

# **An Analysis of the Ponca City Area Labor Force**

Summary Report

for the

Ponca City Economic Development Board

and

Oklahoma Department of Commerce

David A. Penn, Robert C. Dauffenbach, and John McCraw  
Center for Economic and Management Research  
Michael F. Price College of Business  
The University of Oklahoma

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## **An Analysis of the Ponca City Area Labor Force**

Sponsored by the Ponca City Area Economic Development Board and the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, this study examines the availability of labor in the Ponca City, Oklahoma, area. Data were collected by telephone from randomly selected adults in September and October of 1998. The results presented in this report are based on 1,000 interviews targeted to residents of Kay County and areas in neighboring Osage, and Pawnee counties, as well as Sumner and Cowley counties in Kansas. Residents of Ponca City constitute 48 percent of the sample.

This study demonstrates that a pool of labor exists among workers who are employed but do not fully utilize 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 14.2 percent of workers in the area fit the underemployed criteria.

Many of the underemployed are searching for improved job situations. These workers exhibit a variety of occupations and skills. The results show that the median underemployed worker is willing to commute 21 miles or more for a job that pays 10 percent to 15 percent more than current wages.

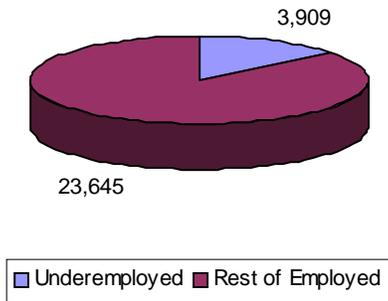
A smaller pool of labor exists among those who are without work but who want to work. These persons include retirees who wish to return to work for a variety of reasons. In general, those who want to work are less skilled and have less education than does the average worker in the area.

The next section provides comparative survey details regarding the underemployed followed by comparisons of Ponca City with the surrounding area.

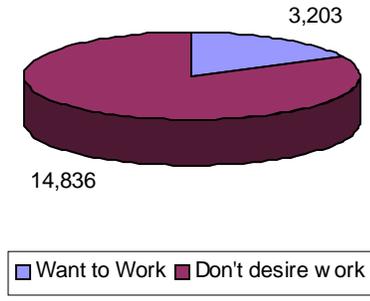
## Highlights Regarding the Underemployed

Approximately 3,909 persons in the target area are looking for work that better utilizes their skills and education. Another 3,203 persons are currently not working but want to work.

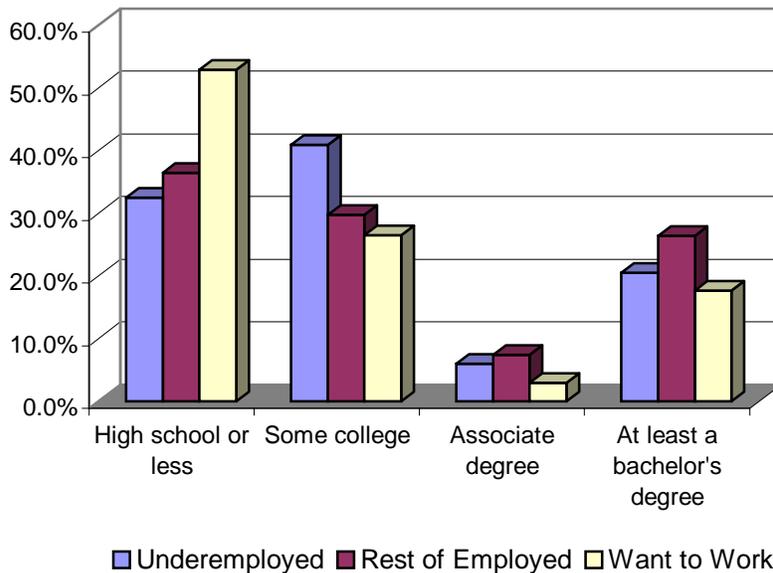
**Estimated Persons Who Are Working**



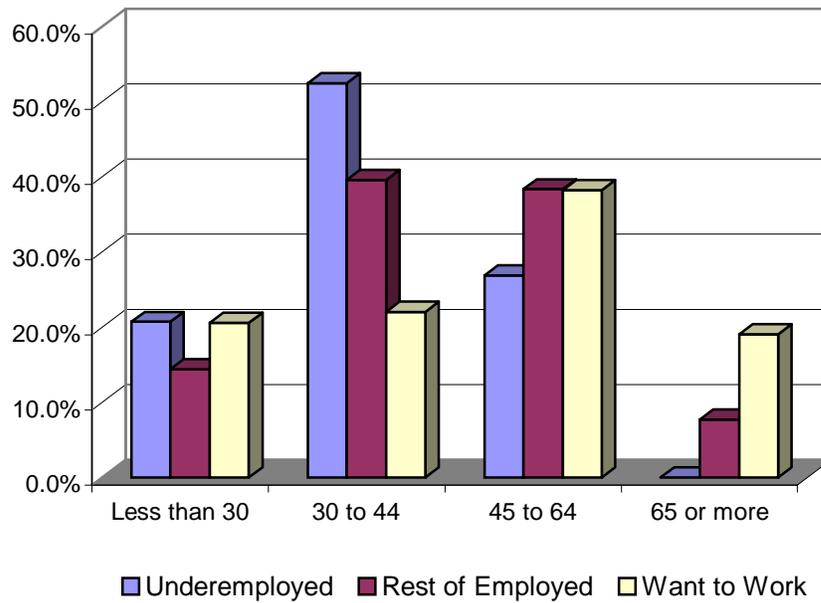
**Estimated Persons Who Are Not Working**



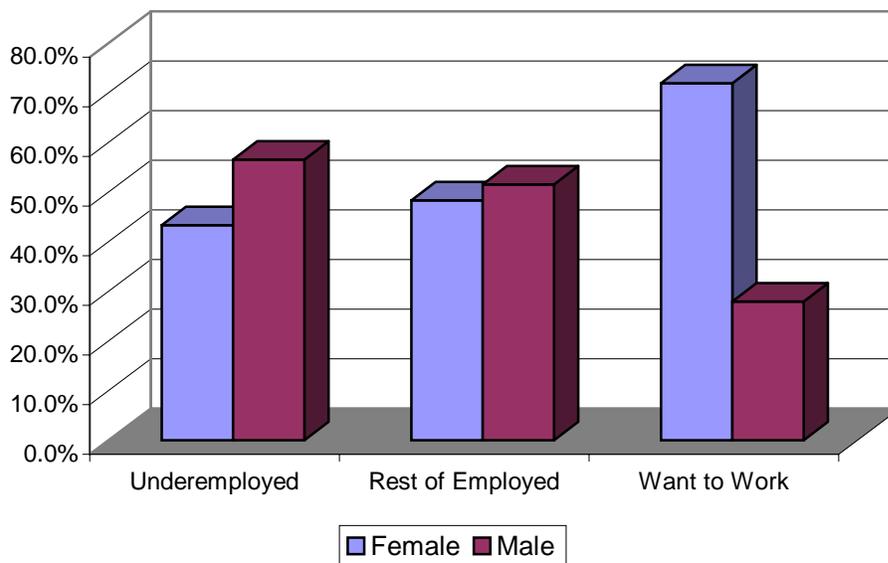
Fewer underemployed workers have four-year degrees than do other workers. Persons who are not working and want to work have much less education.



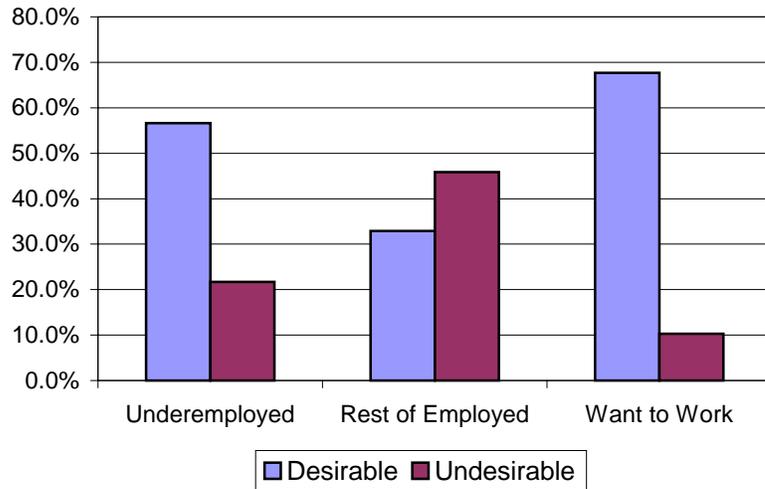
Underemployed workers are younger while persons without a job but who want to work are older.



Most of the underemployed are male. Those who are without work but want to work are mostly female.

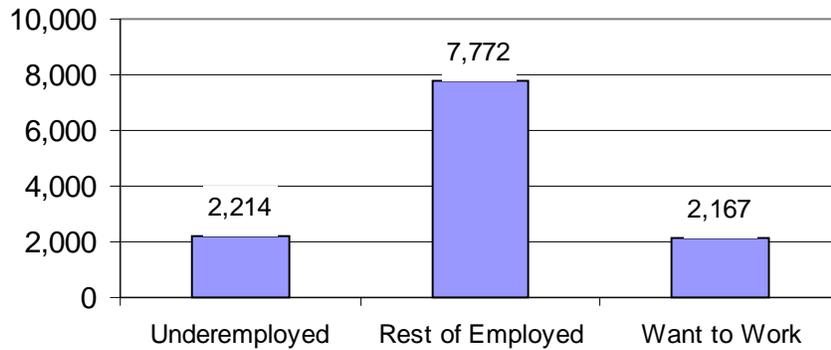


An employment opportunity that pays from \$8 per hour to \$10 per hour is viewed as desirable by 57 percent of the underemployed and by 33 percent of the rest of employed. Approximately 68 percent of persons who are without work but want to work view such a job as desirable.



An estimated 12,152 persons living in the Ponca City area are interested in a job that pays from \$8 hour to \$10 hour...

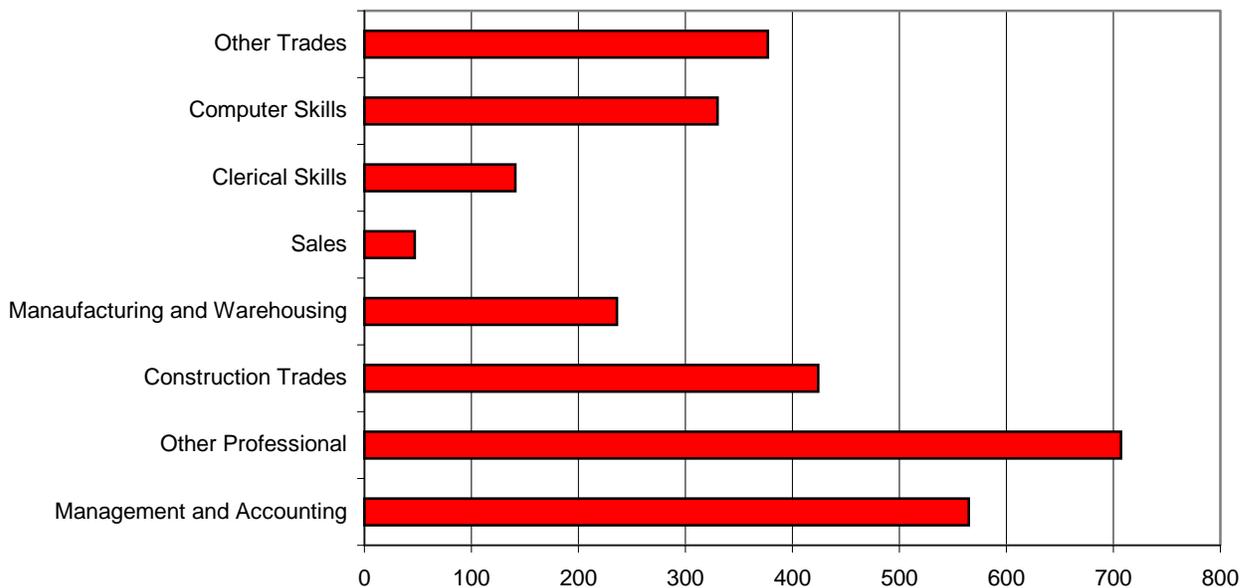
**Number of Persons Willing to Work for \$8-\$10 per Hour**



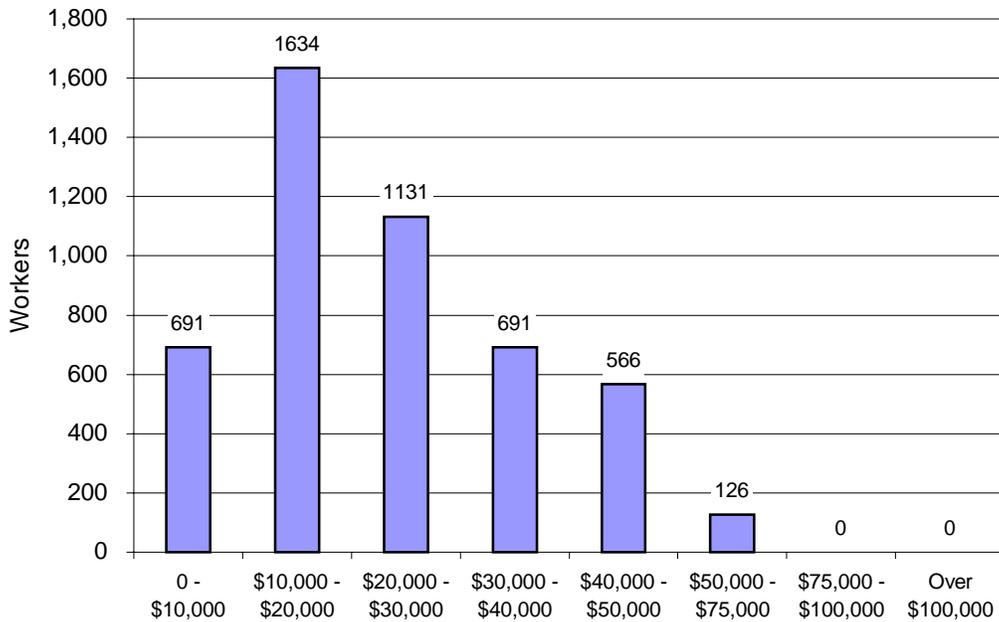
The underemployed work in a variety of occupations and skills, from executives and other professionals to craftsmen and clerks:

	<u>Estimated Workers</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Executive, Administrative, and Managerial	518	13.3
Professional Specialty	236	6.0
Technicians and Related Support	141	3.6
Sales	236	6.0
Administrative Support, Including Clerical	471	12.0
Service Occupations	659	16.9
Farming, Forestry, and Fishing	47	1.2
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair	659	16.9
Machine Operators, Assemblers, and Inspectors	471	12.0
Transportation and Material Moving	424	10.8
Military	47	1.2

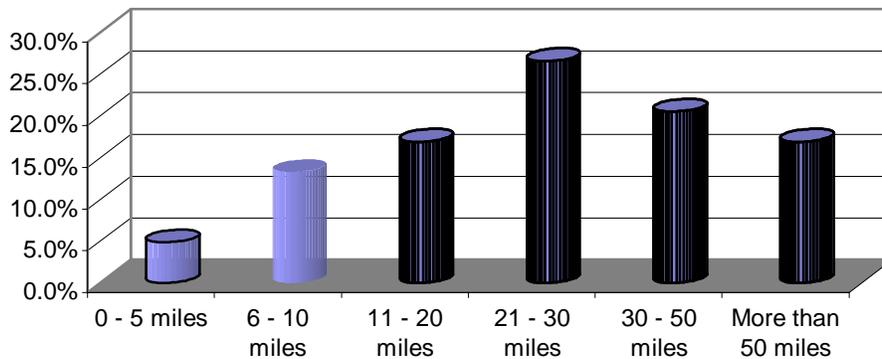
Most of the underemployed have skills they presently are not utilizing. These skills include...



The typical (median) underemployed worker earns between \$20,000 and \$30,000 a year and would change jobs for a pay increase of between 10 percent and 15 percent.

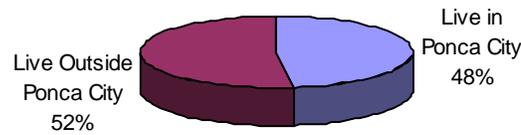


Approximately 64 percent of underemployed workers are willing to commute at least 21 miles to work...



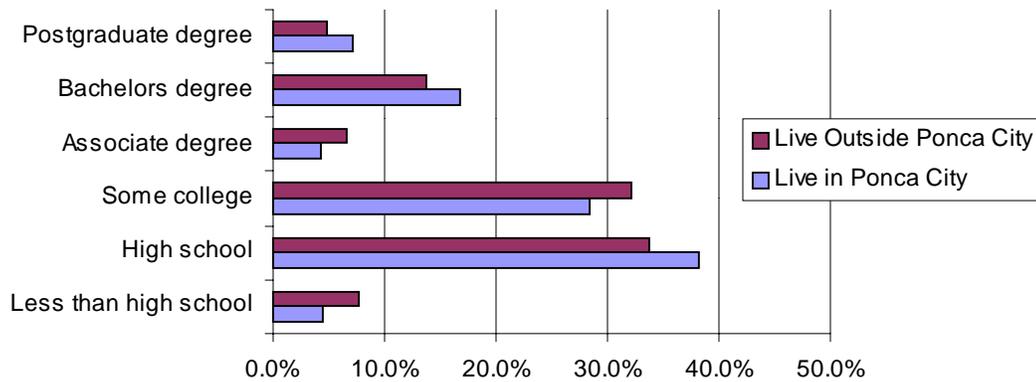
## Contrasting Ponca City Residents with Area Residents

Forty-eight percent of workers in the study live in Ponca City while 52 percent live elsewhere in Kay County or in one of the surrounding counties.



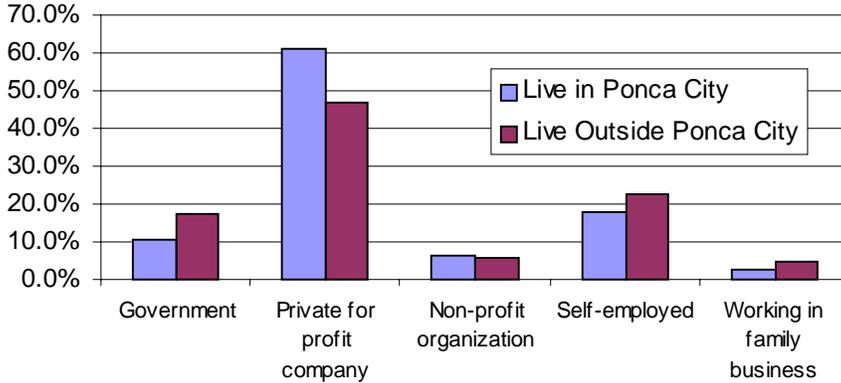
A significant percentage of both Ponca City residents and area residents have completed at least an associate's degree: 28 percent of Ponca City residents and 25 percent of area residents. Also, workers who live in Ponca City have a slightly higher proportion of Bachelor's degrees.

**Level of Education by Place of Residence**



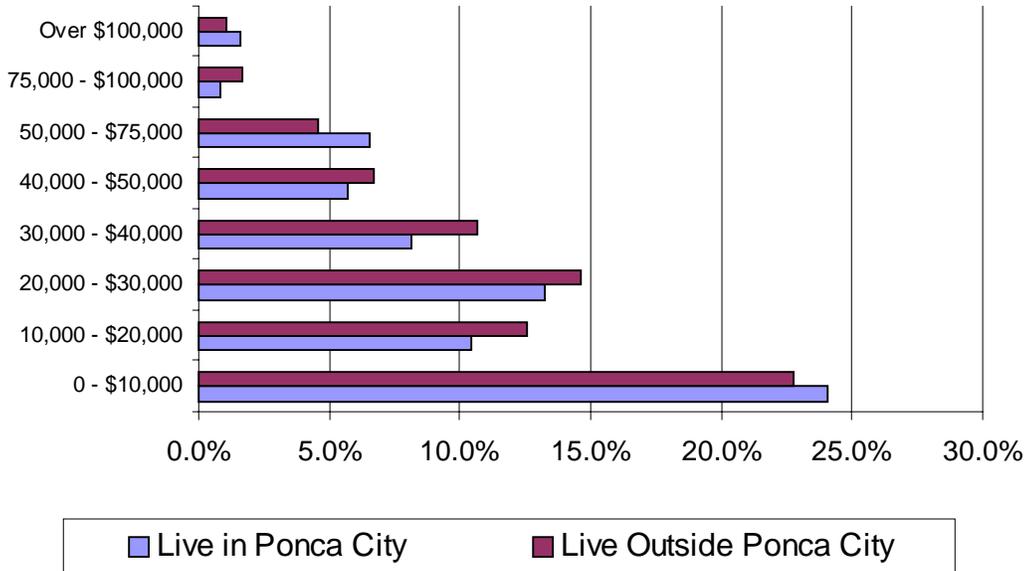
The majority of Ponca City residents and area residents work for private-sector companies. Residents of Ponca City are less likely to work for government and less likely to be self-employed than are those who live outside Ponca City.

**Sector of Employment by Place of Residence**



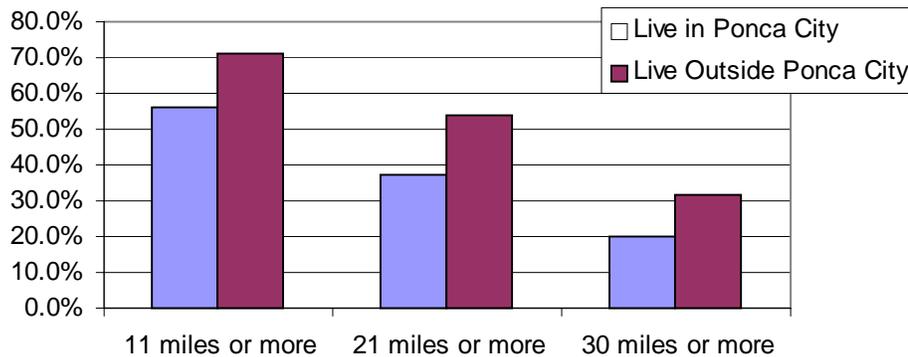
Ponca City residents earn about the same as area residents with median earnings for both between \$20,000 and \$30,000. A higher percentage of Ponca City residents earn \$50,000 to \$75,000 but a greater percentage of area residents earn between \$75,000 and \$100,000.

**Distribution of Earnings by Place of Residence**



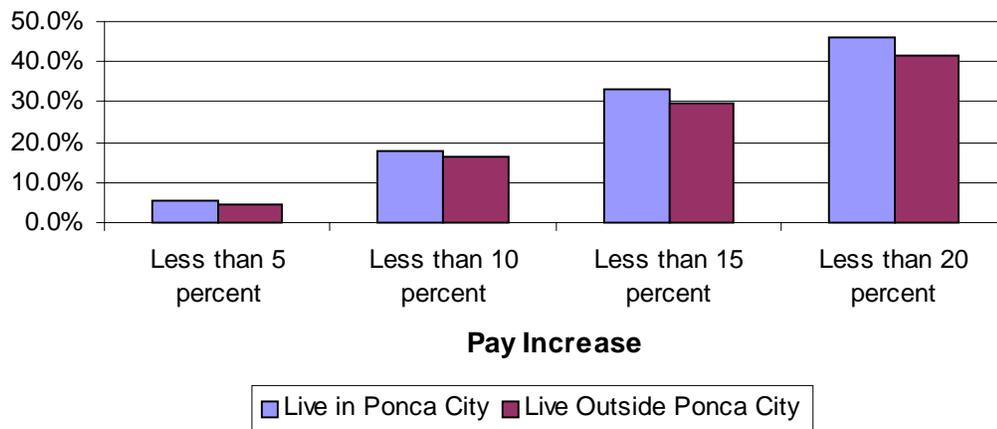
A substantial difference exists regarding willingness to commute. Workers living outside Ponca City are more willing to commute than are Ponca City residents.

**Willingness to Commute by Place of Residence**



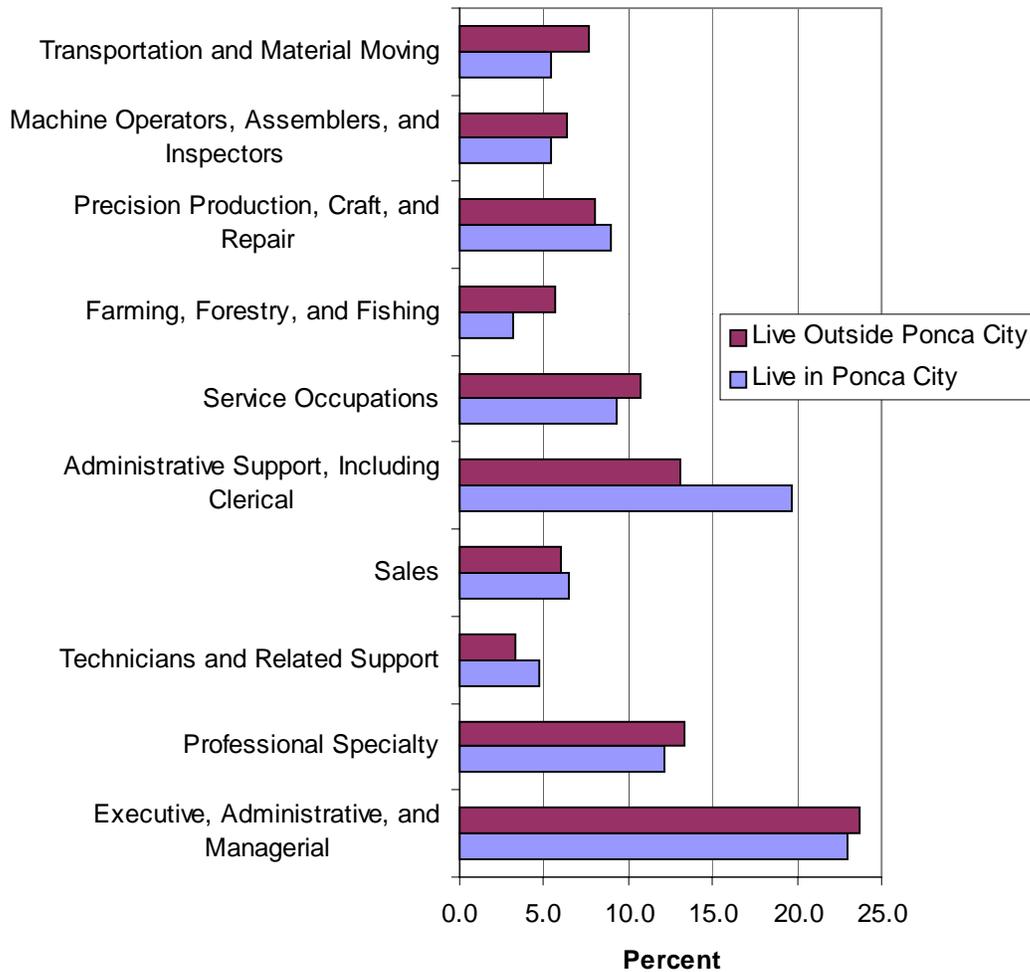
Little difference exists between Ponca City residents and area residents in their willingness to change jobs: Thirty-three percent of Ponca City residents would change jobs for a pay increase of 15 percent or less, compared with about 30 percent for area residents. Also, 24 percent of area residents and 22 percent of Ponca City residents are not interested in changing jobs at any increase in pay.

**Percent of Workers Willing to Change Jobs by Percent Pay Increase Needed**

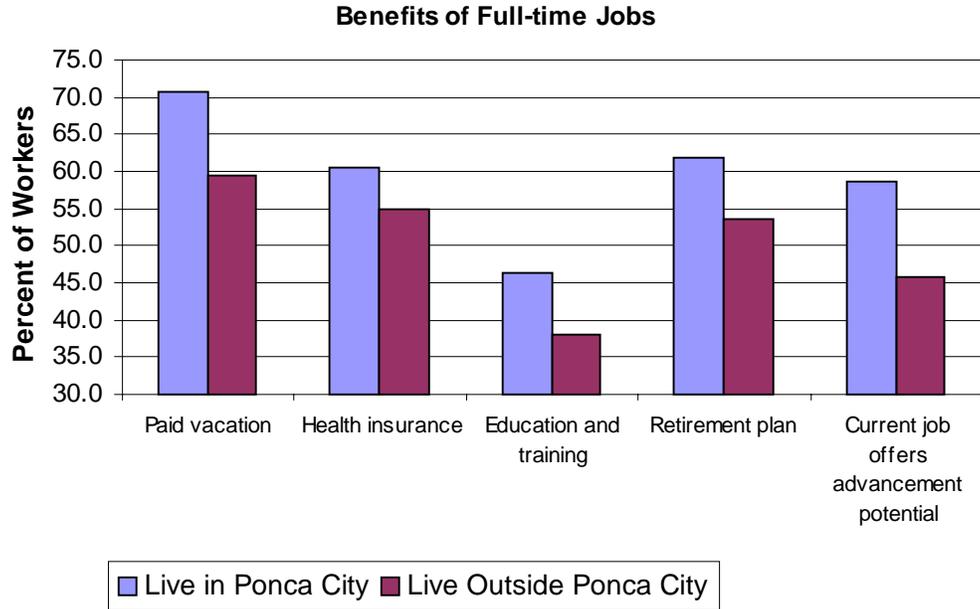


The distribution of occupations is similar. However, Ponca City residents tend more towards administrative support jobs while area residents tend more towards executive, administrative, managerial, and professional jobs.

**Occupation by Place of Residence**



Compared with area residents, a higher proportion of Ponca City residents receive benefits with their jobs.



## Conclusions

### **Underemployed workers**

- A significant pool of labor exists among workers who are not fully utilizing their education and skills
- Many underemployed workers are searching for higher-paying jobs
- The underemployed exhibit a variety of occupations and skills
- Most are willing to commute 21 miles or more for an increase in pay of 10% to 15%
- A smaller pool of labor exists among those not working who desire work. These persons typically are less skilled and not as well educated

### **Ponca City residents vs. Area residents**

- On average, earnings for Ponca City residents are similar as for persons living outside Ponca City
- Ponca City residents are somewhat more resistant to changing jobs compared with area residents
- Occupational patterns are very similar, but Ponca City residents tend to be more concentrated in administrative support positions while area residents are more concentrated in executive and managerial occupations
- More than 60% of Ponca City residents and about 47 percent of area residents are employed in private sector positions
- Compared with persons living outside of Ponca City, a higher proportion of Ponca City residents enjoy benefits with their full-time jobs

## Appendix: Distribution of the Sample

<b>City/town</b>	<b>Interviews</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Arkansas City, KS	103	10.3%
Blackwell, OK	132	13.2%
Braman, OK	6	0.6%
Burbank, KS	5	0.5%
Caldwell, KS	3	0.3%
Fairfax, OK	25	2.5%
Geuda Springs, KS	5	0.5%
Grainola, OK	4	0.4%
Kaw City, OK	4	0.4%
Nardin, OK	3	0.3%
Newkirk, OK	35	3.5%
Pawhuska, OK	59	5.9%
Pawnee, OK	31	3.1%
Perth, KS	1	0.1%
Ponca City, OK	501	50.1%
Ralston, KS	6	0.6%
Shidler, OK	3	0.3%
Sumpter, OK	1	0.1%
Tonkawa, OK	53	5.3%
Other	18	1.8%
Don't Know	1	0.1%
Refused	1	0.1%
	1,000	100.0%

<b>County</b>	<b>Interviews</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Kay	710	71.0%
Osage	136	13.6%
Pawnee	38	3.8%
Sumner County, Kansas	8	0.8%
Cowley County, Kansas	103	10.3%
Other (specify)	4	0.4%
Don't Know	1	0.1%
Valid cases	1,000	100.0%

