



STATE OF THE  
**WORKFORCE**  
2022

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## Message from the Executive Director

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Over the last few years boards across the state and country have shown up for their communities in new and innovative ways. Intentionally creating spaces for partnership and collaboration; listening and learning how best to support individuals and employers navigate and thrive through a global pandemic, economic shutdowns and competing demands, a changing labor market, and the outcries for social justice process, planning and implementation.

Answering the call isn't easy or perfect but a saying in Spanish my mom always said to us growing up was "No hay mal que por bien no venga," the English equivalent being, "Every cloud has a silver lining."

The public workforce system was far overdue in reimagining and reinventing how we engage with job seekers, employers, partners, stakeholders, and our communities. As we continue to rebuild, I hope we keep identifying ways to work together in the most challenging of times and align ourselves in meeting our region's full potential. As the new Executive Director of Lane Workforce Partnership, it is my honor and privilege to work alongside people who are helping to solve our most critical social challenges through economic and workforce development initiatives and investments. Our hope is that this report provides our readers with insights and information that is useful in these times of change. We also want to take the opportunity to highlight agencies, partners, and best practices that we are proud of as a region. Our board and team are committed more than ever to show up as our community needs us to, now and into the future.

*Ashley Espinoza*

Ashley Espinoza

# Introduction to this year's State of the Workforce Report

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## Are we really facing a workforce shortage, or is this actually a workforce reshuffle?

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment rates across the nation were low – at or near what is considered to be full employment. Then, with COVID -19 the unemployment rate shot up. However, when viewed from a long-term lens, this spike in unemployment was really brief, although very disruptive. COVID ended up being a game changer for the workforce. Service industries were exceptionally hard hit by the virus, while others were able to pivot and rethink how they get work done. Zoom meetings and remote work environments became a reality and are now a normal part of daily life and frontline and essential workers have continued to show up to meet the needs and demands of our communities.

Today employers are facing a new workforce challenge – they can't find candidates to fill their employment opportunities. Record job openings and low unemployment combine to create an extremely difficult hiring environment. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, nationally there are [five unemployed persons for every ten jobs open](#). As we began to emerge from COVID and focused on employer's struggles to fill job openings, we mistakenly thought that people were just refusing to come back to work and that was the cause of the workforce shortage. But in reality, the labor force participation rate – the share of people working or looking for work – [is higher in Oregon than it was pre-pandemic](#). People are working. This

leads to the conclusion that we don't have a workforce shortage – but rather a “shift” in the workforce. In other words, the workforce reinvented itself and no longer looks like it did prior to COVID. This too is our new reality!

This report sets out to examine just what this shift means for workforce development. Who is in the workforce, how can employers attract them, and what will it take retain them? We also have to account for those who are taking the leap of becoming their own business owners, independent contractors, gig workers, and job creators.

Traditional employment incentives such as compensation, titles, and career advancement opportunities won't work for today's workforce. While these factors are still important, people have reevaluated what they want. More people, of every generation, are seeking meaningful work, a meaningful work/life balance, and stability.



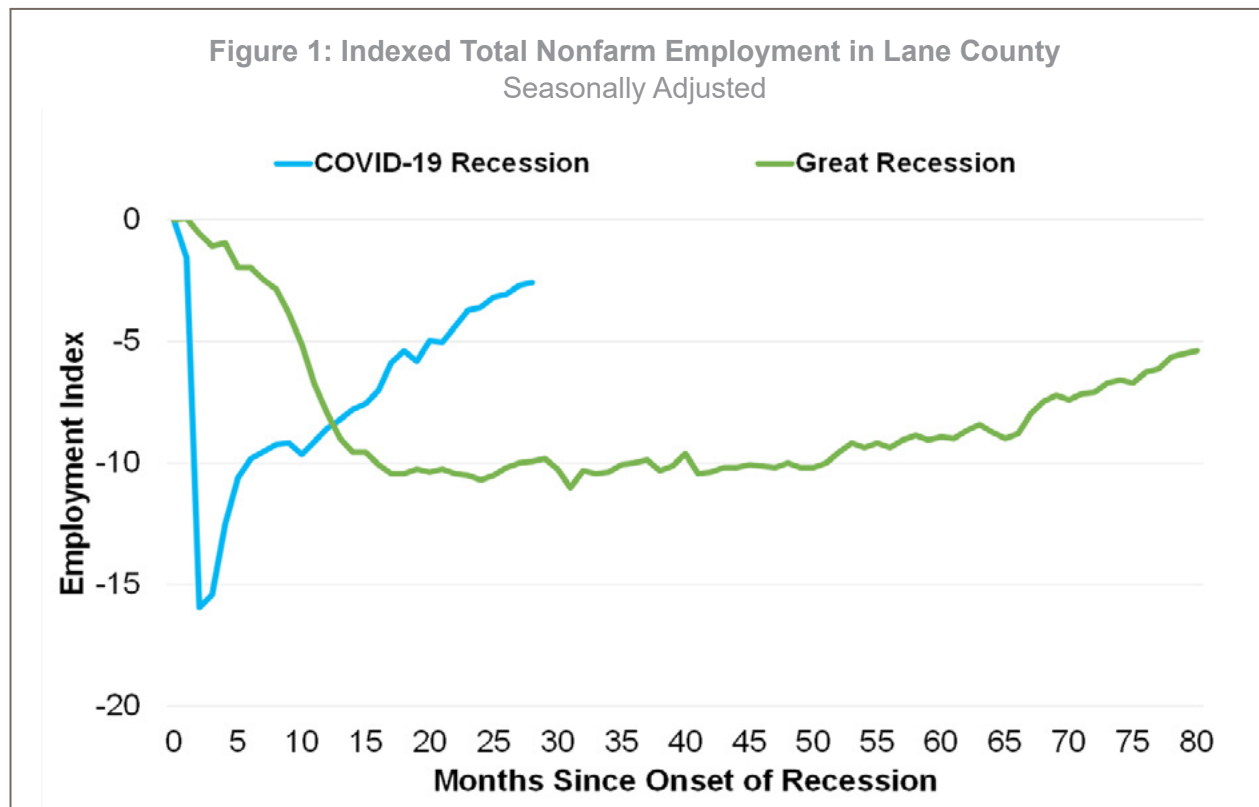
# Economic Trends

The economy in Lane County has diversified over the past three decades from one that was largely dependent upon the wood products industry to one that is high-tech, forward thinking, environmentally conscious, and diverse (Table 1). Food product manufacturers have found niches in craft beer and organic products; the tech sector has added firms; the county has grown into a regional health care hub; the bioscience sector is expanding; and state and federal government agencies (including the University of Oregon) have provided stability.

In early 2020, Lane County’s economy was in the midst of the longest expansion in recent history, adding 23,600 jobs (growth of 17 percent) from September 2010 through February 2020 (Figure 1). Several industries contributed to the rebound including

Education and Health Services	18%
Government	17%
Retail Trade	13%
Professional and Business Services	12%
Leisure and Hospitality	10%
Manufacturing	9%
Financial Activities	5%
Construction	5%
Wholesale Trade	4%
Other Services	3%
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	2%
Information	1%
Mining and Logging	1%

Source: Oregon Employment Department



Source: Oregon Employment Department, Current Employment Statistics

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manufacturing, construction, retail trade, professional and business services, and health services.

The growth came to an abrupt end in March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic reached Oregon. Due to people staying home and restrictions on activities with close contact to avoid spreading the virus, economic activity slowed significantly. In Lane County, small job losses experienced in March became major job losses in April. Between February and April, Lane County lost about 26,600 jobs — a drop of 15.9 percent — while the unemployment rate increased from a record low of 3.6 percent to a record high of 14.0 percent.

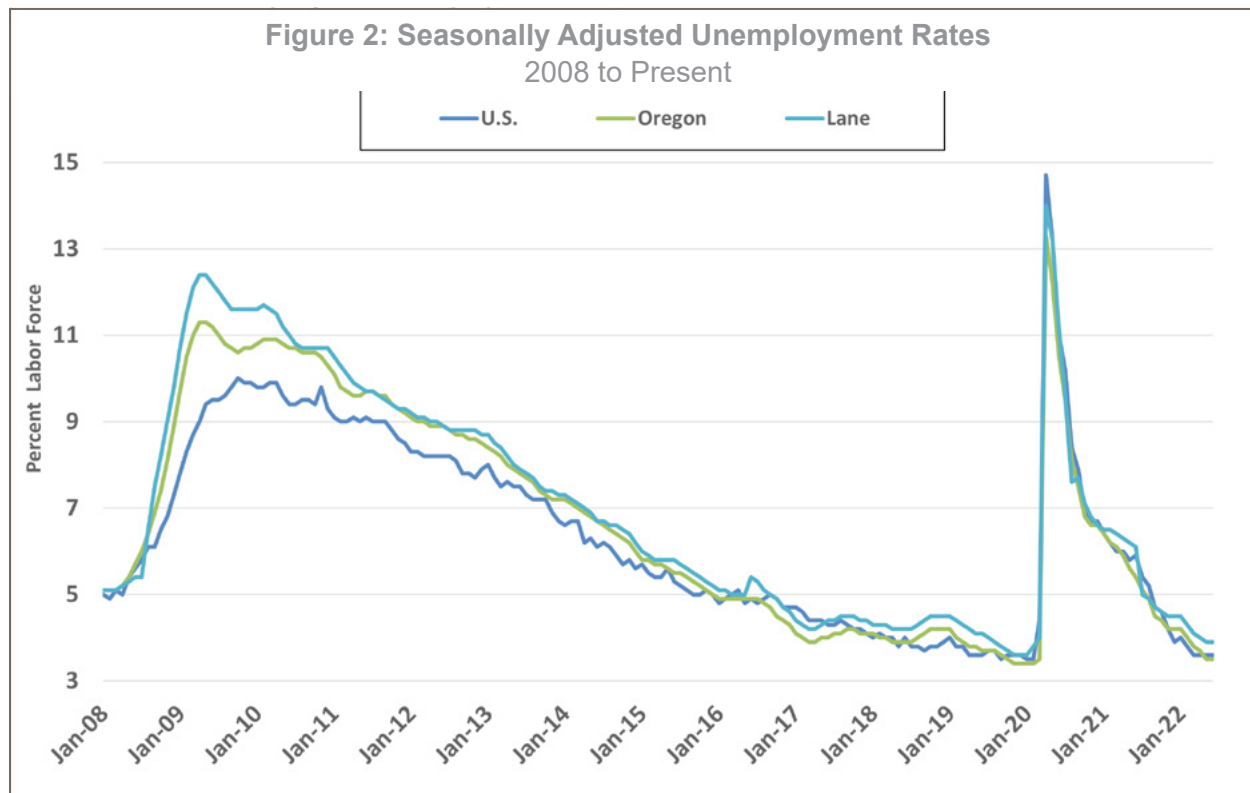
All major sectors lost jobs. The first and most restrictive measures were placed on restaurants and bars, severely impacting the leisure and hospitality industry. The sector lost 8,900 jobs, or slightly more than half of all jobs in the industry. Other service industries, including personal services like hair stylists and

gyms, dropped about 20 percent. Health care and social services dropped 10 percent, largely from closures of doctor's and dentist's offices.

The goods producing industries of construction and durable goods manufacturing were least affected by COVID-19 restrictions, losing about 5 percent each. Food and beverage stores actually increased employment, adding about 2 percent as additional staff for grocery pick-up services needed to be hired.

### LABOR MARKET

Fortunately, a large portion of the job losses due to the pandemic were temporary. Restrictions put in place to stem the spread of the disease were loosened early on and some of the hardest hit businesses such as restaurants, bars, gyms, hotels, hair stylists, and retail stores if masks were worn and social distancing could be practiced, were able to restart operations. Aside from small declines in December of 2020 due to an outbreak of the Delta variant and again in



the fall of 2021 due to the Omicron variant, employment growth has generally been strong.

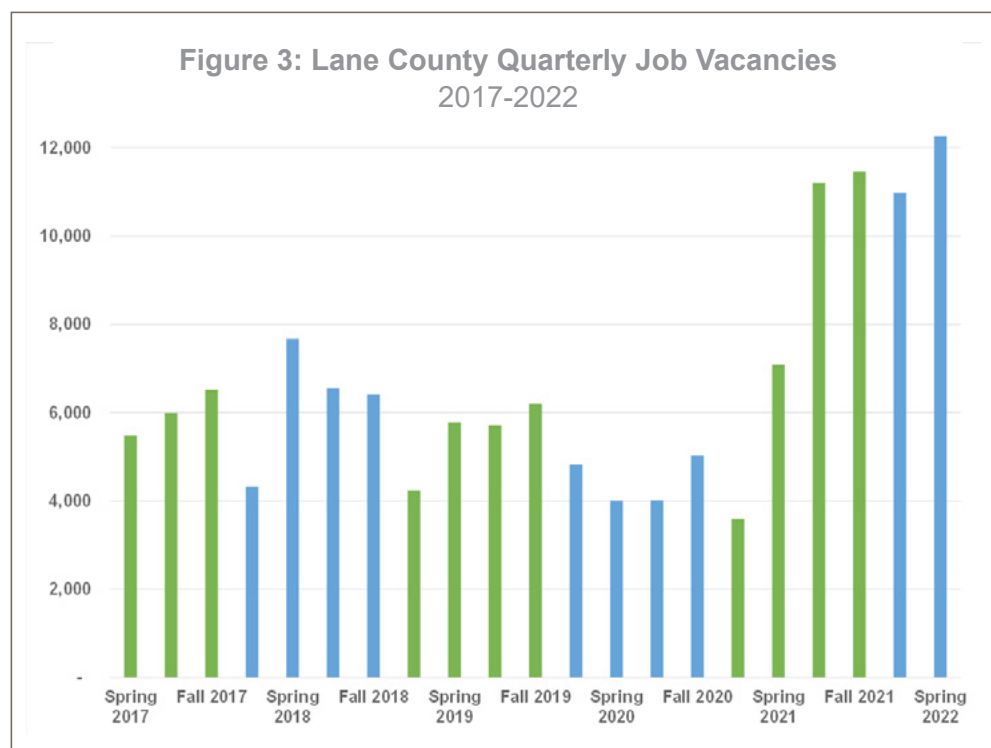
Figure 2 shows that, as of the writing of this publication, the labor market has improved. New initial claims for unemployment insurance are below pre-pandemic levels. The county's unemployment rate has generally followed national and state trends, peaking in April 2020 at 14.0%, a little lower than the U.S. rate (14.7%) and a little higher than the Oregon rate (13.3%). Since then, it has dropped to a near record low 3.8 percent.

The low level of initial claims and low unemployment rate are indicative of a tight labor market. Pent up demand from the economy reopening after pandemic restrictions combined with federal stimulus dollars has created a high level of demand. On the supply side, total employment is above prerecession levels. According to state-wide numbers, some of the increase in the total number of employed persons is due to an increase of self-employed workers. As a result, a shortage of workers is causing many employers to have difficulty filling job vacancies. Job vacancies at Lane County private employers set a record high in the summer of 2021 of 11,203 and has remained elevated, setting another record of 12,260 in the spring of 2022 (Figure 3).

## LANE COUNTY'S EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

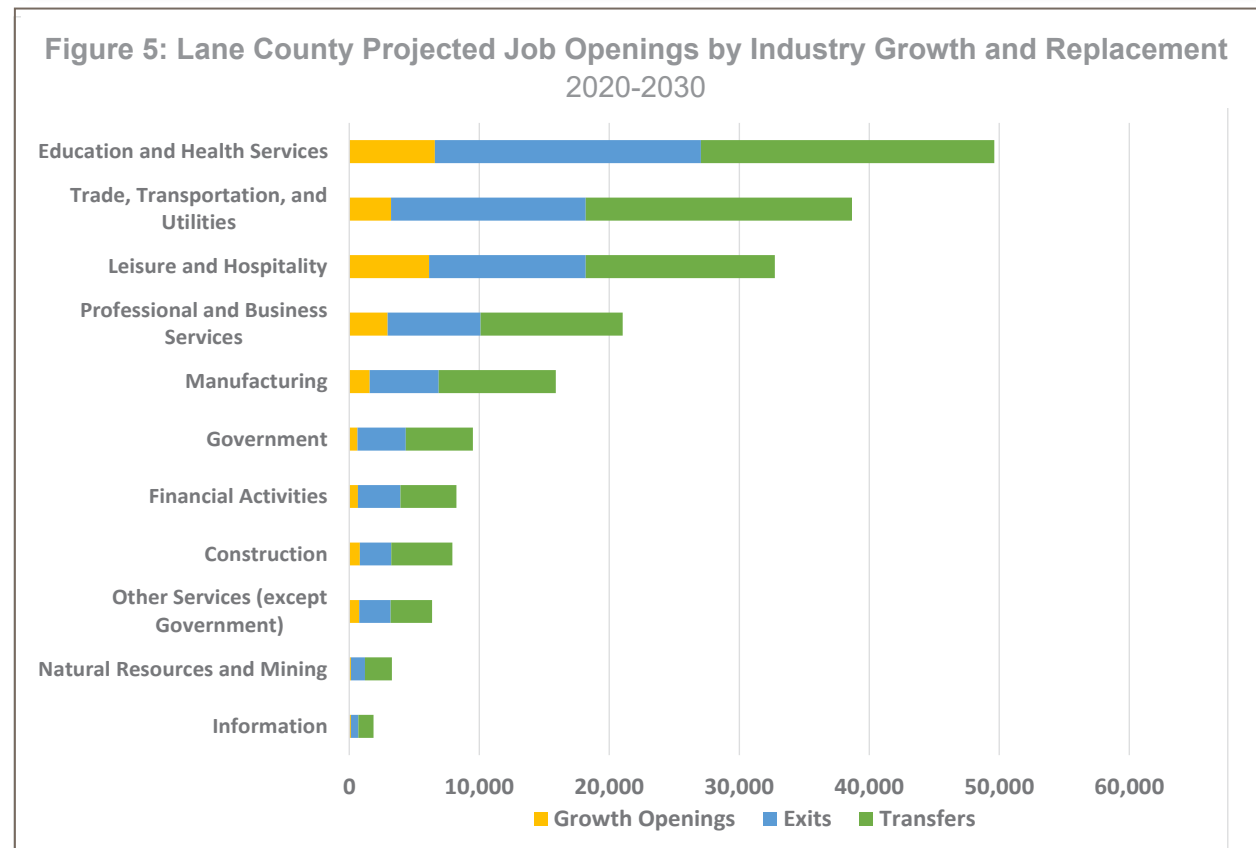
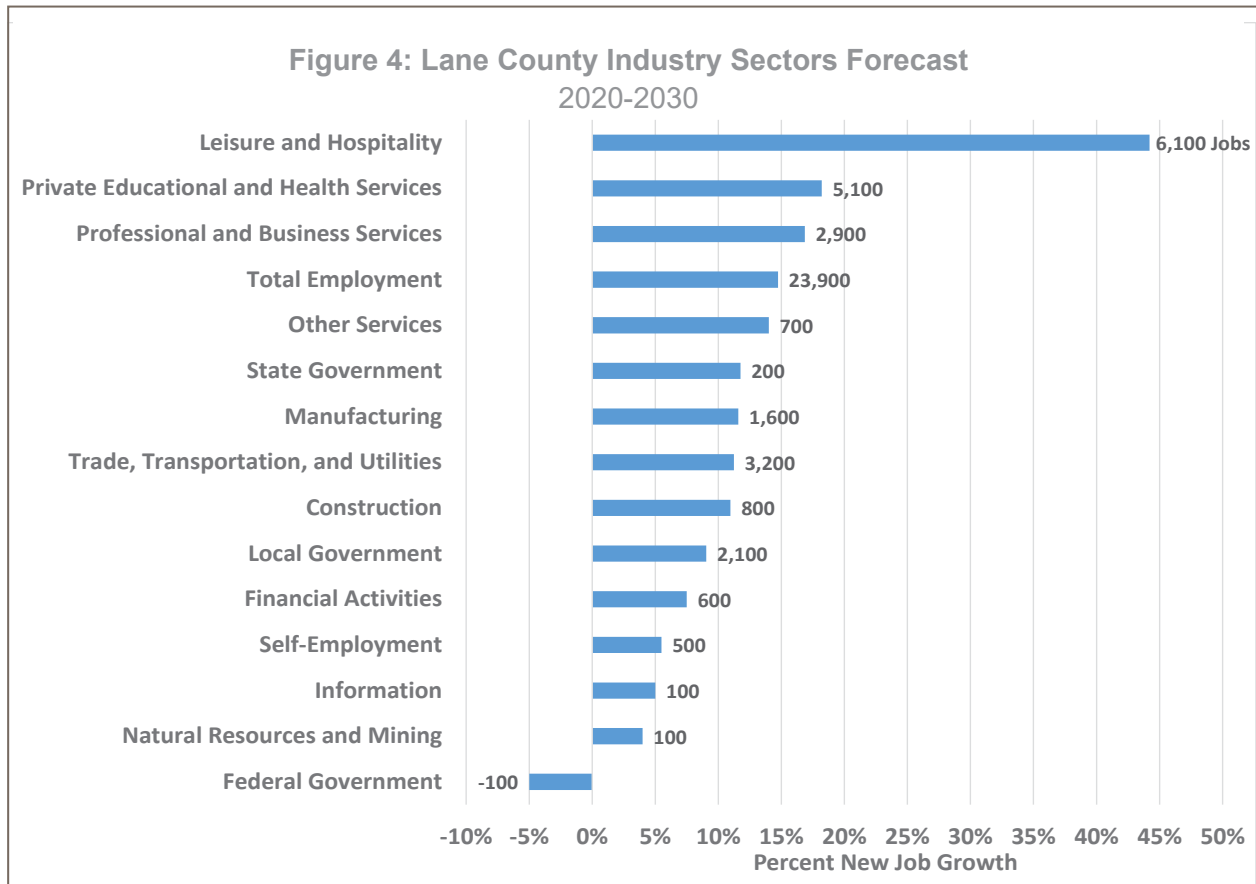
The 2020 to 2030 Lane County employment projections are long-term projections intended to capture structural changes in the economy, not cyclical fluctuations. The projections point to strong job growth between 2020 and 2030 and accounts for recovery from low employment levels in 2020 from the COVID-19 recession. In Lane County, some industries are expected to experience especially strong growth between 2020 and 2030 including leisure and hospitality, health care, professional and business services, and trade, transportation, and utilities. As shown in Figure 4, all Lane County industries except federal government are expected to add jobs from 2020 to 2030.

Lane County will add 23,900 jobs between 2020 and 2030. This represents a 15 percent increase in employment, slightly lower than the state-wide increase of 16 percent over the same period. The growth stems from anticipated private sector gains of 23,400 jobs



Source: Oregon Employment Department

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(17 percent) and the addition of 2,200 jobs (8 percent) in government.

Even in industries expected to grow slowly, there will be opportunities created by replacement needs (Figure 5). Replacement needs are created when someone permanently leaves an occupation, commonly by retiring, and does not include regular turnover. As the population ages and retirements increase, the level of replacement openings increases.



Photo credit: Melissa Cooper

## LANE COUNTY EMPLOYMENT GROWTH HIGHLIGHTS

- The industry most affected by COVID-19 restrictions, leisure and hospitality is projected to increase the fastest and add the most jobs. The projected 6,100 jobs (44% growth) in leisure and hospitality is mainly driven by the recovery from the pandemic, as restaurants, hotels and arts, cultural, and recreational establishments are expected to see increased demand as in-person and recreational activities resume.
- The private health care and social assistance sector is projected to add the second-largest number of jobs, gaining 4,700 jobs (18% growth) over the 10-year period. This growth is attributed to the aging of the state's population, longer life expectancies, and continued population growth. Health care alone will account for nearly one out of five new jobs created by 2030.
- Professional and business services add 2,900 jobs, partly from growth in the tech sector.
- Trade, transportation, and utilities is a large industry sector that is projected to grow by 3,200 jobs (11%) due to a recovery from the COVID-19 recession in retail trade and demand for transportation services as more people shop online and need products delivered.
- State government is expected to add 200 jobs (12%) mostly from growth at the state hospital in Junction City.
- Local government adds 2,100 jobs, largely in education and including the addition of the Knight Science Campus at the University of Oregon.
- Construction was one of the industries least affected by COVID-19 restrictions. Propelled by the need to fill low housing inventory, the industry is expected to add 800 jobs.
- Manufacturing grows by 800 jobs. Durable goods manufacturing grows due to recovery from COVID-19. Nondurable goods manufacturing grows, adding 400 jobs, largely from food and beverage manufacturing.



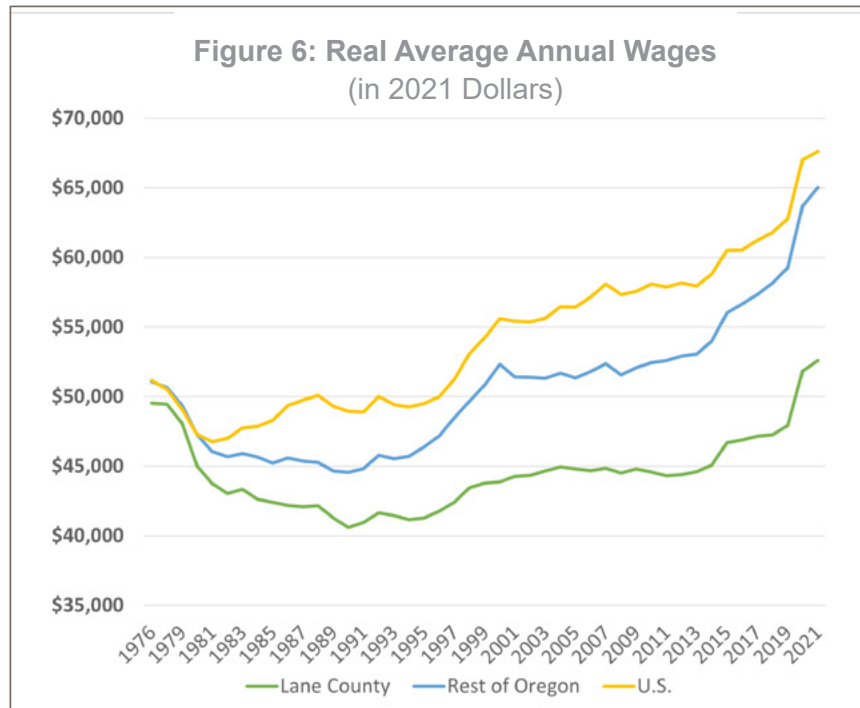
Photo credit: Frank Shoemaker, Eugene, Cascades & Coast

### WAGES

Real average wages in Lane County steadily increased in the 1990s with the addition of technology manufacturing and stabilization in the wood products industry. Wages peaked in 2004 at \$44,953, an increase of \$4,359 (11%) from the low point in 1990. Wages then became stagnant until the end of the Great Recession and rose during the recovery. Wages increased steadily until 2020 when layoffs in lower paying jobs due to pandemic restrictions caused the average to spike. In 2021, an improved labor market and low overall inflation caused real average annual wages to top \$52,000 for the first time since 1979 at \$52,596.

The increase in real wages was not enough to keep the wage gap between

Lane County and the rest of the state from expanding (Figure 6). In 1990, Lane County wages were 10 percent less than the rest of the state. By 2000, the gap had expanded to 19 percent, largely due to rapid growth in tech manufacturing in the Portland area. After some



Source: Oregon Employment Department

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small improvement in the early 2000s, the wage gap with the rest of the state began to grow again after 2010, reaching 24 percent in 2021.

An industry mix made up of lower-paying industries compared to the Portland area explains some of the wage gap between Lane County and the rest of the state. The University of Oregon provides a ready supply of new graduates to fill entry-level professional positions, which contributes to keeping wages low for those occupations due to high competition. Additionally, quality of life factors can cause workers to accept a lower wage in order to continue living in a desirable area. In Lane County, such factors as less congestion, proximity to outdoor recreation, and lower housing prices may also explain some of the wage difference between Lane County and the rest of Oregon. (Note: While housing costs in Lane County are lower

than other areas of the state, affordability is a significant problem. There are several organizations addressing the issue of the high cost of housing in Lane County. See a report issued by the Eugene Chamber of Commerce for more information on workforce housing. (<https://www.openforbizeugene.com/middle-housing-in-eugene/>)

Although the average wage in Lane County was \$52,596 in 2021, roughly 57 percent of jobs paid less. In Lane County, most of the largest occupations pay less than the average wages for all occupations (Figure 7). For example, fast food counter workers, home health care workers, retail salespersons, and cashiers earn less than \$35,000. Registered nurses and general operations managers are the exception for large occupations since they pay well, averaging \$100,827 and \$97,306 respectively.

**Figure 7: Largest Occupations and Highest Paying Occupations in Lane County**

Largest Occupations	2021	2022 Average
	Employment	Wages
Fast Food and Counter Workers	5,024	\$30,667
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	4,379	\$33,595
Retail Salespersons	4,253	\$33,808
Cashiers	3,561	\$30,815
Registered Nurses	3,374	\$100,827
General and Operations Managers	3,278	\$97,306
Office Clerks, General	3,240	\$39,829
Stockers and Order Fillers	3,014	\$34,930
Customer Service Representatives	2,206	\$38,508
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	1,898	\$45,828
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1,875	\$34,443
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,866	\$51,695
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, Executives	1,827	\$45,080
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	1,781	\$36,549
Waiters and Waitresses	1,755	\$31,941

Highest Paying Occupations	2021	2022 Average
	Employment	Wages
Physicians, All Other	390	\$288,125
Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	95	\$269,797
Family Medicine Physicians	138	\$250,469
Chief Executives	150	\$237,997
Dentists, General	83	\$236,985
Nurse Anesthetists	29	\$203,708
Judges, Magistrate Judges, and Magistrates	385	\$185,046
Pharmacists	133	\$137,831
Nurse Practitioners	168	\$135,645
Physician Assistants	102	\$132,700
Architectural and Engineering Managers	88	\$129,126
Database Architects	259	\$126,440
Financial Managers	400	\$125,442
First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives	255	\$123,520
Computer Systems Analysts	79	\$122,829

## LANE WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP

**EDUCATION**

Historically, a majority of jobs in Lane County required little in the way of training or education. New trends, illustrated in Figure 8 show that some of the fastest growing occupations require postsecondary education and training even for entry-level work. About 73 percent of available openings from 2020 to 2030 typically require a high school diploma or less; many of these jobs are lower-paying service and retail occupations. However, 52 percent of available openings from 2020 to 2030 will require post-secondary education or training for the applicant to be truly competitive. Jobs that require postsecondary education and training are expected to grow 13 percent, compared to 15 percent for all occupations. Those requiring some sort of college degree will grow by 14 percent.

Data for the U.S. shows a direct correlation between education level, earnings, and unemployment. The higher the education level achieved, the higher the pay and the

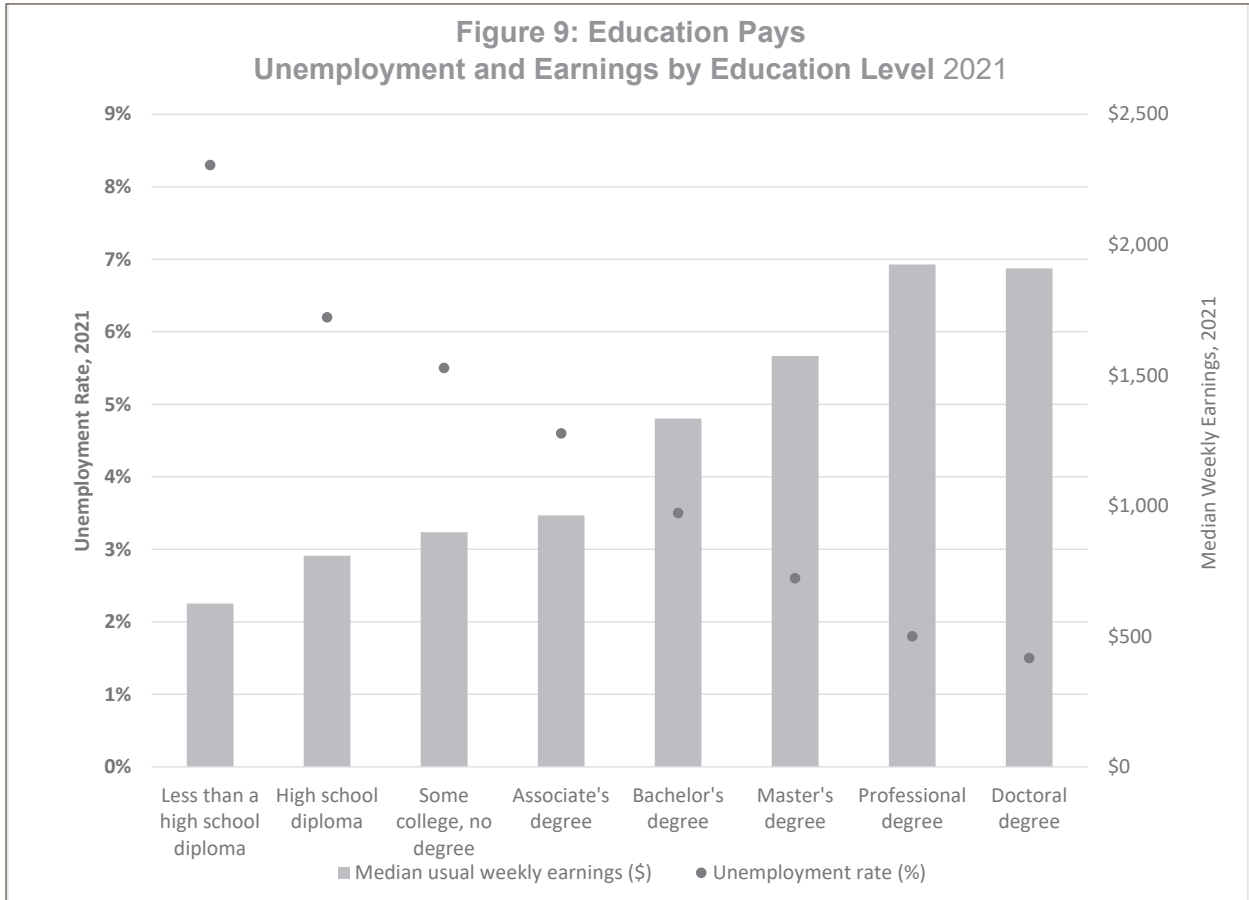
lower the chances of being unemployed (Figure 9). People with less than a high school diploma averaged \$626 in weekly earnings and an unemployment rate of 8.3 percent in 2021, while people with a bachelor's degree earned \$1,334 in weekly earnings and had a 3.5 percent unemployment rate.

Lane County's educational attainment levels have increased over time. The share of the 25 and older population with less than a high school degree declined from 17 percent in 1990 to 7.5 percent in 2020, while the share with a bachelor's degree or higher increased from 22.2 percent to 31.9 percent. In 2020, the percentage of the population 25 and older with less than a high school diploma was lower in Lane County (7.5 percent) than Oregon (8.9 percent) and the U.S. (11.5 percent). The population with a bachelor's degree or higher was slightly lower in Lane County at 32 percent, compared to 34 percent for Oregon and 33 percent for the U.S. (Table 2).

**Figure 8: Lane County Forecasted Typical Educational Attainment**

<b>Typical entry-level education</b>						
Education	2020 Employment	2030 Employment	Employment Change	Percent Change	Replacement Openings	Total Openings
Doctoral or professional degree	2,465	2,754	289	11.7%	908	1,197
Master's degree	4,511	5,197	686	15.2%	3,445	4,131
Bachelor's degree	30,898	35,029	4,131	13.4%	24,425	28,556
Associate's degree	3,756	4,347	591	15.7%	3,137	3,728
Postsecondary training (non-degree)	16,698	18,863	2,164	13.0%	16,278	18,443
High school diploma or equivalent	60,261	67,270	7,009	11.6%	66,224	73,233
Less than high school	43,334	52,605	9,271	21.4%	65,953	75,224
<b>Typical competitive-level education</b>						
Education	2020 Employment	2030 Employment	Employment Change	Percent Change	Replacement Openings	Total Openings
Doctoral or professional degree	5,831	6,524	693	11.9%	3,439	4,132
Master's degree	9,467	10,948	1,481	15.6%	7,945	9,426
Bachelor's degree	30,963	35,173	4,210	13.6%	25,402	29,612
Associate's degree	14,678	15,816	1,138	7.8%	14,300	15,438
Postsecondary training (non-degree)	37,379	43,295	5,915	15.8%	40,868	46,784
High school diploma or equivalent	63,605	74,309	10,704	16.8%	88,416	99,120





Source: U.S Dept of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

**Table 2: 2020 Educational Attainment in Population 25 Years and Older**

	Lane County	Oregon	United States
% Less than high school	7.5%	8.9%	11.5%
% High school grad or higher	92.5%	91.1%	88.5%
% Associate degree	9.6%	9.0%	8.6%
% Bachelor's degree or higher	31.6%	34.4%	32.9%

Source: Census Bureau 5 - Year American Community Survey, Table B15003

## KEY MESSAGES FOR EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS IN LANE COUNTY:

- Approximately 35 percent of Lane County’s projected growth and replacement job openings will require postsecondary education or training for the typical entry-level educational requirement.
- Approximately 65 percent of these openings will require postsecondary education or training from candidates who want to be truly competitive.
- Roughly 62 percent of high-wage, high-demand job openings require postsecondary education or training.



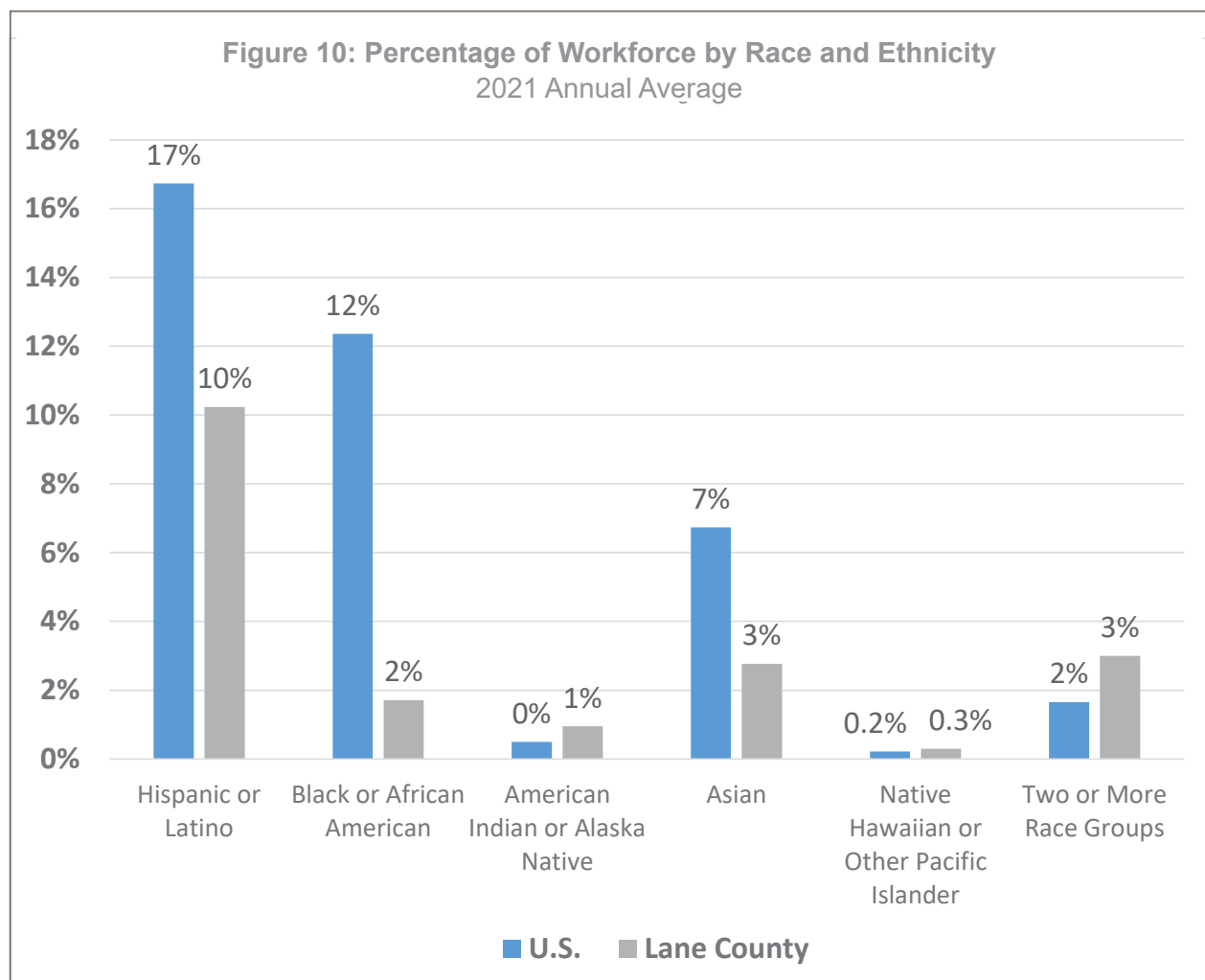
## AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE WORKFORCE

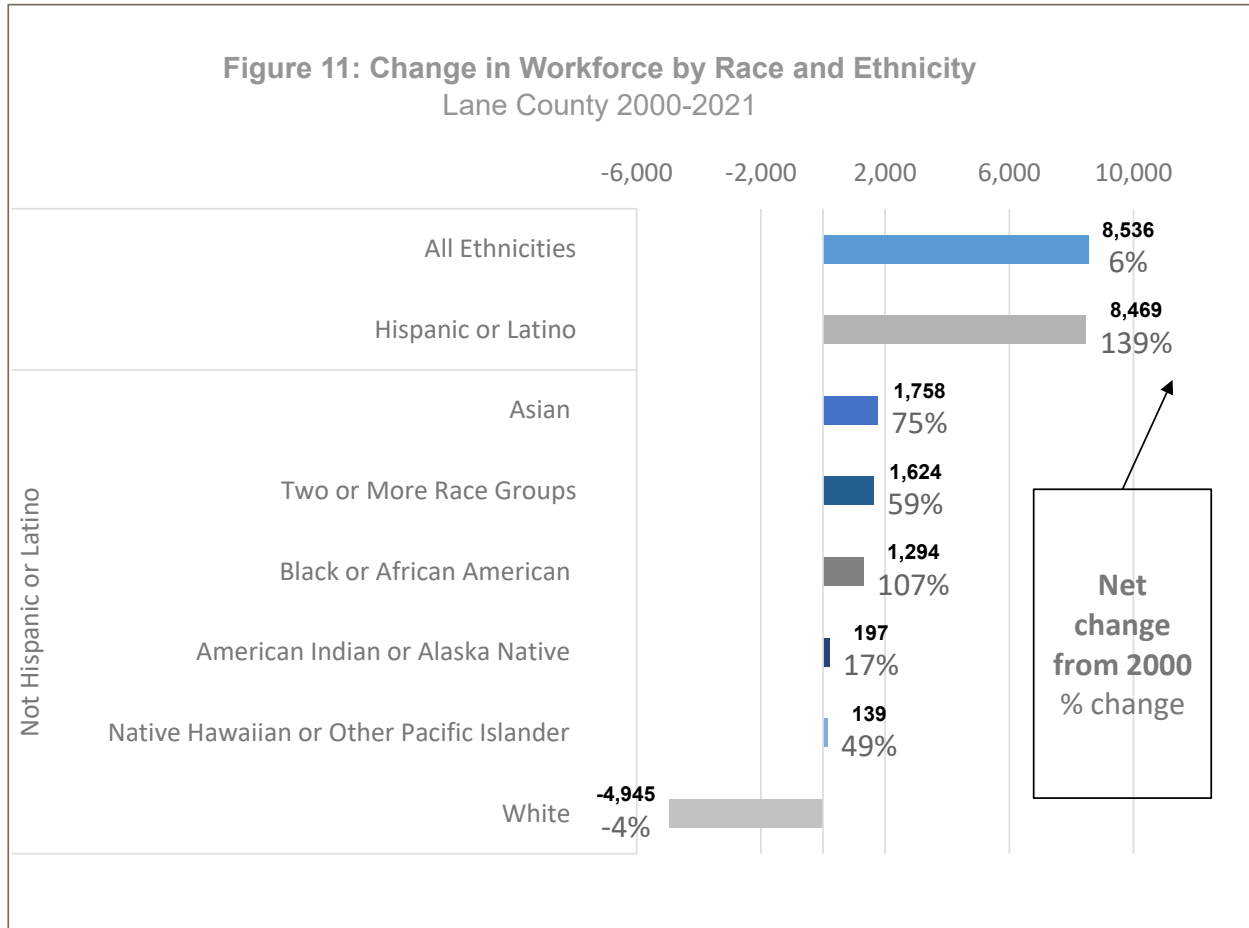
A critical growth area for the workforce is the increasingly racially and ethnically diverse population of Lane County. Although the Lane County workforce in 2021 is less diverse than the U.S. as a whole, particularly in the percentage of workers that are Black or African-American, Asian, or Hispanic and Latino, the way the workforce looks is changing rapidly (Figure 10).

Measuring workforce diversity relative to the beginning of the millennium shows how quickly the change has taken place. While the number of total workers grew by 6%, or 8,500 workers, from 2000 to 2021, the rate of change in most races and ethnicities far

surpassed that pace. In fact, the number of workers who are Hispanic or Latino or Black or African American in Lane County more than doubled in just over two decades. Asian and Pacific Islander workers, as well as workers of two or more races, also grew their representation rapidly, by between 50 and 75 percent (Figure 11).

Although they remain the largest group of workers in Lane County, there are actually nearly 5,000 fewer non-Hispanic White workers than in the year 2000. This represents the relatively older age of the non-Hispanic white population, as well as the increasing diversity of the total residential population from which our workers are drawn.





Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Workforce Indicators

**NEW MINIMUM WAGE LAW**

On March 2, 2016, Senate Bill 1532 was signed into law. As a result, Oregon’s minimum wage increased in steps through 2022 (Table 3). There are three tiers (standard, Portland Metro, and nonurban counties) of step increases based on geography.

Lane County is in the standard tier. The final increase occurred in July 2022, raising Lane County’s minimum wage to \$13.50 per hour. The Oregon Employment Department made a conservative estimate of the number of jobs affected by the minimum wage increase in Lane County by looking at how many jobs paid at or below the new minimum wage level in the third quarter of 2021. During that period, approximately 8,029 (4.7 percent) of

jobs paid at or below the new minimum wage scale in Lane County.

Table 3: Lane County Minimum Wage Increase	
2016.....	\$9.75
2017.....	\$10.25
2018.....	\$10.75
2019.....	\$11.25
2020.....	\$12.00
2021.....	\$12.75
2022.....	\$13.50

# Who's in the Workplace and Where can they be found?

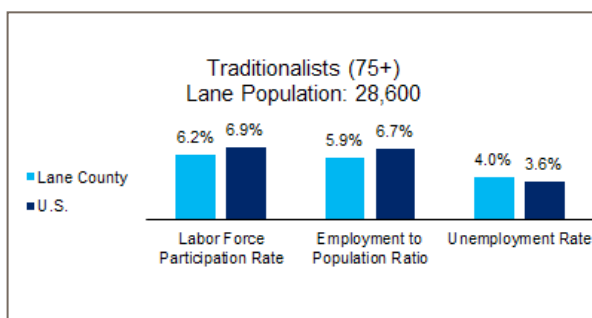
## GENERATIONS IN THE WORKFORCE

Today's workforce is arguably the most generationally diverse in our modern history (Figure 12). There are currently five generations in the workforce:

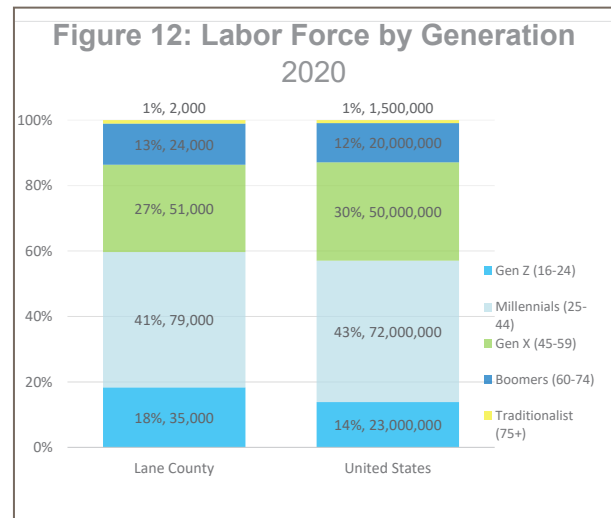
- Traditionalists (76 to 99 years old)
- Baby Boomers (57 to 75 years old)
- Generation X (41 to 56 years old)
- Millennials (26 to 40 years old)
- Generation Z (9 to 25 years old)

### Traditionalists

Sometimes referred to as the “greatest” generation, this group has mostly exited the workforce, but there are still those who need or want to work. This generation lived through world wars, the stock market crash, and more than one recession. While many in this generation lack digital literacy, their skills are varied, and their value lies in their ability to train and coach the next generation(s). They appreciate a traditional work environment.



**Recruiting a Traditionalist:** One of the best workforce programs to tap into this generation is the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act. This is a community service and work-based job training program for older adults. In Oregon, the program



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates  
Table S2301

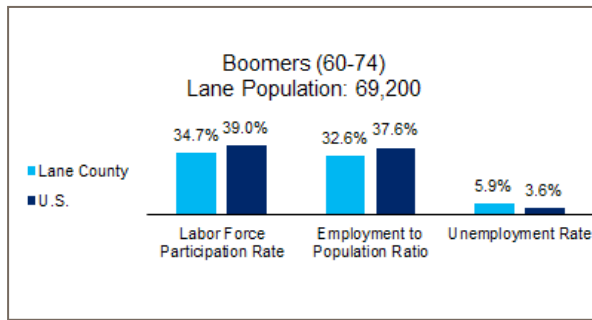
is managed by Easter Seals. <https://www.easterseals.com/oregon/our-programs/employment-training/scsep.html>

### Baby Boomer

There is a greater percentage of older workers in the workforce today and, until COVID, Boomers tended to retire at a later age than traditionalists. However, during COVID, the workforce saw a significant increase of Boomers taking early retirement. Although the population is aging overall, both Boomers and Traditionalists still represent potential growth in the labor pool. More people 65 and older are working than in decades past, and [although this rate declined in 2020](#), there is room to rebound to earlier levels given economic opportunities.

Like Traditionalists, this generation appreciates a traditional work environment, they are competitive in nature, saw many changes in technology during their lifetime, and are career focused.

## LANE WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP

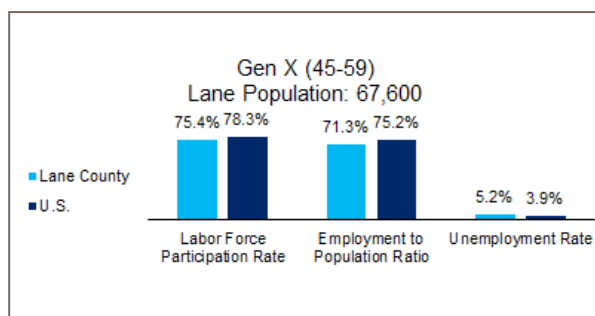


**Recruiting a Baby Boomer:** Baby Boomers can often be found on social media platforms like LinkedIn or Facebook. If targeted for project work, they are likely to respond. Don't look for a Baby Boomer on Instagram or Snapchat, as they are not likely to be found there.

### Generation X

This group is often referred to as the sandwich generation between boomers and millennials. Although a smaller segment, Gen X accounts for about 50 million workers in the workforce. This generation is self-sufficient, results-oriented, and hard working. They have a very entrepreneurial mindset and they value diversity. This generation led the use of technology in the workforce. They also lived through the Dot.com bust and the Great Recession.

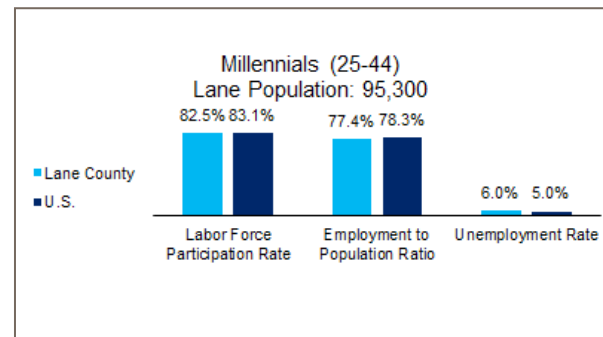
**Recruiting Generation X:** This generation places a strong emphasis on work/life balance. They are highly connected as the sandwich generation. They embrace technology and social media. You can find them on LinkedIn, Twitter, as well as Instagram. Gen X will seek opportunities



that appeal to their desire to advance their careers.

### Millenials

Also known as Generation Y, Millenials are the generation that were catalysts for change in the workplace. This generation, which currently makes up the largest portion of the U.S. workforce, is strong on collaboration and places an emphasis on social responsibility. This is a tech savvy generation, able to communicate through digital devices just as easily as an in-person meeting. This generation appreciates a flexible workplace and are motivated by working with organizations that are aligned with their values. This generation seeks new challenges and is not afraid of moving on when they are not engaged in challenging work.



**Recruiting Millennials:** As the largest working generation, now almost entirely in the growth and advancement phase of their careers, targeting Millennials for workforce development is less of a choice and more of a necessity for employers. Life events such as raising children, purchasing a home, and deciding where and how to advance their career are most common around this age. Helping young workers work through challenges as an integrated part of the workforce is a powerful recruitment and retention tool.

As just one example, childcare is scarce and expensive for parents, which impacts young workers' ability to participate in the workforce.

## LANE WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP

In 2020, only 20% of children under age 13 in Lane County had access to visible child care, whereas 66% of children under age six had all parents in the household employed. COVID placed additional burdens on parents by restricting the number of childcare seats and opening hours, further exacerbating the issue. In the summer of 2022, the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey found that among Oregonians who were not currently working, [more than 90,000 listed their primary reason](#) as "caring for children not in school or daycare".

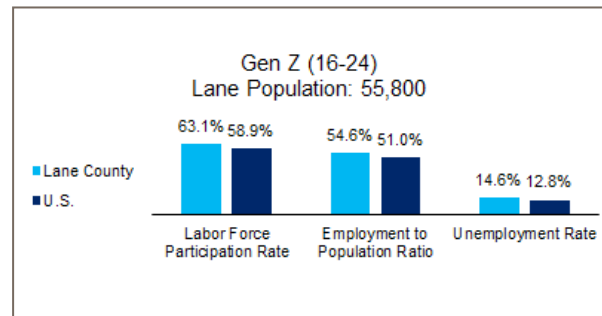
Helping Millennial workers come back into the labor force or advance their career while caring for young children isn't a silver bullet solution, but is likely to help attract new and talented workers at the margins. This is especially true for young mothers who are most likely responsible for navigating childcare shortfalls and challenges.

## YOUNG ADULTS AND THE EMERGING WORKFORCE

### Generation Z

This is the youngest generation comprising the newest entrants to the workforce. Gen Z's, jokingly referred to as Gen Zoomers, were practically born with a cell phone in their hand. This is the most tech savvy generation in the workforce today. While young, this generation is turning out to be very competitive and career-driven. This is the most diverse generation entering the workforce and as such, they value diversity, social justice, and inclusion. Of interest about this generation is that while they are not themselves immigrants, more of them are children of immigrants than past generations. The COVID-19 pandemic has arguably hit this generation the hardest. They have had their education interrupted (K-12 and post-Secondary), those in school had to switch to on-line learning, and they are the most likely to have lost their entry level hospitality, retail, or food & beverage job as they were

just entering the workforce. COVID created a huge disruption to this generation that will likely have lasting impacts that we don't yet understand.



**Recruiting Generation Z:** There are several workforce development programs likely to have young adults ready to explore employment opportunities. Career Technical Education programs through high schools are a great place to tap into this emerging workforce and organizations like Connected Lane County, that connect the youth from the 16 school districts across the county to education and employment pathways, better prepare them for future success. Learn more about Career and Technical Education programs in Lane County through Lane Education Service District. <https://lanecte.org>. To learn more about Connected Lane County's Navigate, Elevate and Spark programming visit their website at <https://connectedlane.org/>



Photo courtesy of Connected Lane County



## RURAL COMMUNITIES

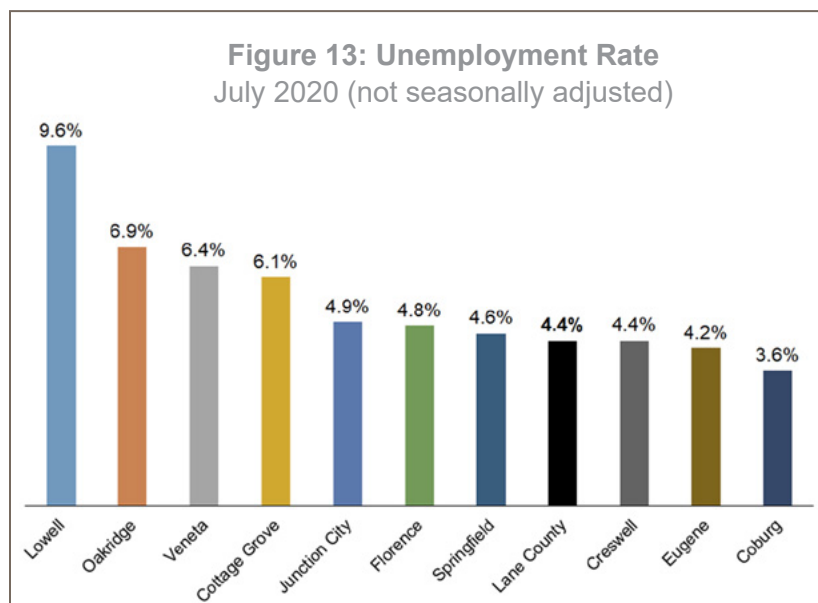
Nearly 40% of Lane County’s population resides outside the boundaries of the two largest cities, Eugene and Springfield. The estimated population of Lane County in 2021 was 382,647, with 144,669 living in small towns or unincorporated areas across the county. Assuming that the county’s workforce participation rate (56.3%) is roughly the same in rural areas, the rural workforce makes up more than 80,000 people. In addition, there is typically more “slack” in the rural labor force. Most of the small towns and rural areas in Lane County tend to have a higher unemployment rate than the County as a whole, as you can see from Figure 13.

The question then becomes, how do we tap into this significant human resource? Do we try to attract these workers to Eugene and Springfield located jobs OR, do we flip the question and work on the creation of jobs where people live?

In Oakridge, the city is focused on job creation on multiple fronts: small business development and support, entrepreneurial training, making the most of its natural resources, and creating an industrial park zoned for multi-use facilities. The success of these ventures will result in family sustaining wage jobs being created in Oakridge and preparing the young adults graduating from high school for these employment opportunities. This solution represents a workforce and economic development roadmap for Lane County’s rural communities.

One other factor to consider when tapping into the rural community’s workforce is

that of the narrowing digital divide. As the digital divide is resolved and high-speed internet access is more readily available throughout all regions of the county, there are more opportunities for businesses to benefit. People can work remotely from just about anywhere. Tapping into the millennial and Z generations through the design of productive work using technology opens up any number of opportunities and helps these rural communities grow and prosper.



Source: Oregon Employment Department, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

## THE BENEFITS OF CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) PROGRAMS

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs are not new – but have been newly appreciated as an avenue to prepare the emerging workforce. CTE is gaining in popularity – not because it’s a cool way to train Gen Zs, but because its benefits actually prepare Gen Zs for their pathway to post-secondary education and/or the world of work.

According to research from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), 93 percent of high school students in

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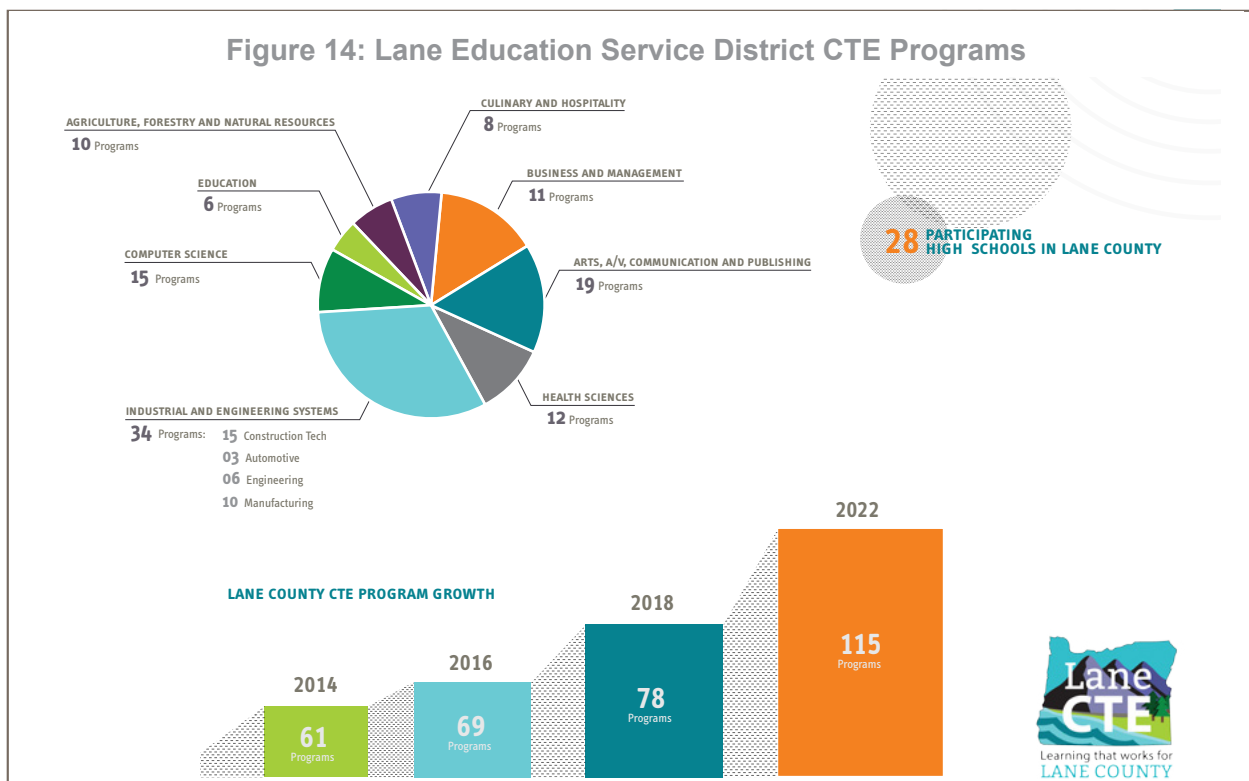
McKenzie Sheds of Hope Project Photo credit: Lyle Lang

would have kept them in high school.<sup>1</sup>

CTE programs can reach youth who would otherwise be at risk of dropping out. Research indicates that children of color and low-income families have a higher risk of disengaging from school due to institutional, systemic, and generational challenges. Reaching these students, through relevant course work and responsive and relevant supports and interventions at a young age is critical to them and to the workforce needs of tomorrow.

**Recruiting CTE Graduates:** There are 28 high schools in Lane County offering CTE training programs in a wide variety of careers. For CTE, career preparation is the goal, which provides numerous opportunities for real-world application. Businesses can engage with CTE programs by providing these students with work experiences such as job shadowing, internships, paid and un-paid work experiences. These experiences create an opportunity for the student to explore their new career and for the business to develop

CTE programs graduate on time, significantly higher than the [national rate of 84.6 percent](#). What's more, ASCD research indicates 81 percent of high school dropouts reported that relevant, real-world learning opportunities



the student's talents and turn those talented students into long term employees.

Figure 14 is a Lane ESD 2022/2023 Lane County Career and Technical Education infographic about CTE programs in Lane County and participating high schools.

## **RE-ENTRY POPULATIONS/ SECOND CHANCE/OFFENDERS**

According to an article published by the US Chamber of Commerce, an estimated 70 million people in the U.S. have an arrest or conviction record, and over 600,000 men, women, and justice involved youth are released from jail each year. Successfully reintegrating these individuals brings many advantages to the community, the individual, and our economy.

Second chance hiring is the practice of hiring formerly incarcerated individuals. Businesses with an interest in diversifying their workforce can tap into this pool of qualified talent. Engaging this vast labor pool offers businesses a chance to address labor shortages amongst a diverse group of potential employees. This group of workers have spent significant amounts of time educating themselves while they were incarcerated and employers can benefit directly by hiring these skilled individuals.

The Second Chance Business Coalition found that 85% of HR and 81% of business leaders say that individuals with criminal records perform the same as or better than employees without criminal records. Research shows that second chance employees are loyal and have lower turnover rates, resulting in savings to their employers.

For employers, there is the added monetary benefit to hiring a second chance employee in the form of the federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit, which gives employers who hire a qualified ex-felon a tax credit of up to 25% of

their first year's wages if the employee works at least 120 hours, and 40% if they work over 400 hours. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wotc>

***Recruiting Second Chance Employees in Lane County:*** Sponsors and Opportunity Oregon offer a rich mix of services to help both businesses and second chance employees connect.

Located in Lane County, Oregon, Sponsors, Inc. was founded in 1973 by Sister Janice Jackson, along with passionate volunteers and community activists. Together the group sponsored young men exiting the Oregon State Correctional Institution. These sponsors met individuals as they exited the prison gates, often with nothing more than the clothing on their backs. The sponsors assisted them in finding housing and employment, and helped with social readjustment. Beginning with just five transitional beds, Sponsors has since expanded its housing programs to provide 242 beds of transitional and long-term housing across seven sites throughout Lane County. <https://sponsorsinc.org/>



Photo courtesy of Sponsors, Inc





Photo credit: Ashley Espinoza

Opportunity Oregon works with Oregon companies to find who they need for their workforce, and helps open them up to the benefits of hiring the previously incarcerated. They have established a relationship with the Oregon prison system that allows them to support the most devoted people to succeed as they transition back into their communities. [www.opport-unity.org](http://www.opport-unity.org)

## IMMIGRANTS

Immigrants to the United States have been a workforce resource for centuries. Many foreign-born workers are just as likely as native-born workers to hold middle-skilled jobs, despite having lower traditional education attainment in general. With a little training, those in lower-skilled jobs could easily advance to middle-skill jobs. Rather than entering the workforce with specific credentials required for entry into a specific job, the immigrant workforce are advancing to middle-skilled jobs through job experience and on-the-job training. About 25 percent of both groups (Native and Foreign-born workers) have middle-skilled jobs, though immigrant workers are more likely than

native-born workers to have lower-skilled jobs (50 percent compared with 44 percent) and less likely to have high-skilled jobs (25 percent compared with 31 percent).<sup>2</sup>

Certain types of training and education are needed to support immigrant upskilling and leveraging their unique assets and needs across sectors and occupations. Limited English proficiency is a common barrier among immigrants employed in lower- and middle-skilled jobs, suggesting the importance of English language training as part of workforce development strategies for this population.

As employers are increasingly expressing a need for workers with bilingual and culturally diverse skills to serve an increasingly diverse public, there are significant benefits tapping into the immigrant population. Employers who want to recruit and retain workers can invest in improving job quality by recognizing barriers like childcare and transportation and providing supports or services to help current employees like translation which also promotes inclusion and a sense of belonging. They can also invest in upskilling their employees through onsite training to foster English language learning and promote advancement. And they can collaborate with immigrant-serving organizations and other training providers to ensure that training programs are informed by current industry need.

**Recruiting Immigrants:** Building on a history that stretches back to 1952, Catholic Community Services (CCS) of Lane County's Refugee and Immigrant Services Program (RISP) provides Employment Services to refugees, asylum seekers, and other immigrants. RISP responds with creativity and compassion to marginalized and underserved populations of Lane County residents, matching their skills with the local businesses that hire them. RISP connects businesses with motivated, work-ready, and work-eligible job seekers. CCS assists clients

in acquiring job readiness skills, by providing interpretation services from the application process through the initial employment period, in finding their first job in the United States, or in finding different work that better suits their needs. Services are provided in Spanish, Dari, Pashto, and English. Contact: [RISP@ccslc.org](mailto:RISP@ccslc.org).

## GIG WORKERS

There is no official definition or profile for who Gig workers are, but rather what gig workers are. Gig workers work at short-term, temporary jobs or as independent contractors for one or a variety of employers. Gig work can range from dog walkers to software engineers to corporate consultants and everything in between.

According to a great article in Forbes Magazine on engaging gig workers, as much as 40 percent of the U.S. workforce is engaged in some type of gig work, and even before the pandemic, the gig economy was growing triple the rate of the overall national workforce.<sup>3</sup> The author suggests that businesses can best engage gig workers by incorporating them into the fabric of their workforce, by taking time to onboard the gig workers, setting them up for success, allowing them the flexibility to get work done in the way they prefer, recognizing their contributions, and providing them with some security.

Hiring gig workers offers employers an avenue to increasing diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Temp workers offer new perspectives and can bring cultural diversity into the workplace. The gig worker provides an opportunity to take positive steps forward in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.

**Recruiting Gig Workers:** It's best to tap into a gig worker when the business has a need for a highly skilled person to perform



Photo courtesy of Discard Upcycling

a specific assignment that has a definitive time line. The gig economy primarily depends on technology, and advances in technology will enable further growth. Recruiting a gig worker requires that the business integrate recruitment tools with modern uses of technology. Popular websites for recruiting gig workers include:

[www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)  
[www.Gigworker.com](http://www.Gigworker.com)  
[www.Fiverr.com](http://www.Fiverr.com)  
[www.talroo.com](http://www.talroo.com)

Locally, Discard Upcycling and Viking Textile Maker Hub are a prime example of gig workers and their creativity. Designers work with students and independent sewists to create innovative, unique products made from discarded or damaged materials, diverting waste from landfills, and giving discarded materials a new life. Discard Upcycling encourages businesses to donate scrap materials from their manufacturing, hosts educational classes for youth and adults, and sells upcycled products. [discardupcycling.com](http://discardupcycling.com)



# Industry Sector Partnerships and their Role in the Great Reshuffle

Sector work is embedded in Lane Workforce Partnership's (LWP) practices and the use of sector-based approaches to respond to the ever-changing needs of industry and its workforce.

[The Lane County Sector Strategy Team](#) (LCSST) uses the nationally recognized model of [Next Generation Sector Partnerships](#), which are regional collaborations of businesses, from the same industry and in a shared labor market region, that work with education, workforce development, economic development, and community organizations to address workforce and other pressing needs of the target industry.

Sector strategies are business-led partnerships primarily funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These funds provide workforce investments for talent development, job creation, and business competitiveness. Local labor market data and analysis is used to inform the work of the board and to identify the regional industries essential to our local economy.

In Lane County, the identified industry sectors are Bioscience, Construction-Aggregate, Creatives, Food and Beverage, Technology, Transportation, and Wood Products. LWP is committed to working with business, industry, and community partners to solve workforce challenges and other competitive needs.

Table 4 and Figure 15 demonstrate that these target industries not only have average to above average wages for Lane County but they have a large number of forecasted openings as well.

Roughly 36 percent of Lane County's high-wage, high-demand jobs in 2020 were in targeted sectors, the largest being health care, construction, and technology. These

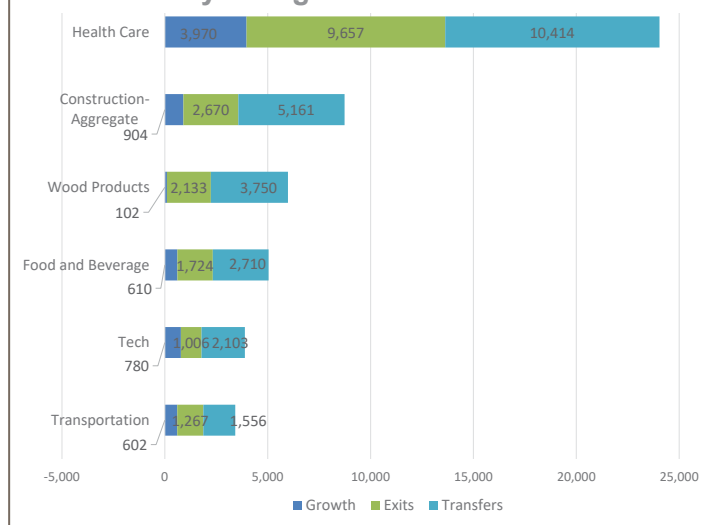
**Table 4: Lane County Sector Average Annual Pay, 2021**

	Average Wage
<b>Lane County Average</b>	<b>\$52,596</b>
Transportation	\$51,118
Food and Beverage	\$52,500
Creative Sector	\$52,842
Construction Aggregate	\$59,429
Wood Products	\$66,067
Health Care	\$66,105
Bioscience	\$77,200
Tech	\$84,534

Source: Oregon Employment Department

jobs include software developers and other computer occupations, registered nurses, medical assistants, carpenters, electricians, and heavy truck drivers.

**Figure 15: Projected Job Openings in Lane County's Target Sectors 2020-2030**



# Bioscience Sector

Lane County is home to 159 bioscience establishments that employed 1,663 workers with a total payroll of \$128 million in 2021. Trends show strong growth in recent years with a slight increase in 2020 during the COVID-19 restrictions. Between 2010 and 2021, the bioscience sector added 101 establishments and employment grew by 714, or 75%. Going forward, growth is expected to be helped by the addition of the Phil and Penny Knight Campus for Accelerating Scientific Impact at the University of Oregon. The goal of the campus is to accelerate scientific discoveries into commercial uses. The average wage in the bioscience sector at \$77,200 is well above the Lane County all industry average of \$52,596. This is due to some very high paying occupations in medicine and science. However, there is a wide range of occupations in other areas including production and transportation. The occupations in bioscience also have a wide range of wages and educational requirements (Table 5).



Photo credit: Bruce Damonte

**Table 5: Lane County Representative Occupations in the Bioscience Sector**

	<u>2022 Average Annual Wages</u>	<u>Typical Entry Level Education</u>
Biochemists and Biophysicists	\$101,182	Master's degree
Biological Technicians	\$46,813	Associate's degree
Chemists	\$84,625	Bachelor's degree
Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	\$70,752	Bachelor's degree
Driver/Sales Workers	\$40,470	High school diploma or equivalent
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	\$61,245	High school diploma or equivalent
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	\$35,718	Less than high school
Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	\$42,569	High school diploma or equivalent
Phlebotomists	\$43,207	Postsecondary training (non degree)

Source: Oregon Employment Department

# Construction-Aggregate Sector

**Table 6: Lane County Construction-Aggregate Sector Employment Forecast**

<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u># Growth</u>	<u>% Growth</u>	<u>Exits</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Total Openings</u>
8,062	8,966	904	11%	2,670	5,161	8,736

Source: Oregon Employment Department

Construction and mining are two closely related industries in Lane County that have been combined into a single sector. Almost all mining employment in Lane County is local sand and gravel companies that produce construction aggregate.

The construction - aggregate sector has seen strong growth following losses during the Great Recession. After bottoming out in

2011 at 5,256 jobs, employment has grown by 2,956 (56%) to reach 8,212 in 2021.

Like most goods-producing industries, the construction-aggregate sector was not as badly affected by COVID-19 restrictions as many of the services industries. Construction lost about 6 percent of its jobs between February and April when restrictions were enacted but regained the loss by June and



Photo courtesy of Delta Construction Co and Steve Smith Photography

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continued its normal seasonal growth into summer. Mining lost about 20 jobs, which were recovered by June.

Construction-aggregate is expected to grow slower than the overall economy at 11 percent between 2020 and 2030 resulting in 904 new jobs, compared to 15 percent for all industries (Table 6). In addition, there are 7,831 expected replacement openings for a total of 8,736 openings over the ten-year period.

Annual average wages in construction-aggregate are higher than the overall average for all industries at \$59,429 compared to \$52,596 in 2021. Lane County's total payroll in

construction-aggregate was \$489 million. Even though wages are higher on average than for all industries, most occupations in construction-aggregate require only a high school diploma or less for the typical entry-level position, providing good paying jobs at lower educational levels (Table 7).

The industry faces some challenges due to an aging workforce. With 46 percent of its workers over the age of 45, the majority of skilled workers are being lost, and according to local employers, it is difficult to attract younger workers who are more interested in other industries like technology and entrepreneurship.

**Table 7: Lane County Top Occupations in the Construction-Aggregate Sector by Entry Level Education**

	<u>2020</u> <u>Employment</u>	<u>2022</u> <u>Average</u> <u>Annual</u> <u>Wage</u>	<u>Typical Entry Level Education</u>
Carpenters	954	\$55,601	High school diploma or equivalent
Electricians	717	\$74,805	High school diploma or equivalent
Construction Laborers	572	\$47,273	Less than high school
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	428	\$74,638	High school diploma or equivalent
Painters, Construction and Maintenance	301	\$43,795	Less than high school
Roofers	285	\$46,882	Less than high school
Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	221	\$52,872	Less than high school
Cost Estimators	221	\$66,027	Bachelor's degree
General and Operations Managers	204	\$97,306	Bachelor's degree
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	175	\$53,584	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	131	\$45,828	Postsecondary training (non-degree)

Source: Oregon Employment Department



# Transportation Sector

**Table 8: Lane County Transportation Sector Employment Forecast**

<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u># Growth</u>	<u>% Growth</u>	<u>Exits</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Total Openings</u>
2,930	3,532	602	21%	1,267	1,556	3,425

Source: Oregon Employment Department

The transportation sector combines the truck transportation, transit and ground passenger transportation, warehousing and storage, and related activities industries. Combined, these industries include 187 firms that produced annual average employment of 2,957 and \$151 million in total payroll in 2021.

Trends show relatively strong growth coming

out of the Great Recession, a small loss in early 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions, largely from the ground transportation portion, and then recovery into 2021. Between 2010 and 2021, the transportation sector added 500 jobs for 20% growth.

Going forward, Oregon Employment Department forecasts show strong growth



Photo credit: Nicole Desch



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with the addition of 602 new jobs for a 21% growth rate between 2020 and 2030 compared to 15% for all industries. Growth is helped as demand from e-commerce for deliveries through trucking and warehousing increases. In addition, an aging workforce will help add 2,823 replacement openings for a total of 3,425 openings over the 10-year period (Table 8).

The overall average annual wage of \$51,118 in the transportation sector is slightly less than the all industry wage in Lane County largely due to low wages in the transit and ground transportation portion of the sector. A look at common occupations in the sector shows that most are low to medium wage jobs with attainable education levels (Table 9).

**Table 9: Lane County Top Occupations in the Transportation Sector by Entry Level Education**

	<u>2022 Average Annual Wages</u>	<u>Typical Entry Level Education</u>
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	\$53,216	High school diploma or equivalent
Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	\$50,831 *	High school diploma or equivalent
Cargo and Freight Agents	\$49,509	High school diploma or equivalent
Counter and Rental Clerks	\$40,458	Less than high school
Dispatchers, Except Police, Fire, and Ambulance	\$47,915	High school diploma or equivalent
General and Operations Managers	\$97,306	Bachelor's degree
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$51,695	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	\$35,718	Less than high school
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	\$41,584	High school diploma or equivalent
Motor Vehicle Operators, All Other	\$34,281	High school diploma or equivalent
Office Clerks, General	\$39,829	High school diploma or equivalent
Packers and Packagers, Hand	\$31,827	Less than high school
Reservation and Transportation Ticket Agents and Travel Clerks	\$44,996 *	High school diploma or equivalent
Shuttle Drivers and Chauffeurs	\$32,553	High school diploma or equivalent
Supervisors of Transportation & Material Moving Workers, Exc Aircraft Cargo Handling	\$55,364	High school diploma or equivalent

\* Oregon Statewide wage

Source: Oregon Employment Department

# Tech Sector

**Table 10: Lane County Tech Sector Employment Forecast**

<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u># Growth</u>	<u>% Growth</u>	<u>Exits</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Total Openings</u>
3,578	4,358	780	22%	1,006	2,103	3,889

Source: Oregon Employment Department

The tech sector in Lane County includes roughly 616 firms in industries like software publishing, data processing services, and electronic manufacturing. Together, these firms employed 3,693 workers in 2021 and contributed over \$312 million in total payroll.

Trends show the sector grew after the Great Recession, gaining roughly 520 jobs between 2012 and 2014 from a variety of

manufacturing, software, and computer service firms. Between 2015 and 2021, the sector was down 736 jobs, largely due to published layoffs at Symantec. However, new and expanding tech firms countered these job losses. The number of new firms in the tech sector grew by 232 between 2015 and 2021. The tech sector was one of the least affected by COVID-19 restrictions since many of the occupations in the nonmanufacturing tech



Photo credit: Athena Delene, Delene & Co.

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industries can be done effectively from home. The sector lost 2 percent of its employment between February and April of 2020 and then gained jobs into 2021.

Tech sector wages are high. In 2021, the average annual wage was \$84,534 compared to \$52,596 for all industries in Lane County.

At the occupational level, common occupations in the industry show a combination of highly paid technical occupations and generally lower paid office personnel. Table 11 shows the most common

occupations in the sector with average annual wages.

The Oregon Employment Department forecasts show the tech sector will grow by 22 percent in Lane County between 2020 and 2030, compared to 15% for all industries (Table 10). Growth is helped by the addition of new establishments in recent years. In addition, there are an expected 3,757 openings that will be created through replacement needs equaling 3,889 total openings or an average of 389 openings per year.

**Table 11: Lane County Top Occupations in the Tech Sector - Common Occupations**

<b>Occupational Title</b>	<b><u>2022 Average Annual Wages</u></b>
Architects, Except Landscape and Naval	\$75,964
Architectural and Civil Drafters	\$52,792
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$45,828
Civil Engineers	\$94,889
Computer and Information Systems Managers	\$119,769
Computer Network Support Specialists	\$68,198
Computer Programmers	\$83,404
Computer User Support Specialists	\$57,666
General and Operations Managers	\$97,306
Life, Physical, and Social Science Technicians, All Other	\$47,262
Office Clerks, General	\$39,829
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	\$62,378
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	\$45,080
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	\$94,710
Web Developers and Digital Interface Designers	\$65,668

Source: Oregon Employment Department

# Food and Beverage Sector

**Table 12: Lane County Food and Beverage Sector Employment Forecast**

<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u># Growth</u>	<u>% Growth</u>	<u>Exits</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Total Openings</u>
3,832	4,442	610	16%	1,724	2,710	5,044

Source: Oregon Employment Department

The food and beverage sector is a traded sector that includes both manufacturers and wholesalers. An important growth industry in Lane County, the number of firms grew from 125 to 183 and employment grew from 2,907 to 3,887 between the end of the recession in 2010 and 2019. Craft beer and organic food manufacturers contributed to the growth.

Because the food and beverage sector is made up of jobs in manufacturing and wholesale trade,

it was less affected by COVID-19 restrictions than some other sectors. When restrictions were enacted in 2020, the sector dropped about 2 percent, compared to 7 percent for all industries. The sector rebounded in 2021, adding 184 jobs to reach 173 establishments and 4,007 jobs.

Going forward, the sector is expected to add 610 additional jobs by 2030 for a 16% growth rate, compared to 15% for all industries (Table 12). In addition, there are an expected 4,434



Photo credit: Colin Morton, Eugene, Cascades & Coast



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replacement openings equaling 5,044 total openings over the 10-year period.

Wages are about the same in the food and beverage sector compared to total average wages in Lane County. In 2021, the Lane County average annual wage in the food and beverage sector was \$52,500 compared to \$52,596 for all industries (Table 13). High wages in the food and beverage sector are relatively uncommon in Oregon. Statewide, wages in the food and beverage sector are somewhat less than the average for all industries. In Lane County, many firms in the

food and beverage manufacturing portion of the sector produce specialized products such as organic food and craft beer as opposed to large food processors, helping to push wages higher.

The table below shows that wages are low to medium and educational requirements for the food and beverage sector are relatively low. Of the most common occupations, most require a high school diploma or less, yet employers in the industry report having difficulty hiring and keeping workers.

**Table 13: Lane County Common Occupations in the Food and Beverage Sector**

	<u>2022 Average Annual Wages</u>	<u>Typical Entry Level Education</u>
Bakers	\$34,685	Less than high school
Driver/Sales Workers	\$40,470	High school diploma or equivalent
Food Batchmakers	\$39,235	High school diploma or equivalent
Food Preparation Workers	\$33,168	Less than high school
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$51,695	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	\$37,631	High school diploma or equivalent
Packers and Packagers, Hand	\$31,827	Less than high school
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	\$66,844	High school diploma or equivalent
Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks	\$39,352	High school diploma or equivalent
Stockers and Order Fillers	\$34,930	Less than high school

\* Oregon Statewide wage

Source: Oregon Employment Department



# Wood Products Sector

**Table 14: Lane County Wood Products Sector Employment Forecast**

<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u># Growth</u>	<u>% Growth</u>	<u>Exits</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Total Openings</u>
5,607	5,709	102	1.8%	2,133	3,750	5,985

Source: Oregon Employment Department

Wood products have played a key role in Lane County's economy for generations, and with innovative technologies continues to be an important economic sector today. All aspects of wood products production are part of the Lane County economy including planting, harvesting, and manufacturing. When initially tracking this industry sector, LWP focused on the narrow definition of advanced wood products manufacturing, but after extensive conversations with industry leaders, we

pivoted to expand our definition to capture a broader list of activities in this industry sector. Numbers from the Oregon Forest Resources Institute show that the sector had 7,585 jobs and over \$419 million in total payroll in Lane County in 2019, the most of any county in Oregon.

Wood products manufacturing is by far the most prominent sector within overall manufacturing in Lane County and is more



Photo courtesy of Sierra Pacific Industries

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strongly concentrated in our area than almost any other in the country. In 2021, Lane County wood products manufacturing had about eight times more employment concentration than the U.S. and two times more than Oregon statewide.

Although the sector has trended downward since the late 1970s, it had a steady rebound from the Great Recession. Using an industry code definition that captures most of the employment in the wood products sector, it added 476 jobs or about 8.6 percent between 2012 and 2019.

Wood products was one of the industries least affected by the COVID-19 restrictions in early 2020. Between February and April when restrictions were enacted, wood products manufacturing lost only 100 jobs (about 3 percent) and regained most of those jobs by June 2020. A loss of about 60 jobs due to COVID-19 restrictions in logging were

regained by June.

The Oregon Employment Department forecasts that the sector will increase by 2 percent between 2020 and 2030, gaining 102 jobs over the period. However, replacement needs, largely due to retirements are expected to create 5,883 replacement openings for 5,985 total openings over 10 years (Table 14).

Wages are generally high in the wood products sector. The 2021 annual average wage for the sector in Lane County was \$66,067 compared to the overall average of \$52,596 for all industries (Table 15).

The table below shows common occupations within the wood products sector with their wages and educational requirements in Lane County, showing that there are well paying jobs at relatively low education levels.

**Table 15: Lane County Common Occupations in the Wood Products Sector**

	<u>2022 Average Annual Wages</u>	<u>Typical Entry Level Education</u>
Machine Feeders and Offbearers	\$37,631	High school diploma or equivalent
Logging Equipment Operators	\$52,114	High school diploma or equivalent
Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Wood	\$43,915	High school diploma or equivalent
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	\$44,630	Less than high school
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$51,695	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	\$39,065	High school diploma or equivalent
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	\$61,245	High school diploma or equivalent
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	\$42,067	High school diploma or equivalent
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	\$42,988	High school diploma or equivalent
Helpers--Production Workers	\$36,560	Less than high school
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	\$61,901	High school diploma or equivalent
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	\$35,718	Less than high school
Adhesive Bonding Machine Operators and Tenders	\$41,849	High school diploma or equivalent
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	\$32,588	Less than high school
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	\$35,746	High school diploma or equivalent

Source: Oregon Employment Department

# Health Care Sector

**Table 16: Lane County Health Care Sector Employment Forecast**

<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u># Growth</u>	<u>% Growth</u>	<u>Exits</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Total Openings</u>
21,283	25,253	3,970	19%	9,657	10,414	24,041

Source: Oregon Employment Department

Health care is a large and growing sector in Lane County. Lane County is a regional center for health care in Oregon where patients from outside the county consume services. The county's concentration of health care employment is higher than both Oregon and the nation,

The health care sector in Lane County had 1,041 firms that employed 21,102 people in 2021. Payroll in Lane County equaled

\$1,394,942,208 in 2021.

This sector was the only one that did not drop during the Great Recession and continued to grow afterward, adding 4,012 jobs, or 23 percent, between 2011 and 2019.

Health care was moderately affected by COVID-19 restrictions. Many nonessential health care providers temporarily closed until medical and dental offices could enact social



Photo credit: Nicole Desch



## LANE WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP

distancing protocols. The sector lost about 1,180 jobs or 5 percent of its employment between 2019 and 2020, and had lost an additional 148 in 2021.

Job opportunities in the health care industry continue to grow, with high-paying jobs spanning the entire educational requirement spectrum. The 2021 annual average wage in health care is \$66,105, compared to \$52,596 for all industries.

Fifty-one percent of the jobs in the health care industry are in high-wage, high-demand occupations. Among the top high-wage, high-demand occupations are registered nurses, medical assistants, dental assistants, and nurse practitioners (Table 17).

Like most of the sectors on which LWP focuses, health care has an aging workforce.

About 45 percent of Lane County workers in health care are 45 years of age and older, boosting the need for replacement openings through retirements. There are expected to be 20,071 replacement openings between 2020 and 2030 (Table 16). When combined with growth openings, there are an expected 24,041 total openings over the 10-year period. Health care is undergoing dramatic shifts in terms of its workforce needs. There is a greater focus on patient engagement and empowerment, health promotion, disease prevention, population health, team-based care among providers, and coordinated care across health care organizations. These shifts are changing how care is delivered, resulting in workforce fluctuation. There is a shift to less intensive care, earlier intervention, and coordinated care.

**Table 17: Lane County Representative Occupations in the Health Care Sector**

	<u>2022</u> <u>Average</u> <u>Annual</u> <u>Wages</u>	<u>Typical Entry Level Education</u>
Billing and Posting Clerks	\$44,374	High school diploma or equivalent
Dental Assistants	\$47,613	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Dental Hygienists	\$90,129	Associate's degree
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	\$33,595	Less than high school
Interviewers, Except Eligibility and Loan	\$37,582	High school diploma or equivalent
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$59,663	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$33,047	Less than high school
Medical and Health Services Managers	\$110,796	Bachelor's degree
Medical Assistants	\$45,570	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	\$52,952	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Medical Secretaries	\$43,889	High school diploma or equivalent
Nursing Assistants	\$40,004	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Receptionists and Information Clerks	\$34,393	High school diploma or equivalent
Registered Nurses	\$100,827	Bachelor's degree
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	\$60,399	Postsecondary training (non-degree)

Source: Oregon Employment Department

# Creative Sector

The creative sector is comprised of a variety of industries including those related to the production of apparel, art, publishing, and the performing arts. It also includes museums and historical sites. There were 565 establishments with 4,027 employed and over \$171 million in total payroll in 2021.

Trends show a loss of 443 jobs or 12% between 2010 and 2021. Most of the loss was due to COVID-19 restrictions that negatively affected the performing and visual arts. The performing arts were impacted by the closure of theaters. Likewise, the visual arts were impacted with the closure of galleries and art shops and new barriers to in-person art sales. Between 2019 and 2020, the creative sector lost about 570 jobs, or 15%. It had gained about 100 of the lost jobs in 2021. The sector is still recovering from losses due to COVID-19 restrictions in 2020. Going forward, the creative sector should continue to rebound from the losses incurred in 2020



Photo credit: Turell Group, Eugene, Cascades & Coast

due to COVID-19 restrictions, especially in the performing arts. Galleries are seeing a similar steady recovery as performing art venues.

The average wage in the creative sector at \$52,842 is slightly above the Lane County all industry average of \$52,596. Due to the variety of industries in the sector, there is a wide range of occupations that include a wide range of wages (Table 18).

**Table 18: Lane County Representative Occupations in the Creative Sector**

	<u>2022 Average Annual Wages</u>	<u>Typical Entry Level Education</u>
Audio and Video Equipment Technicians	\$48,592 *	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	\$94,710	Bachelor's degree
General and Operations Managers	\$97,306	Bachelor's degree
Musicians and Singers	\$34 per hr	High school diploma or equivalent
Printing Press Operators	\$41,605	High school diploma or equivalent
Office Clerks, General	\$39,829	High school diploma or equivalent
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	\$47,273	Less than high school
Sewing Machine Operators	\$33,151	Less than high school
Computer Network Support Specialists	\$68,198	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Editors	\$57,198	Bachelor's degree
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	\$42,067	High school diploma or equivalent
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	\$59,681	Bachelor's degree
Graphic Designers	\$47,841	Associate's degree
Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Wood	\$43,915	High school diploma or equivalent
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$45,828	Postsecondary training (non-degree)

\* Oregon statewide wage.

Source: Oregon Employment Department



# Introduction to Workforce Systems

Lane Workforce Partnership's (LWP) workforce system encompasses all of Lane County from the coast to the Cascade Range, and borders our neighboring counties to the north and south. Geographically, the region encompasses 4,722 square miles - the same size as the entire state of Connecticut. The region is primarily rural with the Eugene and Springfield metropolitan area located approximately at the center of the county.

Our region boasts great recreational areas including parks, rivers, lakes, hiking trails, and coastal attractions. We are home to the University of Oregon, a public flagship research university with educational offerings that attract students from across the nation and the world. We also have a strong community college, Lane Community College, with advanced and specialized offerings to meet the needs of our diverse regional economy; 94 percent of those enrolled at LCC are Lane County residents.

In addition to the long-established wood products industry still present in Lane County, we have seen the area develop additional major industry hubs in health care, information technology, and food and beverage manufacturing. Through the Knight Campus at the University of Oregon, bioscience has emerged as our newest industry sector.

Lane County's workforce system is part of the larger Oregon Workforce Development System. The statewide workforce development system helps the emerging (youth/young adults ages 14-24), transitional and current workforce obtain and succeed in family-wage jobs. In addition, the Oregon Workforce Development System assists businesses in finding top candidates for job openings and works to find solutions to workforce challenges.

In Oregon, there are nine local Workforce Development Boards responsible for brokering services for adults, dislocated workers, youth/young adults, and businesses through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). In Lane County, Lane Workforce Partnership is the administrative arm of the local Workforce Development Board.



The WIOA emphasizes alignment of a coordinated workforce system. As a result, in Lane County the workforce service delivery system is a collaborative that includes:

- Department of Human Services
  - Self-sufficiency programs
  - Vocational rehabilitation
- Department of Education
  - Lane Community College
  - K-12 school districts
- Oregon Commission for the Blind
- Oregon Employment Department

A majority of services to job seekers and business customers are provided out of the WorkSource Lane Centers in Eugene and Florence, and the Oregon Department of Human Services offices in Eugene, Springfield and Cottage Grove. Most services to Lane County's youth and young adult populations are provided by Connected Lane County.

# FINAL THOUGHTS



Photo credit: Mike Shaw, Eugene, Cascades & Coast

It is with great enthusiasm that Lane Workforce Partnership provides this 2022 State of the Workforce Report. In this report, we set out to explore Lane County's current workforce with the hope that by understanding who is in the labor market, businesses can better plan for how they can tap into this rich and diverse community. It's clear, that if we want to increase our competitiveness in Lane County, we need to embrace our growing diversity. Businesses can use the information in this report to create their own strategic plan for recruiting and retaining a workforce that will help them to thrive and grow into the future.

Lane Workforce Partnership hopes this report provides the reader with information needed to navigate these unsettling times, changing economic conditions, and the shifts we are experiencing in the makeup of our workforce. We will continue to bring together partners and resources to anticipate and respond to community workforce needs. As we look to

the future, we know we will continue to face uncertainties and challenges. We also know that our community is strong – as evidenced by how well we have diversified our industry base over the years. We have grown from a timber industry to one that is strong in technology and sciences. By working together, as the people of Lane County do so well, we will continue to grow and thrive into our collective future.

## PRIORITY POPULATIONS

- Communities of color
- Women
- Low-income communities
- Rural and frontier communities
- Veterans
- Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals
- Persons with disabilities
- Members of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ascd.org/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/98766/upskilling\\_immigrant\\_workforce\\_to\\_meet\\_employer\\_demand\\_for\\_skilled\\_workers\\_2.pdf](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/98766/upskilling_immigrant_workforce_to_meet_employer_demand_for_skilled_workers_2.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/larryenglish/2021/02/23/gig-workers-are-the-workforce-of-the-future-heres-how-to-engage-them/?sh=7cc950c1656f>

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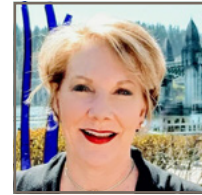
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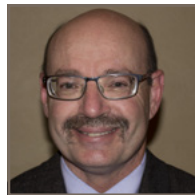
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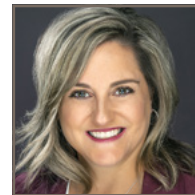
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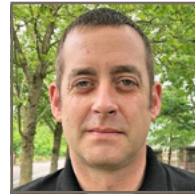
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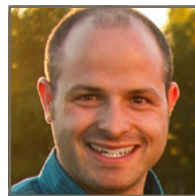
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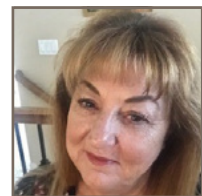
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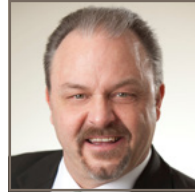
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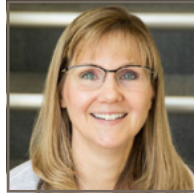
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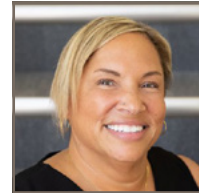
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