics
  - Management, Accounting, Finance, Marketing, and Economics.
- E. Arts and Humanities
  - Art, Music, History, Philosophy, and Languages.
- F. Computer Science and Math
  - Computer Programming or Technology, Networking, Web design, and Math.
- G. Education
  - Elementary and Secondary Teaching.

The figure below shows that most ALP members indicate a college major in Business and Economics (6,630 or 29%). Biological Sciences and Health accounts for the next largest number of students/former students (5,955 or 26%), while Education (3,321 or 14%) round out the top three fields.

**Figure 6: Undergraduate College Major**

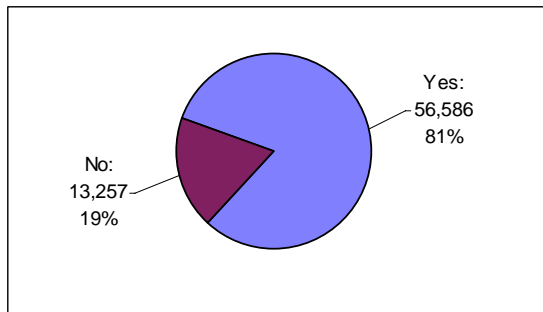


## Considerations for Employment

An important consideration for many employers looking to locate or expand operations is whether workers are willing to pursue new employment opportunities. Some workers may be available for new employment but are unwilling to switch from their current job to a different type of position. A large percentage of those unwilling to change their jobs, might limit the types of employers that can enter the labor basin. This does not seem to be the case in the St. Joseph Labor Basin, however. Figure 7 indicates that 56,586 (81%) members of the Available Labor Pool are willing to accept positions outside of their primary fields of employment.

Table 4 and Figure 8 suggest that the Available Labor Pool in the St. Joseph Labor Basin is open to commuting. More than 40% of the members (or 30,025 individuals) of the Available Labor Pool will commute up to 45 minutes, one way, for an employment opportunity. More than four-fifths (83.2% or 58,140) will commute up to 30 minutes for employment, and nearly all (97.5% or 68,085) will travel up to 15 minutes for employment.

**Figure 7: Willing to Work Outside of Primary Field**



**Table 4: Available Labor by Commute Minutes**

	Number	Cumulative Percent
More than 60 Minutes	1,115	1.6
Up to 60 Minutes	15,733	22.5
Up to 55 Minutes	15,733	22.5
Up to 50 Minutes	15,956	22.8
Up to 45 Minutes	30,025	43.0
Up to 40 Minutes	33,723	48.3
Up to 35 Minutes	34,018	48.7
Up to 30 Minutes	58,140	83.2
Up to 25 Minutes	58,910	84.3
Up to 20 Minutes	65,118	93.2
Up to 15 Minutes	68,085	97.5
Up to 10 Minutes	69,144	99.0
Up to 5 Minutes	69,843	100.0

The total might not sum precisely due to rounding.

**Figure 8: Available Labor by Commute Minutes**

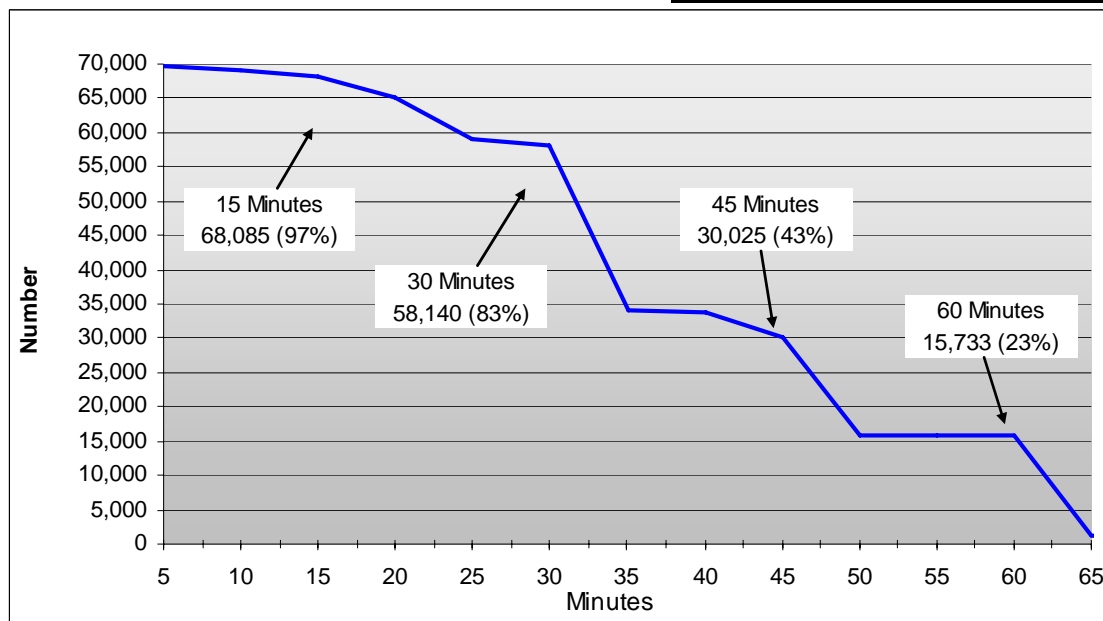
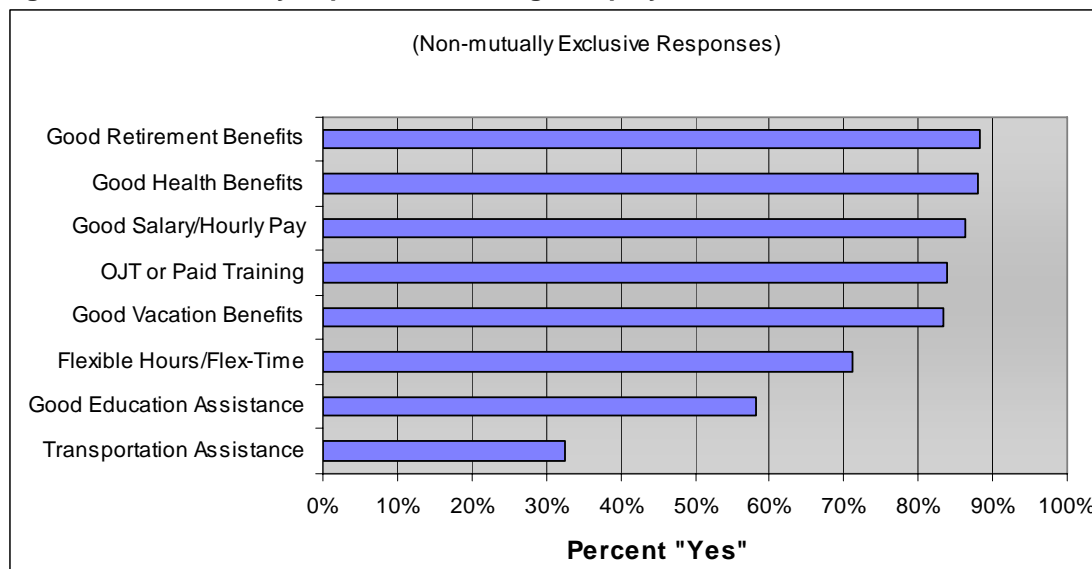


Figure 9 shows various benefits affecting the decisions of current workers to take a different job and potential workers to take a new job. The five most important benefits are good retirement benefits, good health benefits, good salary or hourly pay, on-the-job or paid training, and good vacation benefits. Each of these five received more than 80% support from survey respondents.

**Figure 9: Benefits Very Important to Change Employment**



It is not surprising that many respondents (86%) indicate that a good salary is an important benefit. It is interesting to note, however, that good retirement benefits and good health benefits received more support than salary. These figures suggest that employers might consider offering these benefits (or offering improved existing benefits) to attract new employees.

Table 5 lists some of these benefits, as well as percentages of ALP members that are currently offered these benefits. The figures in the left percent column indicate the percentages of all ALP members that suggest a benefit is an *important* consideration in taking a new or different job, while the figures on the right show the percentages of working members of the ALP that have been offered the benefit by their employers.

**Table 5: Desired Benefits and Current Benefits Offered**

	Benefit Important to Change Jobs Percent	Benefit Currently Received* Percent
Good Retirement Benefits	88.2	70.0
Good Health Benefits	88.1	81.0
OJT or Paid Training	83.8	83.0
Flexible Hours/Flex-Time	71.2	55.9
Good Education Assistance	58.3	51.5
Transportation Assistance	32.4	13.0

\* This column represents responses from working ALP members only.

## Wage Demands

To present an even more refined picture regarding the number of workers who would seriously consider a new employment opportunity, the data in this section of the report includes only those respondents that are determined to be “willing to commute the necessary travel time” for a new or different job opportunity. “Necessary travel time” is defined as a travel time stated by the respondent that is equal to or greater than the travel time necessary for the respondent to commute to the center of the labor basin. For example, a respondent that is willing to travel for 30 minutes, one-way, for a new or different job opportunity and that lives an estimate 15 minutes from St. Joseph is considered “willing to commute the necessary travel time” for a new job. Data from such a respondent are included in this section of the report.

**Figure 10: Available Labor by Hourly Wage (Controlling for Willing to Commute)**

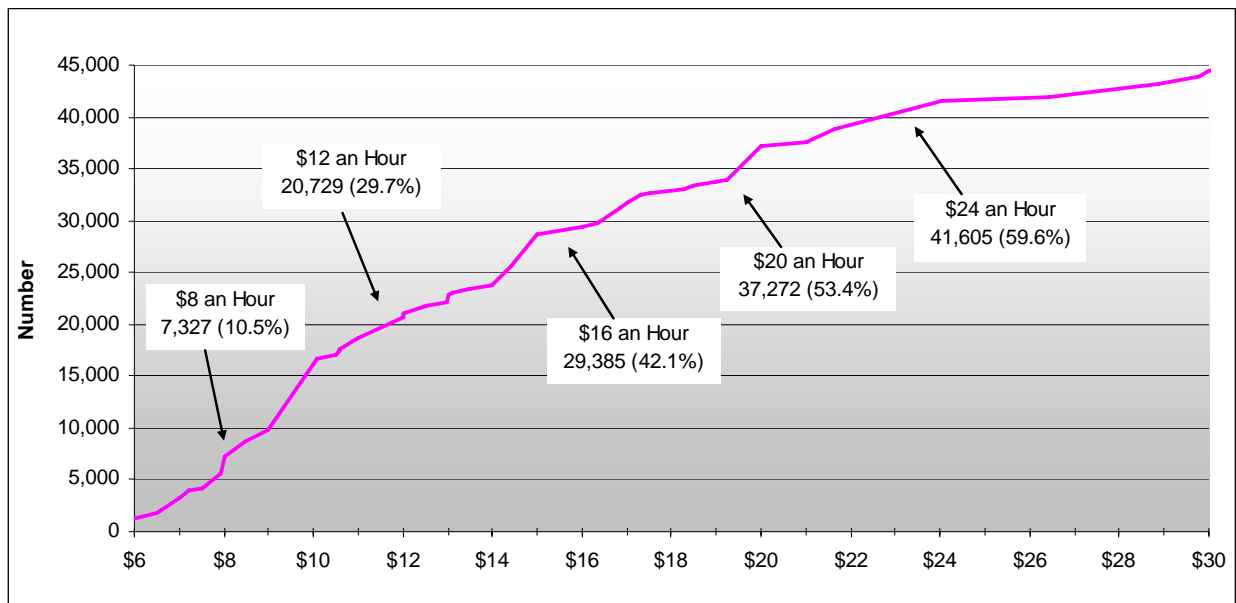


Figure 10 shows the wage demands for the ALP members that are “willing to commute.” It is estimated that 41,605 people (or about 60%) are interested in a new job at \$24 an hour<sup>2</sup>. Approximately 37,272 (or about 53%) members of the labor pool are interested in new employment opportunity at \$20 an hour, while 29,385 (42%) are interested at \$16 an hour. Additionally, about 20,729 people (about 30%) are interested in a new job at \$12 an hour and 7,327 (10.5%) at \$8 an hour.

Figure 10 suggests the obvious: that the higher the wage, the larger the pool of available labor. For example, 8,780 members of the ALP are available for a new or different job at \$9.00 an hour. At \$10.00 an hour, however, the size of the available labor increases to 16,240 members. This represents an increase of 7,460 individuals.

The graph also highlights various “wage preference plateaus” that may be of interest to current and potential employers. A wage preference plateau is a situation in which an increase in wage results in an insignificant or small increase in available labor. For example, 1,211 members of available labor are interested in a job at \$6.00 an hour. At \$6.50 an hour there are approximately 1,860 individuals available. So, while there is certainly an increase in the number

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix II for an hourly wage/annual salary conversion chart.

of available workers at this higher wage rate, the increase is estimated to be only 649 individuals. Similarly, there are 23,450 individuals available at \$13.50 an hour but only about 400 more available at \$14.00 an hour. An additional wage plateau can be seen between \$18.5 and \$19, with an increase of only about 360 individuals.

Table 6 shows the four main occupational sectors<sup>3</sup> of the 69,843-member ALP. The table shows almost 30% (3,542) of the general labors will take a new or different job at a wage of \$9 an hour or less. Almost two-thirds (62% or 7,519) are available for new employment at a wage of up to \$15 an hour. Of the skilled laborers, 52% (2,312) are available at \$27 an hour or below, while no skilled blue-collar workers that are willing to commute the necessary distance are available at \$12 an hour or less.

Almost 40% (8,743) service workers are available at \$12 an hour or less, while 73% (16,805) are available at \$18 an hour or less. Two-thirds (66% or 5,577) of the professional workers are available at \$24 an hour or less. Similar to the skilled laborers, few professional workers are willing to commute the necessary distance to a new or different job for \$12 or less.

**Table 6: Cumulative Wage Demands for Occupational Sectors**

	General Labor		High Skilled Labor		Service Sector		Professional/Sales	
	(N= 30 ) (+/- 17.9% MoE)		(N= 11 ) (+/- 29.5% MoE)		(N= 57 ) (+/- 13.0% MoE)		(N= 21 ) (+/- 21.4% MoE)	
	Number	Cumulative	Number	Cumulative	Number	Cumulative	Number	Cumulative
\$30 or More	12,111	100%	4,441	100%	23,012	100%	8,478	100%
Up to \$30	12,111	100%	2,733	62%	21,318	93%	6,614	78%
Up to \$27	11,664	96%	2,312	52%	20,450	89%	5,758	68%
Up to \$24	11,258	93%	1,370	31%	19,631	85%	5,577	66%
Up to \$21	9,283	77%	1,370	31%	18,652	81%	5,170	61%
Up to \$18	8,697	72%	949	21%	16,805	73%	3,348	39%
Up to \$15	7,519	62%	949	21%	12,549	55%	1,623	19%
Up to \$12	5,421	45%	0	0%	8,743	38%	449	5%
UP to \$9	3,542	29%	0	0%	4,754	21%	0	0%
Up to \$6	549	5%	0	0%	559	2%	0	0%

<sup>3</sup> These sectors represent *employed* members of the ALP only.

Table 7 shows wage demand data for general labor and service sector workers that are willing to change fields of employment and thus, are presumably potential workers for either of these two sectors. Specifically, the table *includes* data from respondents that:

- 1 are willing to commute the necessary distance from his/her community to the center of the labor basin, *and*
- 2 are willing to change their primary field of employment (for example: service sector employment to general labor employment), *and*
- 3a are currently non-employed, *or*
- 3b are employed as general laborers or service sector employees.

**Table 7: Cumulative Wage Demands Allowing Mobility between General Labor and Service Sector**

	Mobile General Labor		Mobile Service Sector	
	(N= 107 ) (+/- 9.5% MoE)		(N= 117 ) (+/- 9.1% MoE)	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cumulative</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cumulative</i>
\$30 or More	34,124	100%	37,313	100%
Up to \$30	32,389	95%	35,223	94%
Up to \$27	31,702	93%	34,195	92%
Up to \$24	29,752	87%	33,206	89%
Up to \$21	28,832	84%	32,273	86%
Up to \$18	26,837	79%	29,465	79%
Up to \$15	22,398	66%	23,787	64%
Up to \$12	17,391	51%	18,413	49%
UP to \$9	8,241	24%	8,804	24%
Up to \$6	1,219	4%	1,236	3%

Table 6 (previous page) presents data representing each occupational sector *independently*. Additionally, Table 6 does not include non-working ALP members. Table 7, on the other hand, allows a general laborer or service sector worker to be classified in both sectors *if* he or she indicates a willingness to change fields of employment. Additionally, it is assumed that a non-working ALP member will take a job (all things being equal) in either the general labor sector or the service sector.

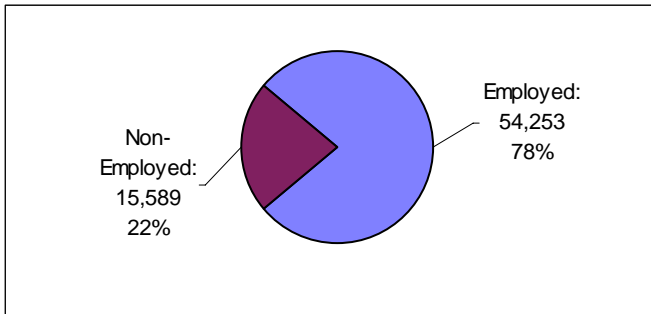
High-skilled blue-collar workers and professional white-collar workers are excluded from Table 7 because it is presumed that, as a general rule, people in occupations such as Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers, Professors, Machinists, Electricians, etc... are unlikely to transfer into lower-skilled general labor and service/support occupations. It is also presumed that, because professional and highly skilled occupations require extensive education and/or training, lower-skilled general laborers and service sector workers are unable to transfer to higher-skilled labor or professional positions - at least in the near term.

## Underutilization Among Available Labor Pool Workers

Underutilization — individuals possessing skills and/or training that exceeds the responsibilities of their current job — is a significant issue in many communities. To assess underutilization in the St. Joseph Labor Basin, *employed members of the ALP* were presented with a scenario describing underutilization. They were then asked a series of questions assessing if they perceived themselves as underutilized because: 1) their skill level is greater than their current job requires, 2) they possess higher levels of education than is required on the job, 3) they earned a higher income at a similar job previously, or 4) they were limited in the number of hours that they could work.

Of the 54,253 *employed members* of the ALP (shown in Figure 11), slightly more than half answered “yes” to one or more of the questions presented above and are considered underutilized. Figure 12 shows that the underutilized workers represent 38% (or 20,844 individuals) of the employed members of the ALP.

**Figure 11: Employed Members of the Available Labor Pool**



**Figure 12: Underutilized Workers**

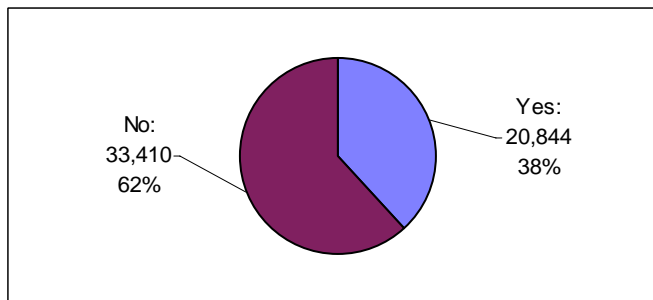


Figure 13 shows the percentages of the positive responses (i.e., “yes” answers) to the various measures of underutilization. About 28% (or 5,764 members) of this subset of the ALP consider themselves as possessing education levels exceeding those needed for their current jobs, while about 27% (5,664) consider themselves underutilized because they have skills that are not being used on the job. Twenty-two percent (4,513) had a previous job that provided more income, while about 13% (2,675) suggest they are not able to work enough hours.

**Figure 13: Reasons for Underutilization**

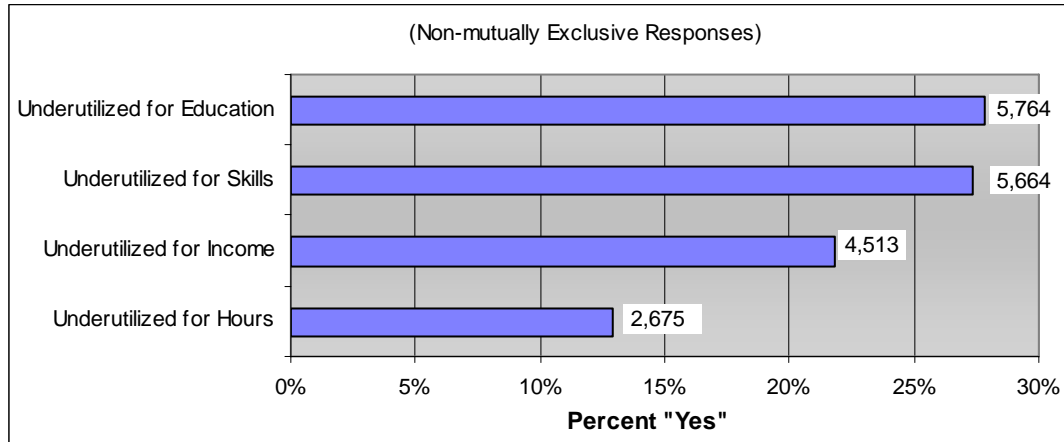


Table 8 and Figure 14 (next page) show some characteristics of the underutilized members of the Available Labor Pool. Table 8 indicates that the education level of the underutilized workers compares to the overall ALP with almost 60% having at least some college education and 34% having completed associate’s degrees. (Table 1 shows that 63% of the entire ALP have some college experience and 34% having completed an associate’s degree).

**Table 8: Highest Level of Education Achieved Among Underutilized**

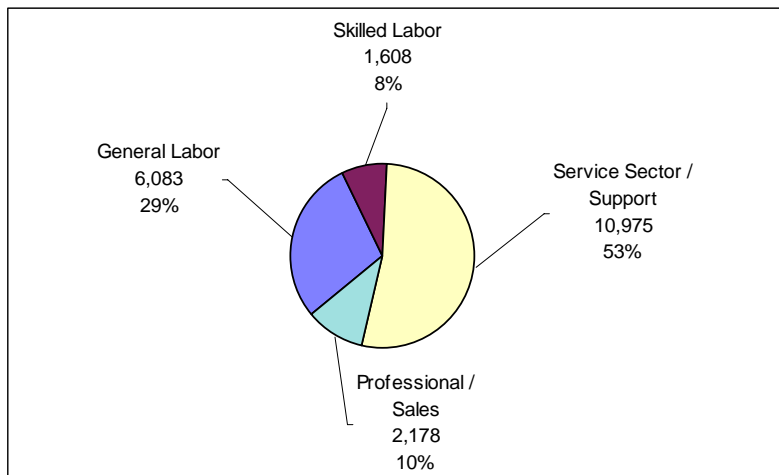
	Number	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Doctoral Degree	515	2.5	2.5
Masters Degree	879	4.2	6.7
Bachelors Degree	4,058	19.5	26.2
Associates Degree	1,674	8.0	34.2
Some College	5,241	25.1	59.3
High School Diploma Only	7,856	37.7	97.0
Less HS Diploma	619	3.0	100.0
Total	20,844	100	

The total might not sum precisely due to rounding.

Figure 14 shows that 29% (6,083 individuals) of the underutilized workers are employed as general laborers and 8% (1,608) are employed as skilled blue-collar workers. Most underutilized workers are employed as service sector and support workers (53% or 10,975 individuals), while 10% (2,178) hold professional positions.

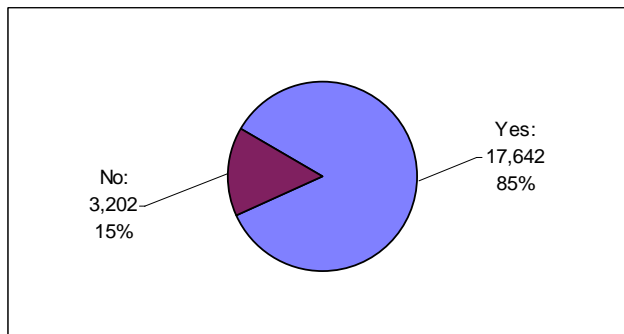
Comparing Figure 14 to Figure 2 suggests that more general laborers and service workers consider themselves as underutilized than do skilled laborers and professional workers. Figure 2 shows that the ALP consists of: 21% general laborers, 10% skilled-laborers, 47% service workers, and 22% professionals. Figure 14 shows: 29% general laborers, 8% skilled-laborers, 53% service workers, and 10% professionals.

**Figure 14: Occupational Sectors of Underutilized Workers**



Respondents indicating that they were underutilized were also asked a follow-up question addressing the willingness to change jobs in order for them to better utilize their skills and/or education. Figure 15 suggests that a substantial portion – 85% (or 17,642 individuals) - of the underutilized workers are willing to change jobs to address underutilization.

**Figure 15: Willing to Change Job to Better Use Skills/Education**



## Methodology

The St. Joseph Labor Basin has a total population of approximately 224,581, and a Civilian Labor Force (CLF) of 124,640. The Docking Institute's analysis suggests that the basin contains an Available Labor Pool (ALP) of 69,843 individuals.

### ***Explaining the Civilian Labor Force***

Traditional methods of assessing the dynamics of the labor force have concentrated on what the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) calls the Civilian Labor Force (CLF). The CLF represents "the civilian non-institutional population, 16 years of age and over classified as employed or unemployed." The BLS defines "non-institutional civilians" as those individuals who are not inmates in institutions and who are not on active duty in the Armed Forces; and "unemployed civilians" as civilians available for work and who had "made specific efforts to find employment" in the previous four weeks.

While a review of CLF statistics represents the starting point for understanding the labor force in the St. Joseph Labor Basin, there are some limitations associated with these statistics. These limitations occur because the CLF *excludes* individuals who may be willing and able to be gainfully employed but have not made specific efforts to find employment in the last four weeks. These individuals may include full-time students who do not work, homemakers, the unemployed who are no longer seeking employment, military personnel who may be leaving military employment in the near future and retired individuals who may be available for work but have not been looking for work recently.

In addition, most new employers draw their workforce from those who are presently employed, not those who are unemployed. As such, Census-based and BLS data (such as the CLF) do not specifically address the possibility of workers moving from one industry to another in search of other employment opportunities.

### ***Defining the Available Labor Pool***

An alternative to the CLF is the "Available Labor Pool<sup>4</sup>." The Available Labor Pool is composed of workers categorized as either 1) currently not working *but* looking for employment, 2) currently employed (full- or part-time) *and* looking for other full-time employment, 3) currently not working in any manner *but* willing to consider different employment for the *right opportunity*, and 4) currently employed and not looking, *but* willing to consider different employment for the *right opportunity*.

There are two key differences between the Civilian Labor Force and the Available Labor Pool. First, the Available Labor Pool methodology expands the pool of potential workers by including workers excluded from the CLF<sup>5</sup>. Secondly, the number of potential workers is then

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<sup>4</sup> The Available Labor Pool includes potential workers excluded from the CLF (such as full-time students willing to take a job, homemakers who have not yet sought employment, military personnel who may be leaving military employment in the near future, and retired individuals who may be willing and able to be gainfully employed).

<sup>5</sup> The number that is added to the Civilian Labor Force is derived by taking from the survey the total number of full-time students, homemakers, military, retirees, and long-term unemployed, who state that they are seeking or available for employment and are within a reasonable commute distance to the center of the labor basin, and dividing this number by the total number of respondents. This quotient is then multiplied by the total number of people in the labor basin who are 18 to 65 years old.

*restricted* to those workers who indicate they are looking for work or are available for new employment. The advantage of this methodology is that it allows researchers to examine those members of the labor pool who have a propensity to consider a job opportunity given their employment expectations. Even with these restrictions, it should be noted that, in practice, not all members of the Available Labor Pool would apply for a new job opportunity. However, the Available Labor Pool figure for a labor basin reveals to current employers and potential employers better information about the quantity and quality of the labor pool than do Civilian Labor Force data and unemployment statistics. The Available Labor Pool for the St. Joseph Labor Basin includes 69,843 individuals. This represents a substantial number of workers and potential workers for employers to draw upon in the St. Joseph Labor Basin.

### **Survey Research Methods**

Data for this study was collected from a random digit telephone survey<sup>6</sup> of adults living in six counties in northwest Missouri and two counties in northeast Kansas. Surveying took place from January 11, 2006 to February 9, 2006, using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. A total of 1,497 households were successfully contacted during the data collection period, and a randomly selected adult<sup>7</sup> in each was asked to participate in the study. In 686 households the selected adult agreed to be interviewed. This represents a cooperation rate of 46% and a margin of error of +/-3.74%.

Survey respondents that were 65 years of age or older and retired or over 65 and not working and not interested in a new or different job were not asked the entire battery of survey questions and are not included in the analysis of this report. The remaining respondents (all other working and non-working respondents) total to 465, and are considered eligible respondents. Of the 465 cooperating and eligible respondents, 47% (or 219) indicated that they were available for new or different employment and/or were looking for a new or different job. This subgroup is considered the Available Labor Pool for the St. Joseph Labor Basin. Responses from 219 individuals provides a margin of error of +/- 6.62%.

The study sponsors and Institute personnel agreed upon the survey items used, with the former identifying the study objectives and the latter developing items and methodologies that were valid, reliable, and unbiased. Question wording and design of the survey instrument are the property of the Docking Institute. A detailed summary of the method of analysis used in this report can be found in Joseph A. Aistrup, Michael S. Walker, and Brett A. Zollinger, "The Kansas Labor Force Survey: The Available Labor Pool and Underemployment." *Kansas Department of Human Resources*, 2002.

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<sup>6</sup> The telephone numbers were assembled by randomly generating suffixes within specific area codes and prefixes. As such, unlisted numbers were included in this sample, minimizing the potential for response bias. Known business, fax, modem, and disconnected numbers were screened from the sample in efforts to reach households only (and to minimize surveyor dialing time).

Up to eight attempts were made to contact each respondent during three calling periods (10 AM to Noon, 2 PM to 4 PM, and 6 PM to 9 PM). Initial refusals were re-attempted by specially trained "refusal converters," which aided in the cooperation rate.

<sup>7</sup> Surveyors requested to "speak with an adult over the age of 17 that has had the most recent birthday."

## Appendix I: Current Employment Status of Available Labor Pool

	Current Employment Status of ALP	
	Number	Percent
General Labor/Construction/Cleaning	4,774	6.8
Farm Labor/Ranch Hand/Landscaping	979	1.4
Delivery/Driver/Courier	360	0.5
Maintenance/Wiring/Plumbing	1,140	1.6
Factory Worker/Grain Elevator/Meat Packer	801	1.1
Truck Driver/Heavy Equipment Operator	3,309	4.7
Police/Fire/Postal/Military Enlisted	1,382	2.0
Lab or Medical Tech/Comp Tech/Programmer	1,404	2.0
Mechanic/Welder/Carpenter/Electrician	2,776	4.0
Other Blue Collar	0	0.0
General Customer Service/Retail/Reception/Waitress	8,705	12.5
Clerical/Secretary/Book-Keeper/Bank Teller	3,993	5.7
Para-legal/Para-pro/CNA/Care Assistance	1,856	2.7
Nurse/LPN/RN/Semi-skilled Social Service	4,340	6.2
Office Manager/Small Business Owner	6,759	9.7
Writer/Instructor/Researcher	1,765	2.5
Sales/Marketing/Accounting	3,987	5.7
Govt., Non-Profit, or Bus Exec/Farm Owner/Military Officer	1,045	1.5
Teacher/Counselor/Social Worker/Physician's Assistant	2,629	3.8
Professor/Doctor/Scientist/Engineer/Attorney	2,251	3.2
Other White Collar	0	0.0
Homemaker	6,058	8.7
Full-Time Student	3,661	5.2
Unemployed	4,045	5.8
Retired	652	0.9
Disabled	1,173	1.7
Total	69,843	100

The total might not sum precisely due to rounding.

## Appendix II: Hourly Wage to Annual Salary Conversion Chart

Hourly Wage	Annual Salary	Hourly Wage	Annual Salary
\$5.00	\$10,400		
\$5.50	\$11,440		
\$6.00	\$12,480		
\$6.50	\$13,520		
\$7.00	\$14,560		
\$7.50	\$15,600		
\$8.00	\$16,640		
\$8.50	\$17,680		
\$9.00	\$18,720		
\$9.50	\$19,760		
\$10.00	\$20,800		
\$10.50	\$21,840		
\$11.00	\$22,880		
\$11.50	\$23,920		
\$12.00	\$24,960		
\$12.50	\$26,000		
\$13.00	\$27,040		
\$13.50	\$28,080		
\$14.00	\$29,120		
\$14.50	\$30,160		
\$15.00	\$31,200		
\$15.50	\$32,240		
\$16.00	\$33,280		
\$16.50	\$34,320		
\$17.00	\$35,360		
\$17.50	\$36,400		
\$18.00	\$37,440		
\$18.50	\$38,480		
\$19.00	\$39,520		
\$19.50	\$40,560		
\$20.00	\$41,600		
\$20.50	\$42,640		
\$21.00	\$43,680		
\$21.50	\$44,720		
\$22.00	\$45,760		
\$22.50	\$46,800		
\$23.00	\$47,840		
\$23.50	\$48,880		
\$24.00	\$49,920		
\$24.50	\$50,960		
\$25.00	\$52,000		
\$25.50	\$53,040		
\$26.00	\$54,080		
\$26.50	\$55,120		
\$27.00	\$56,160		
\$27.50	\$57,200		
\$28.00	\$58,240		
\$28.50	\$59,280		
\$29.00	\$60,320		
\$29.50	\$61,360		
		\$30.00	\$62,400
		\$30.50	\$63,440
		\$31.00	\$64,480
		\$31.50	\$65,520
		\$32.00	\$66,560
		\$32.50	\$67,600
		\$33.00	\$68,640
		\$33.50	\$69,680
		\$34.00	\$70,720
		\$34.50	\$71,760
		\$35.00	\$72,800
		\$35.50	\$73,840
		\$36.00	\$74,880
		\$36.50	\$75,920
		\$37.00	\$76,960
		\$37.50	\$78,000
		\$38.00	\$79,040
		\$38.50	\$80,080
		\$39.00	\$81,120
		\$39.50	\$82,160
		\$40.00	\$83,200
		\$40.50	\$84,240
		\$41.00	\$85,280
		\$41.50	\$86,320
		\$42.00	\$87,360
		\$42.50	\$88,400
		\$43.00	\$89,440
		\$43.50	\$90,480
		\$44.00	\$91,520
		\$44.50	\$92,560
		\$45.00	\$93,600
		\$45.50	\$94,640
		\$46.00	\$95,680
		\$46.50	\$96,720
		\$47.00	\$97,760
		\$47.50	\$98,800
		\$48.00	\$99,840
		\$48.50	\$100,880
		\$49.00	\$101,920
		\$49.50	\$102,960
		\$50.00	\$104,000



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