

# Leake County, MS Workforce Analysis & Target Business Sectors

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Prepared in Collaboration with Kosciusko Attala Partnership, Leake County Development Association, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and Winston County Economic Development District Partnership.





# Leake County, MS

## Workforce Analysis & Target Business Sector Identification

### Introduction

The four-county Central Mississippi region that includes Winston, Attala, Neshoba and Leake counties, under a cooperative agreement with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and the Central Electric Power Association, sought a workforce and economic development analysis. The analysis was envisioned to answer three key questions:

1. What is the current state and capacity of the workforce?
2. What additional or expanded workforce development strategies are needed?
3. What target business sectors are best suited to the regional workforce?

Younger Associates (YA) was selected to conduct the analysis based upon the company's past experience and successes in developing projects of this exact nature and the company's proposed approach to the analysis. The methodology for the Workforce Analysis included:

- » Labor Shed determination
- » Demographic profile of the Labor Shed
- » Analysis of the current employment base
- » Wage comparisons
- » Examination of concentrations by industry sectors and occupational clusters
- » Workforce Survey to determine a number of key and hidden workforce factors
- » Examination of the talent pipeline
- » Input from local employers and educators
- » Review of training and career pathways for high in-demand skills and occupations

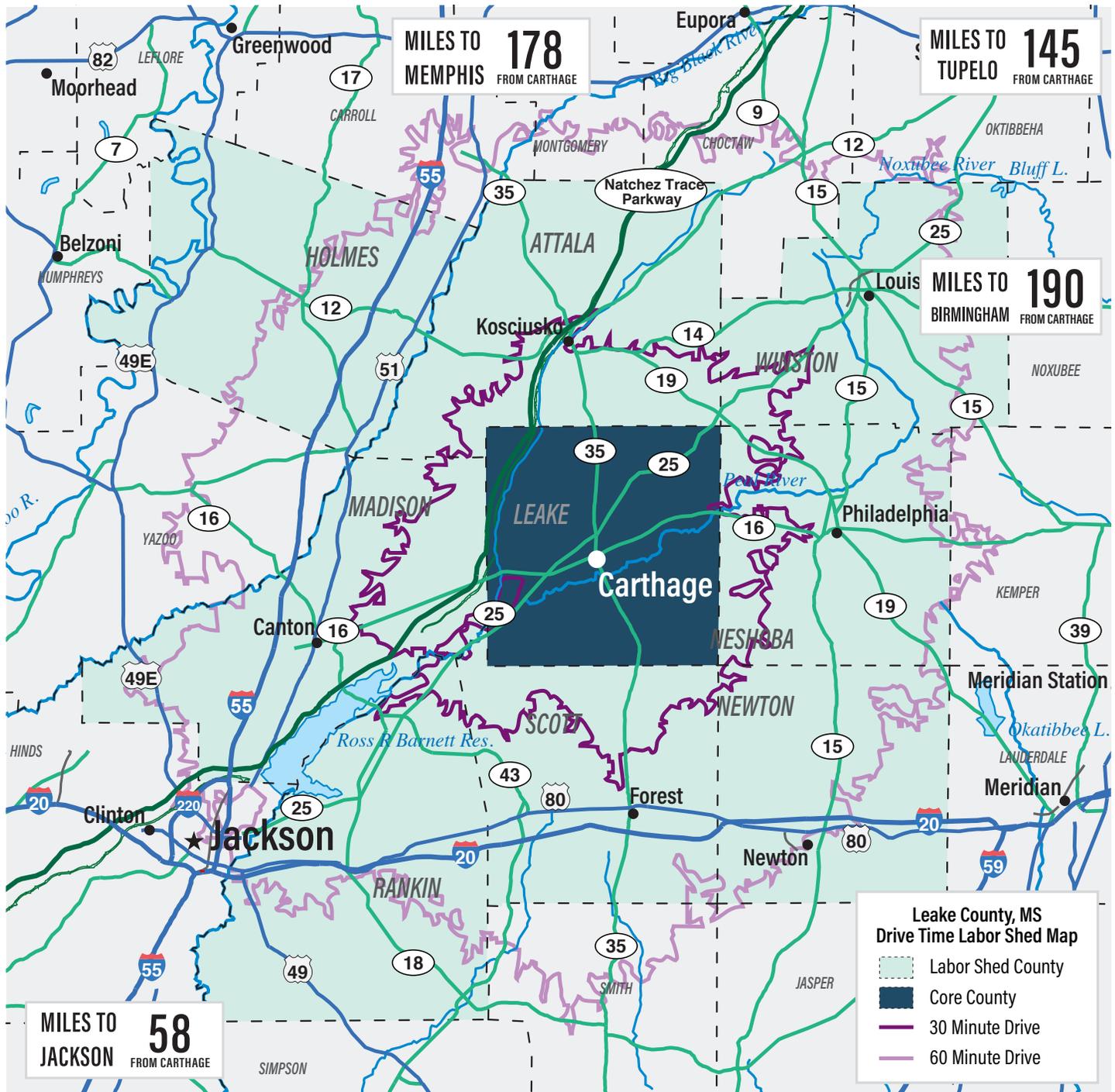
The methodology for the Target Business Sector Analysis (this is often called a Target Industry Analysis, but the YA approach looks at all applicable business sectors and opportunities) included:

- » Existing business, economic base review
- » Locational advantages review
- » Sites and buildings review
- » Business sector screening by NAICS code for several factors outlined later in this report
- » Input from employers, educators and other community leaders
- » Development and application of localized criteria to identify the targets

# Labor Shed Determination

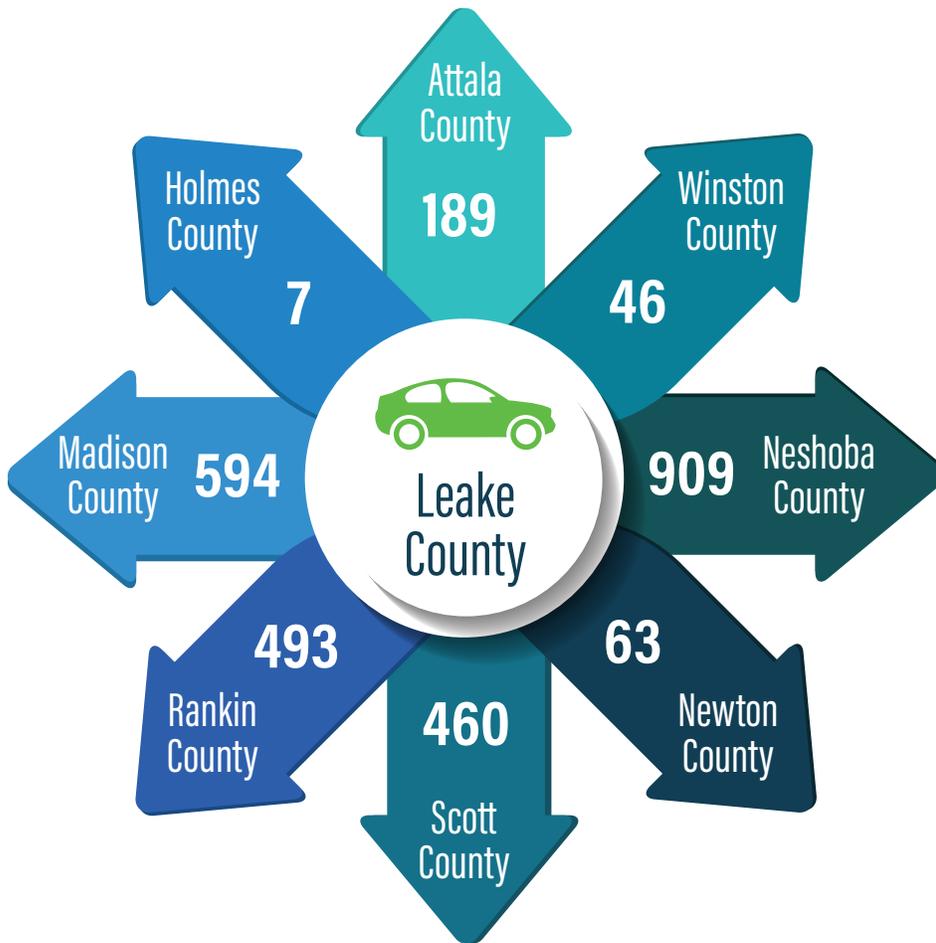
Based on existing commuting patterns, distances and travel times, the first step in the Workforce Analysis was the determination of the Leake County Labor Shed. The Leake County Labor Shed includes Attala, Holmes, Leake, Newton, Madison, Neshoba, Rankin, Scott and Winston counties. A 30-minute drive time from Carthage, located near the center of Leake County, covers portions of all of these counties except Holmes; a one-hour drive time includes all or most of them.

Map 1. Leake County Labor Shed



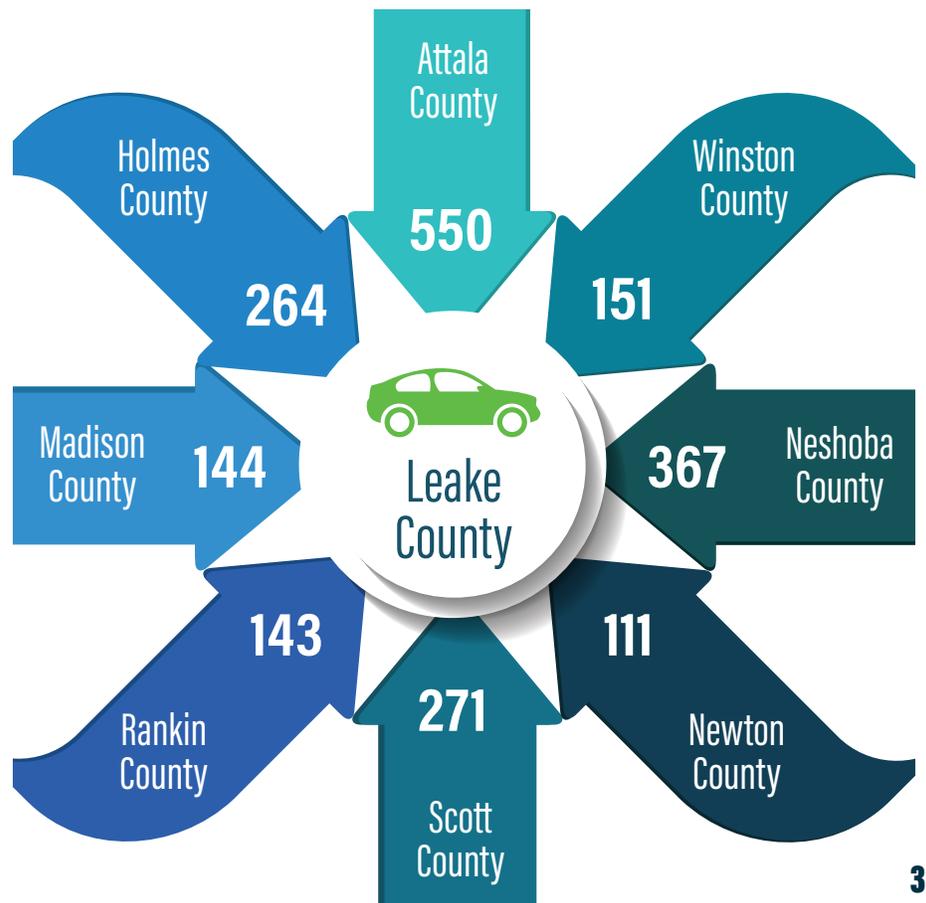
# Commute Patterns

Data from the U.S. Department of Commerce shows the following inflow and outflow of workers within the Leake County Labor Shed.



**Chart 1. Out-Flow Commuting Patterns**  
People who live in Leake County and commute to another county for work.

**Chart 2. In-Flow Commuting Patterns**  
People who live in another county and commute into Leake County for work.



# Demographic Profile of the Labor Shed

Leake County's labor market area has an estimated 2017 population of 395,497. The Labor Shed population has increased 4.34% since the 2010 census, a rate of growth faster than state of Mississippi. Population projections to 2022 anticipate a continued growth in population for the Labor Shed of over 2.4%.

**Table 1. Summary Demographic Profile for Leake County**

Labor Shed Counties include: Attala, Holmes, Leake, Newton, Madison, Neshoba, Rankin, Scott & Winston

	Leake County	Leake Labor Shed	Mississippi	United States
<b>Population</b>				
2000 Census	20,939	329,707	2,844,652	281,421,942
2010 Census	23,805	379,047	2,967,297	308,745,538
2017 Estimate	22,409	395,497	2,995,771	325,139,271
2022 Projection	21,725	405,073	3,018,507	337,393,057
<b>Population Growth</b>				
Percent Change: 2000 to 2010	13.69%	14.96%	4.31%	9.71%
Percent Change: 2010 to 2017	-5.86%	4.34%	0.96%	5.31%
Percent Change: 2017 to 2022	-3.05%	2.42%	0.76%	3.77%
<b>Average Age</b>	<b>37.70</b>	<b>38.32</b>	<b>38.40</b>	<b>39.10</b>
<b>Education Attainment</b>				
No High School Diploma	25.59%	14.78%	17.69%	13.43%
High School Graduate (or GED)	35.30%	26.23%	30.21%	27.83%
Some College, No Degree	20.38%	22.48%	22.96%	21.10%
Associate's Degree	7.69%	8.63%	8.51%	8.04%
Bachelor's Degree	8.35%	16.93%	12.91%	18.43%
Master's Degree	2.09%	7.21%	5.53%	7.91%
Post Graduate Degree	0.61%	3.74%	2.20%	3.25%
<b>2017 Est. Average Household Income</b>	<b>\$ 58,203.00</b>	<b>\$ 75,996.23</b>	<b>\$ 58,480.00</b>	<b>\$ 80,853.00</b>
<b>Civilian Labor Force Participation Percentage</b>	<b>54.0%</b>	<b>56.7%</b>	<b>57.8%</b>	<b>63.5%</b>

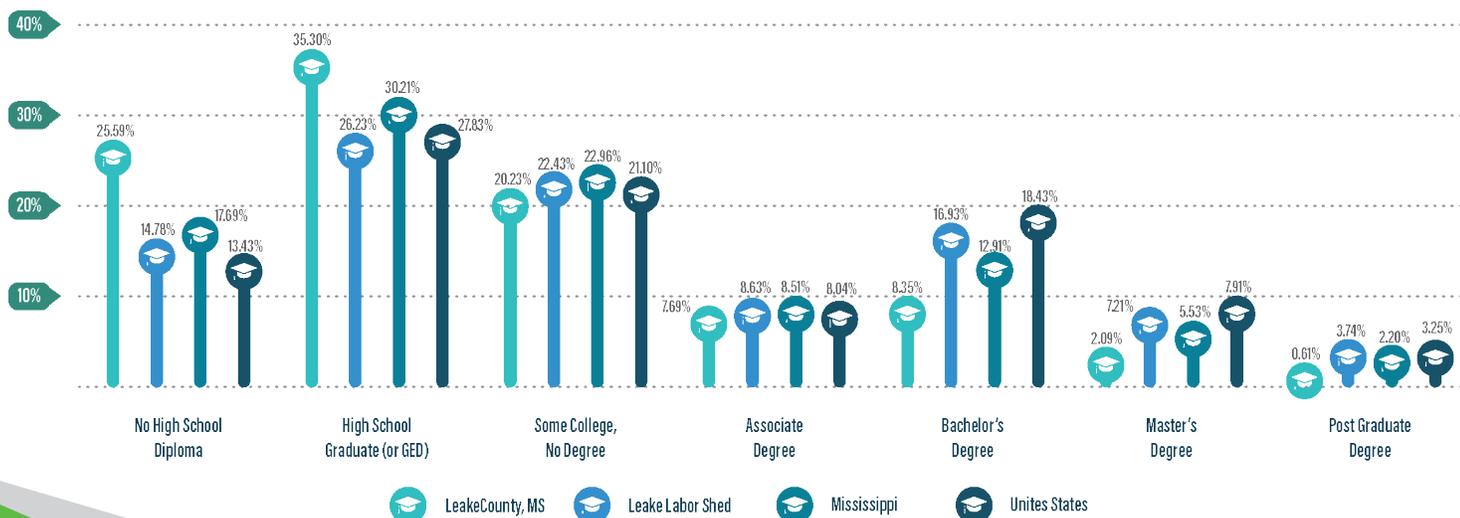
Appendix A of this report contains complete demographic profiles for:

- » Leake County
- » Leake County Labor Shed (all counties)
- » 30-Minute Commute Zone from Carthage, MS
- » 60-Minute Commute Zone from Carthage, MS
- » State of Mississippi
- » United States

These reports can provide much of the data regarding the local populations and comparisons to state and U.S. data that are used in site location decisions and grant writing.

**Chart 3. Education Attainment for Leake County, Leake Labor Shed, State of Mississippi and the U.S.**

Labor Shed Counties Include: Attala, Holmes, Leake, Newton, Madison, Neshoba, Rankin, Scott & Winston



# Review of Existing Occupations

A review of existing occupations in the Labor Shed shows the number of occupations in which the region has concentrations of employment that are significantly higher than the national average (location quotient, LQ). Of those occupations, most are projected to experience national growth over the next five years. A full report of all occupations is provided in [Appendix B](#).

The abbreviated table, Table 2, below shows the occupations with 40 or more employees that have the highest local concentrations (LQ).

**Table 2. Leake County, MS Labor Shed - Occupations with High Concentrations**

Labor Shed Counties include: Attala, Holmes, Leake, Newton, Madison, Neshoba, Rankin, Scott, & Winston

SOC	Description	2016 Jobs	2022 Jobs	2016 - 2022 Change	2016 - 2022 Percent Change	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2016 Location Quotient	National 2016 Jobs	National 2022 Jobs	2016 - 2022 National Change	National Avg. Hourly Earnings
51-3022	Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	3,273	3,212	(61)	(2%)	\$10.67	18.10	153,998	158,555	2,611	\$12.27
51-9193	Cooling and Freezing Equipment Operators and Tenders	127	126	(1)	(1%)	\$11.83	12.79	8,437	8,861	795	\$15.49
51-3023	Slaughterers and Meat Packers	1,192	1,181	(11)	(1%)	\$11.67	12.48	81,388	84,675	2,056	\$13.00
45-4021	Fallers	114	106	(8)	(7%)	\$20.30	11.89	8,180	7,700	(2,627)	\$19.09
45-4022	Logging Equipment Operators	385	407	22	6%	\$16.83	7.68	42,715	41,936	(10,103)	\$17.34
31-1013	Psychiatric Aides	576	471	(105)	(18%)	\$8.86	6.89	71,118	75,524	7,190	\$13.82
51-3099	Food Processing Workers, All Other	218	222	4	2%	\$9.62	4.20	44,243	47,798	5,698	\$12.41
51-4122	Welding, Soldering, and Brazing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	217	209	(8)	(4%)	\$17.47	3.85	48,048	44,962	(12,426)	\$18.39
51-3093	Food Cooking Machine Operators and Tenders	166	172	7	4%	\$11.04	3.81	36,965	39,090	4,630	\$14.58
51-2092	Team Assemblers	4,872	5,315	442	9%	\$15.50	3.71	1,118,761	1,174,349	(22,234)	\$15.67
45-4011	Forest and Conservation Workers	54	76	23	43%	\$14.26	3.68	12,388	13,420	1,350	\$15.01
19-1031	Conservation Scientists	92	99	7	7%	\$24.62	3.57	21,927	23,201	1,859	\$31.29
51-4071	Foundry Mold and Coremakers	51	46	(5)	(10%)	\$13.31	3.50	12,376	11,029	(5,749)	\$17.32
47-5012	Rotary Drill Operators, Oil and Gas	67	99	32	48%	\$34.35	3.50	16,341	17,679	356	\$27.50
35-2011	Cooks, Fast Food	2,026	1,960	(65)	(3%)	\$8.83	3.26	528,589	515,067	28,516	\$9.85
51-6041	Shoe and Leather Workers and Repairers	41	44	3	7%	\$12.26	3.23	10,897	10,656	(2,474)	\$12.11
43-4041	Credit Authorizers, Checkers, and Clerks	134	135	1	1%	\$15.57	2.98	38,293	38,374	(3,445)	\$18.91
49-9044	Millwrights	143	146	4	3%	\$23.39	2.95	41,102	46,007	5,099	\$25.94
49-9043	Maintenance Workers, Machinery	299	338	39	13%	\$20.52	2.73	93,326	101,297	7,824	\$22.11

**Table 2. Leake County, MS Labor Shed - Occupations with High Concentrations (Continued)**

SOC	Description	2016 Jobs	2022 Jobs	2016 - 2022 Change	2016 - 2022 Percent Change	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2016 Location Quotient	National 2016 Jobs	National 2022 Jobs	2016 - 2022 National Change	National Avg. Hourly Earnings
43-5041	Meter Readers, Utilities	106	97	(9)	(8%)	\$13.99	2.66	33,991	32,115	(3,552)	\$20.14
39-3099	Entertainment Attendants and Related Workers, All Other	43	46	3	7%	\$10.36	2.46	14,930	16,722	3,628	\$11.88
45-2041	Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products	168	161	(7)	(4%)	\$10.92	2.41	59,541	60,882	4,447	\$11.68
45-2093	Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals	260	251	(9)	(3%)	\$12.60	2.38	93,106	97,369	12,244	\$12.84
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	332	403	71	21%	\$28.13	2.36	119,737	134,788	28,545	\$32.17
19-4041	Geological and Petroleum Technicians	40	52	11	27%	\$34.23	2.30	15,002	16,369	1,608	\$29.92
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	5,188	5,879	691	13%	\$19.86	2.28	1,934,033	2,058,305	103,185	\$20.58
45-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers	137	148	11	8%	\$18.25	2.26	51,757	51,880	1,088	\$22.85
11-1031	Legislators	143	136	(7)	(5%)	\$11.85	2.20	55,395	55,529	(1,883)	\$21.55
53-7063	Machine Feeders and Offbearers	231	244	14	6%	\$12.36	2.19	89,704	91,931	(5,376)	\$14.66
39-4031	Morticians, Undertakers, and Funeral Directors	67	67	0	0%	\$20.12	2.08	27,348	28,627	859	\$26.07

## Wages

Average wages for all occupations in the Leake County Labor Shed are \$18.18 per hour. This is \$5.01 per hour, or 27.5% below the national average of \$23.19. Only occupations related to forestry and wood products have local wages above the national average.

Since ten of the occupations with high LQs in the local Labor Shed are projected to see local and/or national decline over the next five years, there are opportunities to transition the workers in these occupations to other industries. This is reflected in the target industry recommendations.

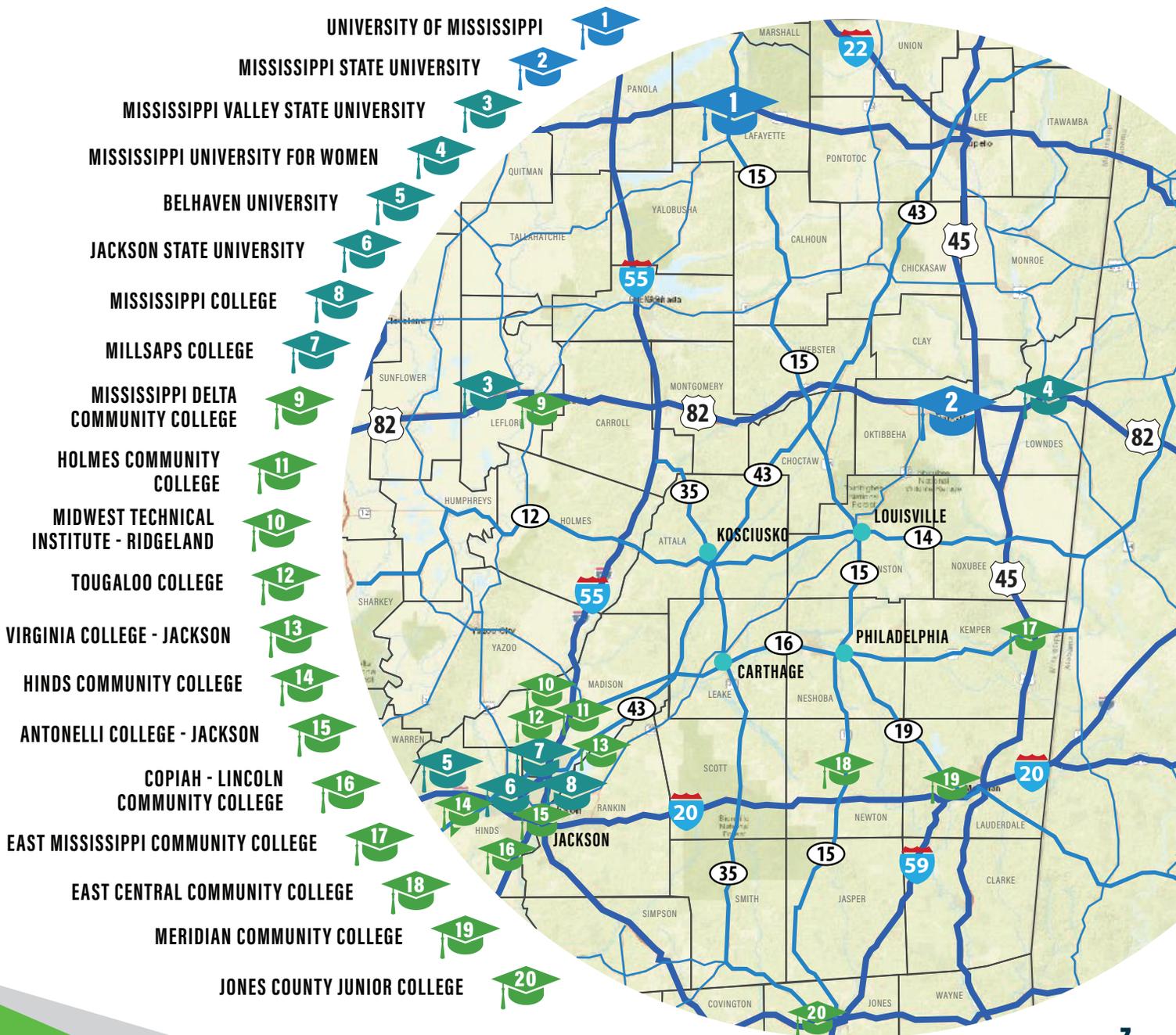
In total, existing businesses in the Labor Shed are projected to generate an increase of over 27,324 jobs over the next five years. This projected increase in employment, paired with prevailing low wages and no growth in the local population base indicates that there will be market pressure to increase local wages.

# Talent Pipeline

A review of higher education institutions and program completions in the region serving the Central Mississippi Labor Shed reveals a substantial pipeline of future talent for any locating or expanding industry.

For this analysis, we included all colleges and technical schools within 95-100 miles of the center point of the four-county region in this study. However, we excluded the colleges within this radius located in Alabama to keep from overstating the size of the talent pipeline. While these higher education institutions could likely supply some of the talent for Central Mississippi, they are more focused on serving their local area.

**Map 2. Higher Education Institutions Serving the Central Mississippi Labor Shed**



**Table 3. Higher Education Completions**

A total of 20 institutions offer programs of general and technical education ranging from technical certificates to doctoral degrees, providing a steady supply of talent.

Institution	Award of less than 1 academic year	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	Associate Degree	Award of at least 2 years, but less than 4	Bachelor's Degree	Post-Baccalaureate Certificate	Master's Degree	Post-Master's Certificate	Doctorate Degree	All Certificates	All Degrees	All Completions
Antonelli College - Jackson	0	32	115	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	115	147
Belhaven University	3	0	38	0	514	1	358	22	0	26	910	936
Copiah-Lincoln Community College	65	65	597	0	0	0	0	0	0	130	597	727
East Central Community College	0	116	483	0	0	0	0	0	0	116	483	599
East Mississippi Community College	49	124	772	0	0	0	0	0	0	173	772	945
Hinds Community College	675	1459	1545	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,134	1,545	3,679
Holmes Community College	0	232	1061	0	0	0	0	0	0	232	1,061	1,293
Jackson State University	0	0	0	0	984	0	434	13	86	13	1,504	1,517
Jones County Junior College	80	382	873	0	0	0	0	0	0	462	873	1,335
Meridian Community College	90	186	527	5	0	0	0	0	0	281	527	808
Midwest Technical Institute - Ridgeland	361	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	382	0	382
Millsaps College	0	0	0	0	179	0	41	0	0	0	220	220
Mississippi College	0	0	0	0	579	0	585	4	196	4	1,360	1,364
Mississippi Delta Community College	0	131	397	0	0	0	0	0	0	131	397	528
Mississippi State University	0	0	0	0	3,302	0	716	17	236	17	4,254	4,271
Mississippi University for Women	0	0	41	0	739	0	83	1	1	1	864	865
Mississippi Valley State University	0	0	0	0	305	0	108	0	0	0	413	413
Tougaloo College	0	0	0	0	141	0	0	0	0	0	141	141
University of Mississippi	0	0	0	0	3826	5	957	16	548	21	5,331	5,352
Virginia College - Jackson	17	167	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	184	17	201
	<b>1,340</b>	<b>2,915</b>	<b>6,466</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10,569</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3,282</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>1,067</b>	<b>4,339</b>	<b>21,384</b>	<b>25,723</b>

Appendix C contains detailed completions by program, degree/certificate and institution.

These 20 higher education institutions produce over 25,700 program completions per year.



# Workforce Survey

In addition to analyzing published secondary data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Department of Education, the Mississippi Departments of Labor and Workforce Development and proprietary data sources, Younger Associates conducted a workforce survey to collect information not found in any published secondary data. This includes underemployment and the not-employed-but-interested cohort, most of whom are not included in unemployment statistics.

The YA survey team was in the region September 14-16, 2017, and conducted 592 intercept interviews of a demographically representative sample of the population. This number of surveys provides a  $\pm 4$  percent margin of error.

The interview team included both English and Spanish speaking researchers. The surveys were administered as brief verbal interviews so that there were no literacy or language barriers. The survey team worked during a range of different days, times and places to deliver results that are reflective of the Labor Shed population.

**Table 4.** List Survey Locations

Locations for the survey interviews were identified by local economic developers and included:

<b>Kosciusko - Attala County</b>	<b>Carthage - Leake County</b>	<b>Philadelphia - Neshoba County</b>
Kangaroo Crossing	Dirt Cheap	Piggly Wiggly
Sunflower	The Junction	Choctaw Post Office
WalMart Supercenter	WalMart Supercenter	WalMart Supercenter
	Piggly Wiggly	Vowell's Market Place
		Pearl River Resort
<b>Louisville - Winston County</b>	<b>Walnut Grove:</b>	<b>Bogue Chitto Community</b>
Northgate Shopping Center	Dollar General	Big Creek Store
WalMart Supercenter	South of the River Roux	
Winston County Courthouse		
R.E. Heinze Stadium at Louisville High School		

# Key Workforce Findings

## Currently Employed

Only **9.2%** of the currently employed population is **self-employed**, which is **slightly lower** than the other rural areas where self-employment is typically between **12% and 15%**.

12-15%  
9.2%

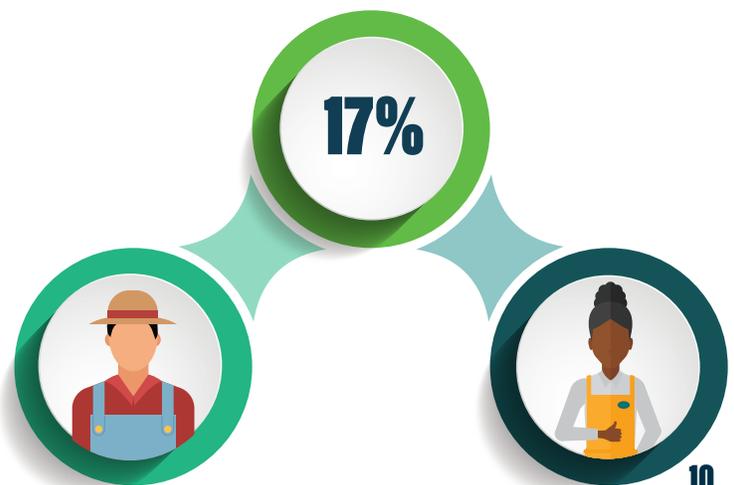


Among the **currently employed**, 73.5% report a **willingness to change jobs**, which is **higher** than the rates we have seen in other labor shed areas. Most respondents who are willing to change jobs want **higher pay** (as little as 50¢).



The average commute time in the labor shed is **27.4 minutes** versus the **34 minutes** in Leake County.

Almost **17%** of the currently employed have a **second job** with the most frequently cited second job being **farming, retail or services**.



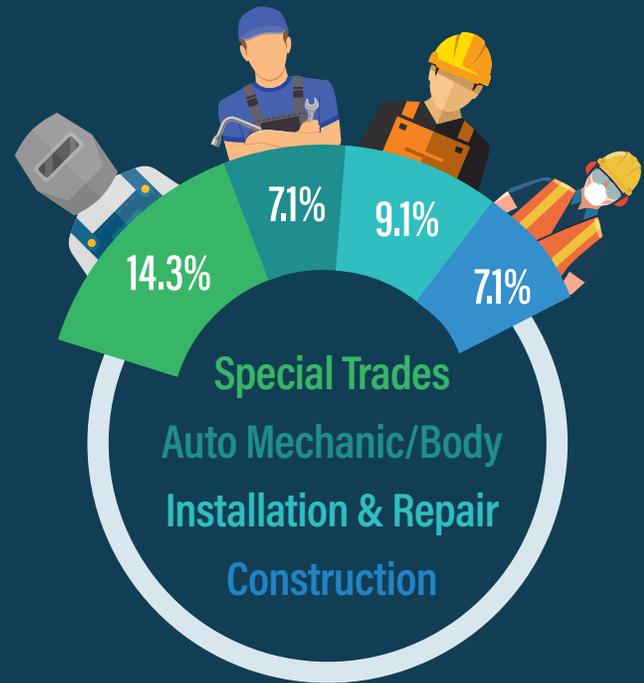
# Underemployed

Approximately **28%** of the workforce report being **underemployed**.

The rates we have measured across the country are typically more in the **14-18%** range.



Survey respondents who identified as underemployed listed specialized work experience or training for:



The underemployed are a significant resource for potential employees in the Central Mississippi Labor Shed. This includes people who:

- » Are employed part-time, but would prefer to be employed full-time
- » Are employed, but have experience, skills or training that qualify them for work in other fields
- » Are employed in second, and/or part-time jobs

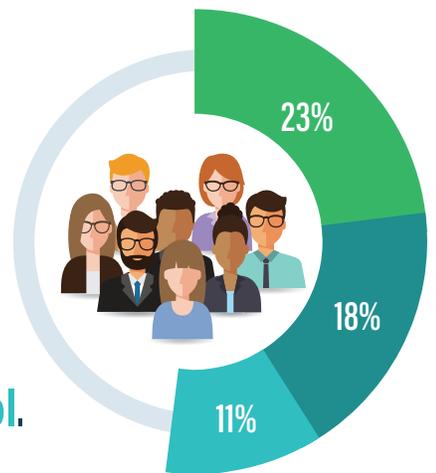
**15%** FEWER THAN  
HELD A CERTIFICATE OR WERE  
IN THE PROGRAM AT PRESENT

WorkKeys®

Among all survey respondents, **88%** were **aware** of the Work Keys/Career Readiness Certificate Program, a very high level, but fewer than **15%** either **held a certificate or were in the program** at present.

# Not Employed, But Interested

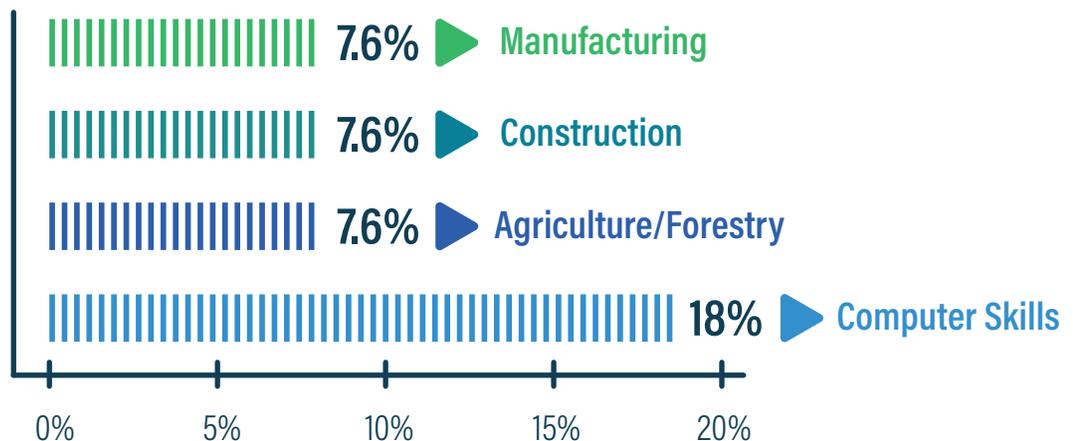
A significant cohort representing more than 10,000 people in the Labor Shed are not employed, but seeking jobs. Of those, 23% said they had applied for jobs, but not been hired; 18% cited layoffs or company closures; and 11% said they were attending school.



Unemployed cohort would be willing to work:

- 88.5% Willing to Train for New Skills
- Hourly Rate of \$10.29
- 70% Willing to Work Shifts

Top preferences among Not Employed for new skills training





**Table 5. Hidden Labor Reserves for Leake County, MS**

Labor Shed Counties Include: Attala, Holmes, Leake, Newton, Madison, Neshoba, Rankin, Scott, & Winston

Employment Characteristic	Leake County Labor Shed
Working Age Population 18-64	186,169
Adjustment - Institutionalized (3.4%)	179,756
Not Employed, But Interested in Employment from Survey	17.9%
Reported No Boundaries to Employment	48.0%
<b>Total Not Currently Employed, but Interested in Employment</b>	<b>15,445</b>
Employed Part Time Percentage from Survey	16.3%
Total Employed Part Time	18,957
Part-Employment, but Prefer Full-time Employment Percentage from Survey	68.7%
<b>Part-Employment, but Prefer Full-time Employment</b>	<b>13,024</b>
Employed, but Reported Underemployed Percentage from Survey	27.9%
Total Under-Employed	32,448
Want to Work in Their Area of Training/Skills/Education Percentage from Survey	74.3%
<b>Total Under-Employed and Want to Use Training/Skills/Education</b>	<b>24,109</b>
Annual Completions from All Training Providers in the Region (Technical, Associates & Beyond Degrees)	25,723
<b>Hidden Labor Reserves</b>	<b>78,300</b>

Full survey response data for Central Mississippi are included in Appendix D.

## Target Sector Screening

The determination of potential target business sectors for a community by Younger Associates is based upon numerous factors, including:

- » A review of existing employment and business establishments within the Labor Shed
- » A review of industry concentrations within the Labor Shed
- » A non-technical review of available sites and buildings
- » A screening of location quotients (LQ) by business sector
- » Interviews with major employers located in Central Mississippi
- » Interviews with higher education leaders
- » A review of any other pertinent locational strengths
- » An analysis of potential targets to determine growth potential and compatibility with local resources

# Existing Economic Base

Major private employers in Leake County are led by food manufacturing and health care.

**Table 6.** Leake County Major Employers

Company	Employees	Product or Services
Tyson Foods, Inc.	1,458	Food
Leake County School District	432	Education
WalMart	250	Retail
Baptist Healthcare – Leake	200	Health Care Services
Leake County, MS Services	176	Government
Central Electric Power Association	109	Utilities
Trend Health and Rehab	100	Health Care
N. L. Carson Construction	50	Construction
Trustmark National Bank	25	Bank
City of Carthage, MS	48	Municipal

A numeric screening of all business sectors identified the sectors that have at least twice the concentration of business activity as the national economy (an LQ of 2 or above). **Appendix E** contains a full list of all occupations. Table 7 on the next page lists these sectors with \$42,500 or higher average earnings per job. This wage benchmark was selected to focus on business sectors that have the potential to improve wage rates in the Central Mississippi region.

Further study of the industrial mix in the Labor Shed; however, reveals that more than a third of local industries in sectors that are projected to undergo a national decline in job numbers over the next five years. Some job loss will be due to modernization and automation of existing facilities, and to closing of outdated facilities. This does not necessarily dictate that there will be a decline in these industries locally (and in some cases, local growth is projected despite national decline), but the overall industry outlook is worthy of note.

Any of the sectors listed in Table 7 with a positive national growth rate projection could be considered a target for the Central Mississippi region that matches workforce resources.

**Table 7. Leake County, MS Labor Market Area Target Industry Sectors with Growth & Wage Potential**

Labor Shed Counties Include: Attala, Holmes, Leake, Newton, Madison, Neshoba, Rankin, Scott, & Winston

NAICS	Description	2016 Business Units	2016 Jobs	2022 Jobs	Increase of 50+ Jobs	2016 Location Quotient	Wages \$50K+	Avg. Earnings Per Job	National 2016 Jobs	National 2022 Jobs	Top 50 Growth	15%+ Growth
											2016 - 2022 National Change	2016 - 2022 National % Change
336112	Light Truck and Utility Vehicle Manufacturing	1	4,460	4,900	440	58.73	\$92,722	\$64,679	72,648	7,968	12%	
333924	Industrial Truck, Tractor, Trailer, and Stacker Machinery Manufacturing	3	684	634	(49)	23.33	\$62,876	24,963	27,943	2,979	12%	
331513	Steel Foundries (except Investment)	1	310	297	(13)	18.86	\$58,668	13,977	12,371	(1,606)	(11%)	
336360	Motor Vehicle Seating and Interior Trim Manufacturing	4	1,236	1,578	342	14.47	\$53,781	72,736	81,989	9,253	13%	
336211	Motor Vehicle Body Manufacturing	2	837	783	(54)	12.31	\$58,353	57,898	60,325	2,427	4%	
335313	Switchgear and Switchboard Apparatus Manufacturing	3	465	476	12	11.85	\$87,658	33,398	35,709	2,311	7%	
335129	Other Lighting Equipment Manufacturing	2	107	108	0	10.76	\$70,008	8,476	8,053	(424)	(5%)	
315190	Other Apparel Knitting Mills	1	61	30	(31)	10.64	\$45,273	4,870	3,871	(999)	(21%)	
213111	Drilling Oil and Gas Wells	5	442	803	361	7.94	\$83,053	47,380	42,467	(4,913)	(10%)	
337121	Upholstered Household Furniture Manufacturing	1	571	367	(205)	7.68	\$43,701	63,397	62,857	(541)	(1%)	
325120	Industrial Gas Manufacturing	7	164	150	(14)	7.49	\$64,048	18,630	18,593	(37)	(0%)	
113310	Logging	59	675	708	33	7.46	\$42,928	77,070	73,843	(3,228)	(4%)	
113110	Timber Tract Operations	9	27	30	3	5.88	\$278,399	3,862	4,257	395	10%	
423810	Construction and Mining (except Oil Well) Machinery and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers	17	573	787	214	5.67	\$79,927	86,058	90,963	4,905	6%	
311119	Other Animal Food Manufacturing	5	205	190	(15)	5.14	\$59,414	33,955	35,298	1,342	4%	
484122	General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Less Than Truckload	15	1,563	2,142	579	5.06	\$70,847	262,934	290,450	27,517	10%	
332992	Small Arms Ammunition Manufacturing	1	64	88	25	4.86	\$79,814	11,140	12,042	902	8%	
622210	Psychiatric and Substance Abuse Hospitals	2	601	648	47	4.49	\$48,241	114,188	141,403	27,216	24%	
334511	Search, Detection, Navigation, Guidance, Aeronautical, and Nautical System and Instrument Manufacturing	1	614	614	0	4.35	\$86,434	120,315	106,450	(13,865)	(12%)	
902619	All Other Schools and Educational Support Services (State Government)	1	78	31	(48)	4.27	\$57,604	15,570	15,422	(148)	(1%)	
336370	Motor Vehicle Metal Stamping	2	420	514	94	4.16	\$63,295	86,054	88,506	2,452	3%	
331110	Iron and Steel Mills and Ferroalloy Manufacturing	3	393	446	54	4.07	\$93,475	82,207	81,376	(830)	(1%)	
325991	Custom Compounding of Purchased Resins	1	78	95	17	3.80	\$92,398	17,374	17,251	(123)	(1%)	
423110	Automobile and Other Motor Vehicle Merchant Wholesalers	15	523	589	66	3.74	\$66,163	119,128	124,351	5,223	4%	
115210	Support Activities for Animal Production	5	173	190	17	3.57	\$45,426	41,185	43,595	2,410	6%	
517210	Wireless Telecommunications Carriers (except Satellite)	21	529	604	74	3.53	\$62,627	127,572	132,793	5,220	4%	
322211	Corrugated and Solid Fiber Box Manufacturing	4	376	482	106	3.44	\$60,689	93,132	89,786	(3,346)	(4%)	
321113	Sawmills	9	324	305	(19)	3.22	\$52,984	85,606	86,873	1,268	1%	
424710	Petroleum Bulk Stations and Terminals	9	126	118	(7)	3.21	\$50,806	33,342	36,149	2,807	8%	
621991	Blood and Organ Banks	3	270	381	111	3.21	\$46,238	71,528	79,795	8,266	12%	
484121	General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload	52	2,179	2,442	263	3.02	\$51,027	614,997	621,393	6,396	1%	
332618	Other Fabricated Wire Product Manufacturing	2	82	87	4	2.70	\$44,674	25,912	23,057	(2,856)	(11%)	
237130	Power and Communication Line and Related Structures Construction	20	551	814	263	2.59	\$81,678	181,115	240,120	59,005	33%	

# Recommended Target Sectors

## Primary Targeted Sectors

Correlating the existence of local skills and experience base due to the presence of existing industries with the growing sectors of the U.S. economy yields a list of potential industrial recruitment targets. The target list has been refined to only include industries that offer an average pay of more than \$42,500.

A review of all the data compiled for this analysis leads to the following recommendation for other primary targeted industrial recruitment sectors:

**321 – Wood Product Manufacturing.** The industry has been historically strong in the region, and the infrastructure is in place to support it. Again, Mississippi State University offers a strong talent pipeline. Specific sectors recommended for recruitment include:

**321113** – Sawmills. Average annual salary \$53,000. Projected national job growth through 2022, 1 percent.

**321999** – All Other Miscellaneous Wood Product Manufacturing.\*

**332 – Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing.** A major presence in the region, the skill sets are present in the workforce and training infrastructure exists from the technical certificate to graduate level. Several growth sectors exist nationally. Specific sectors recommended for recruitment include:

**332311** – Prefabricated Metal Building and Component Manufacturing.\*

**332999** – Small Arms Manufacturing. Annual salary \$79,900; anticipated average growth rate, 8 percent.

**333 – Machinery Manufacturing.** The presence of Mississippi State University and its excellent engineering program offers a steady source of skilled graduates, and the established manufacturing industry in the area has already proven the ability for success in the region. Specific sectors recommended for recruitment include:

**333111** – Farm Equipment and Machinery Manufacturing.\*

**333924** – Industrial Truck, Tractor, Trailer and Stacker Machinery Manufacturing. Average annual salary \$62,900. Projected national job growth through 2022, 12 percent.

**333995** – Fluid Power Cylinder and Actuator Manufacturing.\*

**336 – Transportation Equipment Manufacturing.** Given the presence in the larger region of four major automotive and heavy truck assembly plants, automotive assembly is essentially a mature industry in the region with little room for growth. However, assembly expansion in the southeast in general could spur an increased demand for second- and third-tier suppliers, and could cause those suppliers to review their existing manufacturing and distribution networks with an eye toward consolidation and/or relocation and modernization for optimum efficiency.

**336370** – Motor Vehicle Metal Stamping. Average annual salary \$68,000. Anticipated national job growth through 2022, 3 percent.

**336413** – Other Aircraft Parts and Auxillary Equipment Manufacturing. Average annual salary \$73,000. Anticipated national job growth through 2022, 7 percent.

**336211** – Motor Vehicle Body Manufacturing.\*

**336360** – Motor Vehicle Seating and Interior Trim Manufacturing.\*

\* While not included in the industry table for the Labor Shed, this subsector is present in the Central Mississippi region and should be investigated as a potential target.

## Primary Targeted Sectors (Cont.)

### Other Recommended Primary Targeted Sectors

**236210 – Industrial Building Construction.** Annual salary \$97,900. Projected average growth rate, 8 percent.

A look back at the post-high-school educational completions table referenced earlier in this report affirms that there is a pipeline for trained talent with the appropriate skill sets for these manufacturing sectors and for general business support such as business management and computer training. In particular, the number of engineering graduates from Mississippi State University is an attractive selling point for industries that may be concerned about their ability to hire the needed engineers.

### Secondary Targeted Sectors

Other sectors within each three-digit code would also be good fits for the region, as the workforce skill set, training infrastructure and supply/customer chain could be easily adaptable.

Additionally, the presence of a strong agricultural education program at Mississippi State University and an existing labor force skilled in food processing indicates that other targets in the food processing sector should be investigated, as those sectors tend to be somewhat more immune to economic fluctuations than other manufacturing sectors. In particular, the following sectors should be considered secondary targets:

#### **311 - Food Manufacturing.**

**31119** – Other Animal Food Manufacturing. Average annual salary \$59,400. Projected national job growth through 2022, 4 percent.

**3114** – Fruit and Vegetable Preserving and Specialty Food Product Manufacturing.\*

**3115** – Dairy Product Manufacturing.\*

Further study of the industrial mix in the Labor Shed; however, reveals that two local industry concentrations in the textile industry and the wood products industry are in sectors that are projected to undergo a national decline in job numbers over the upcoming five years, modernization and automation of existing facilities, closing of outdated facilities, offshoring of production activities, and decreased demand for products.

It should be noted; however, that recent announcements involving foreign direct investment in the textile and wood products industry in the South Central and Southeastern U.S. may alter the trend in the those industries. Increasing automation in the textile industry, as well as more dependable and less expensive electrical power, are the driving forces in the onshoring of this new wave of textile manufacturing; it is too early to predict how large a trend that will become. We will, therefore, include textile and garment manufacturing and wood products manufacturing, particularly fluff pulp and fuel pellets, as secondary potential industrial targets for the region. Specific three-digit codes include:

#### **313,314,315 - Textile Mills, Textile Product Mills, Apparel Manufacturing.**

**315190** – Other Apparel Knitting Mills.\*

**313210** – Broadwoven Fabric Mills.\*

\* While not included in the industry table for the Labor Shed, this subsector is present in the Central Mississippi region and should be investigated as a potential target.

# Recommendations for Innovation

## Attract & Train Truck Driver Candidates

Many of the employers interviewed for this study expressed a shortage of truck drivers in the region. This shortage is due, in part, by the number of drivers reaching retirement age or retiring early because of the Department of Transportation's mandate of digital records. Furthermore, fewer people are entering this occupation due to negative perceptions about the industry and general lack of knowledge about the demand for drivers, pay and benefits. Most of the job openings in Central Mississippi are not for long haul drivers, meaning that the drivers can work during the day and be home at night.

Employers and potential truck drivers report that obtaining the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) is a barrier to employment. Holmes Community College offers a Professional Truck Driver Training program, but requires that a student already have a CDL before they can be admitted to the training program.

### Strategies:

- » Work with Holmes Community College to see if they will offer some type of assistance for students to obtain their CDL to be able enter their professional truck driving training program (or remove this criteria from the program and make obtaining the CDL a part of the course).
- » Work with Holmes Community College and other training providers to offer some short-term training to aid seasoned drivers in the use of electronic log systems.
- » Create a promotional piece about this profession that includes a list of area training providers that offer professional truck driving programs along with pay and benefit information. Distribute to high schools, career centers and adult education centers.
- » Develop a program to publicize openings and the training path to become a driver.
- » Attract more trucking contractors to operate in the region.

## Develop the New Housing Industry within the Region

Due to the natural resources, products already manufactured in the region and availability of construction special trade skills in the workforce, the area is a good fit for the emerging pre-fabricated homes and housing components. The residential construction market has changed over the course of the last 10 years from small, independent, local contractors building single family dwellings to large companies that custom prefabricate major housing components then assemble the home on location. This allows the construction company to mass produce parts of the home and benefit from the economy of scale. Publicly traded shares on the top 10 builders were over 60% in 2017.

This industry would utilize natural resources as well as products such as HVAC units and plywood made in the area. This industry is also an excellent match for existing labor pool.

This new industry could also help address the need for population growth in the four Central Mississippi counties. It is important to attract population growth, and available housing is one way to attract people of all ages.

## Develop the New Housing Industry Within the Region (Cont.)

### Strategies

- » Work with local industries that are manufacturing products used by homebuilders to see if they already partner with the new type of home construction companies. This could help identify possible recruitment targets, or local manufacturers may decide to expand into this field.
- » Use incentives such as free or very low cost land to attract an existing home prefabricator company to expand into the Central Mississippi region.
- » Encourage/incentivize start-ups, this would be an excellent field for entrepreneurs.

### Develop Employer Working Panels

During the employer focus group sessions that were held as part of this study, participants interacted eagerly and indicated a benefit from meeting with other employers. These employer consortiums could be used to generate strategies or serve as a catalyst for developing workforce skills improvement initiatives and training programs.

The employer panels should incorporate training providers into their meetings at least twice per year. Local training providers already meet with some employers one on one. It is also suggested that regional industry-specific panels be held. The panels would formalize the process and provide continuous updates on skill gaps and other issues. .

### Address Drug Treatment to Enlarge Potential Labor Reserves

Due to the prevalent use of drugs serving as a barrier to employment, employers and health care providers could create a regional drug-free workplace coalition to help those who are employed as well as those who apply for jobs. The national opioid epidemic has hit rural areas hard. Many people do not have access to treatment and become hopeless.

Similar programs have been shown to have long-term impacts on the individual employee and the overall workforce in the area. Rehabilitated employees have shown to be loyal to their employer who invested in their sobriety. Furthermore, investing in an employee's treatment can be less costly than high turnover. Lowering turnover has also shown benefits to overall employer morale.

Partnering with local hospitals, other health care providers and social service agencies could help reduce the cost of treatment and offer programs to individuals seeking employment or in danger of losing their job due to an addiction.

This type of program is a new and innovative way of battling local addiction problems and would serve as a tool in recruiting industry to the region. It would also have long-term benefits to employers while improving the quality of life in the region.