

An Analysis of the Stillwater Area Labor Force

Summary Report

For the

Stillwater Chamber of Commerce

And

The Oklahoma Department of Commerce

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April 1998

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Sponsored by the Stillwater Chamber of Commerce and the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, this study examines the availability of labor in the Stillwater area. Data were collected by telephone interviews from October 1997 through March 1998. The 897 completed interviews were targeted to Stillwater and area cities including Agra, Carney, Coyle, Cushing, Drumright, Glencoe, Hallett, Jennings, Langston, Maramec, Morrison, Oilton, Pawnee, Perkins, Perry, Ripley, Tryon, and Yale. Stillwater residents constitute 56 percent of the sample.

Although the unemployment rate in Payne County area is very low (1.6 percent in November 1997), this study demonstrates that a significant pool of labor exists among workers who currently are employed but not fully utilizing their education and skills. We call these workers the *underemployed*. In this study, underemployed workers meet three conditions: 1) they feel they are underutilized in their present employment, 2) they have training or education that is not required by their current job, and 3) they would change jobs in order to better utilize their skills and education. Approximately 24 percent of working persons in the sample fit the underemployed criteria.

Many of these workers are currently looking for improved job situations. These underemployed workers exhibit a variety of occupations and skills. A majority of the underemployed are willing to commute 30 miles or more to a job that pays 10 percent to 15 percent more than current wages.

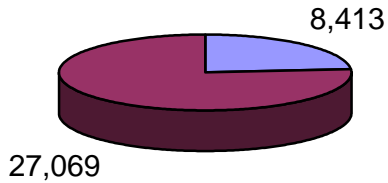
A smaller pool of labor exists among those who are without work but who want to work. These persons include retirees who wish to return to work for a variety of reasons. In general, those who want to work are less skilled and have less education than does the average worker in the area.

The next section provides comparative survey details regarding the underemployed.

Highlights Regarding the Underemployed

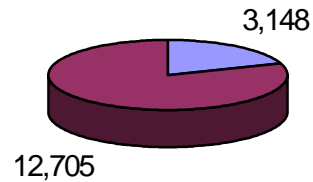
One out of 4.2 workers in the Stillwater area, approximately 8,413 persons, are looking for work that better utilizes their skills and education. Another 3,148 persons who are currently not working want to work.

Estimated Persons Who Are Working



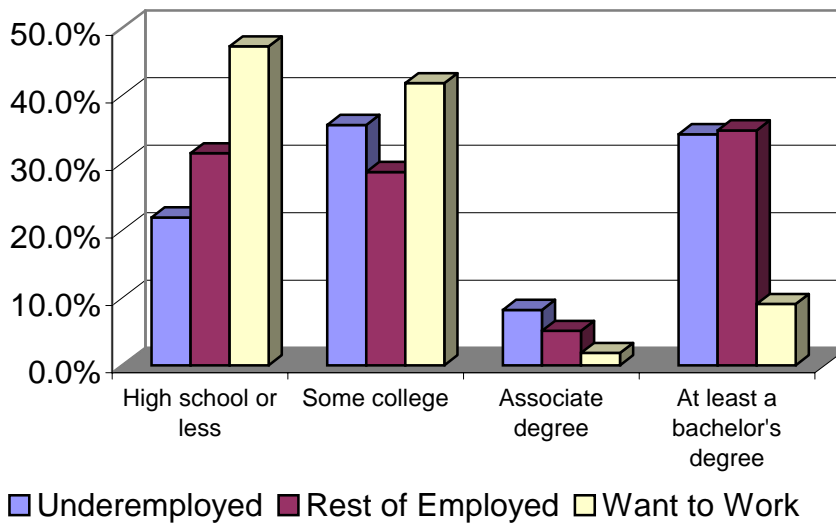
■ Underemployed ■ Rest of Employed

Estimated Persons Who Are Not Working



■ Want to work ■ Don't desire work

Underemployed workers have somewhat more college experience than do other workers. Persons who are not working and want to work have much less education.



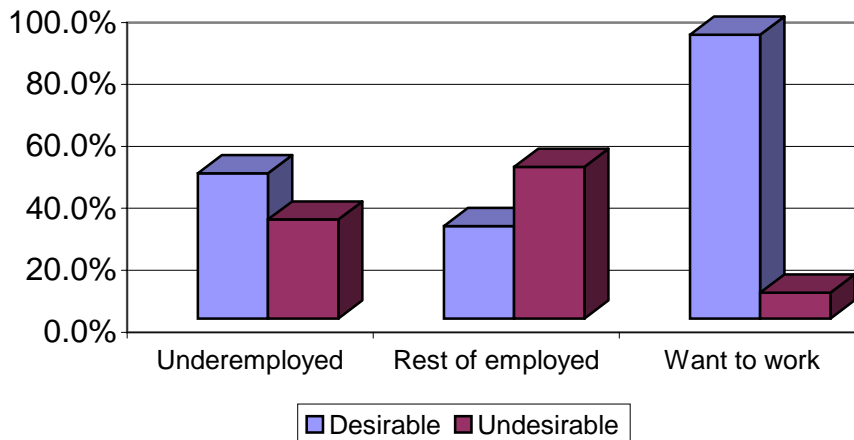
Underemployed workers are younger than other employed persons. Those without a job but who want to work are older.



Males constitute a slight majority among the underemployed, while those who want to work are mostly female.



Most of the underemployed and a vast majority of those who want to work view an employment opportunity that pays from \$8 per hour to \$10 per hour as desirable.

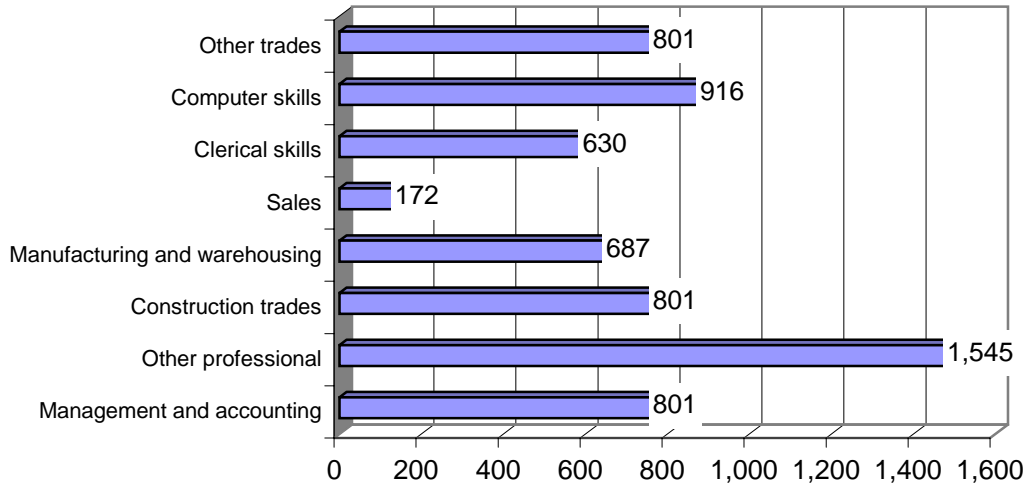


Nearly 14,903 persons in the labor force are interested in a job that pays from \$8 hour to \$10 hour, including 3,949 of the underemployed and 2,885 of those who want to work.

The underemployed work in a variety of occupations and skills, from executives to truck drivers and clerks:

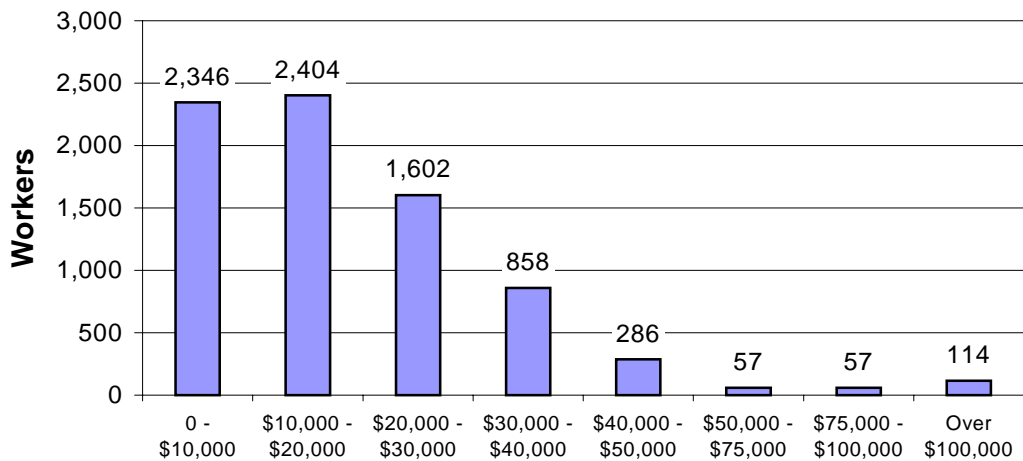
	<u>Estimated Workers</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Executive, Administrative, and Managerial	1,145	13.7
Professional Specialty	1,087	13.0
Technicians and Related Support	401	4.8
Sales	916	11.0
Administrative Support, Including Clerical	1,602	19.2
Service Occupations	1,087	13.0
Farming, Forestry, and Fishing	229	2.7
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair	744	8.9
Machine Operators, Assemblers, and Inspectors	286	3.4
Transportation and Material Moving	744	8.9

Most of the underemployed have skills they are presently not utilizing. These skills include...

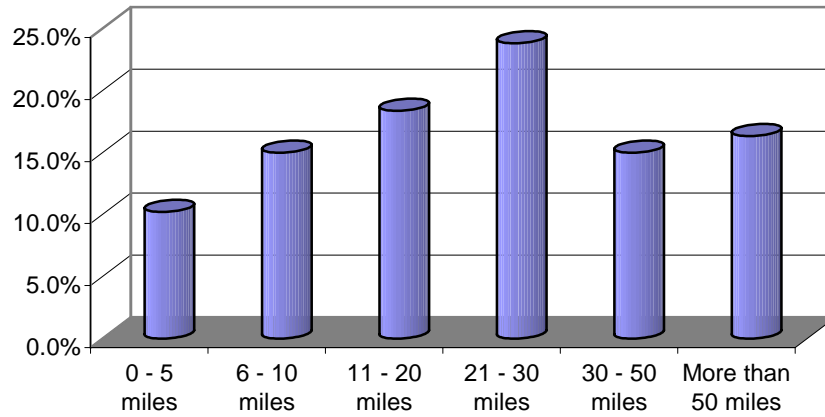


The typical (median) underemployed worker earns between \$10,000 and \$20,000 a year and would change jobs for a pay increase of between 10 percent and 15 percent.

Current Annual Earnings for the Underemployed



A majority of underemployed workers are willing to commute at least 11 miles to work; thirty-one percent would commute 30 miles or more.



The accompanying tables show detailed responses for several types of respondents including those who live in Stillwater, those who live in the area but not in Stillwater, students, the underemployed, those who are willing to work for \$8-\$10 per hour, and those who are out of work but want to work.