

BEYOND THE HEADLINES

At a Glance: Jobs, Workers & the Economy

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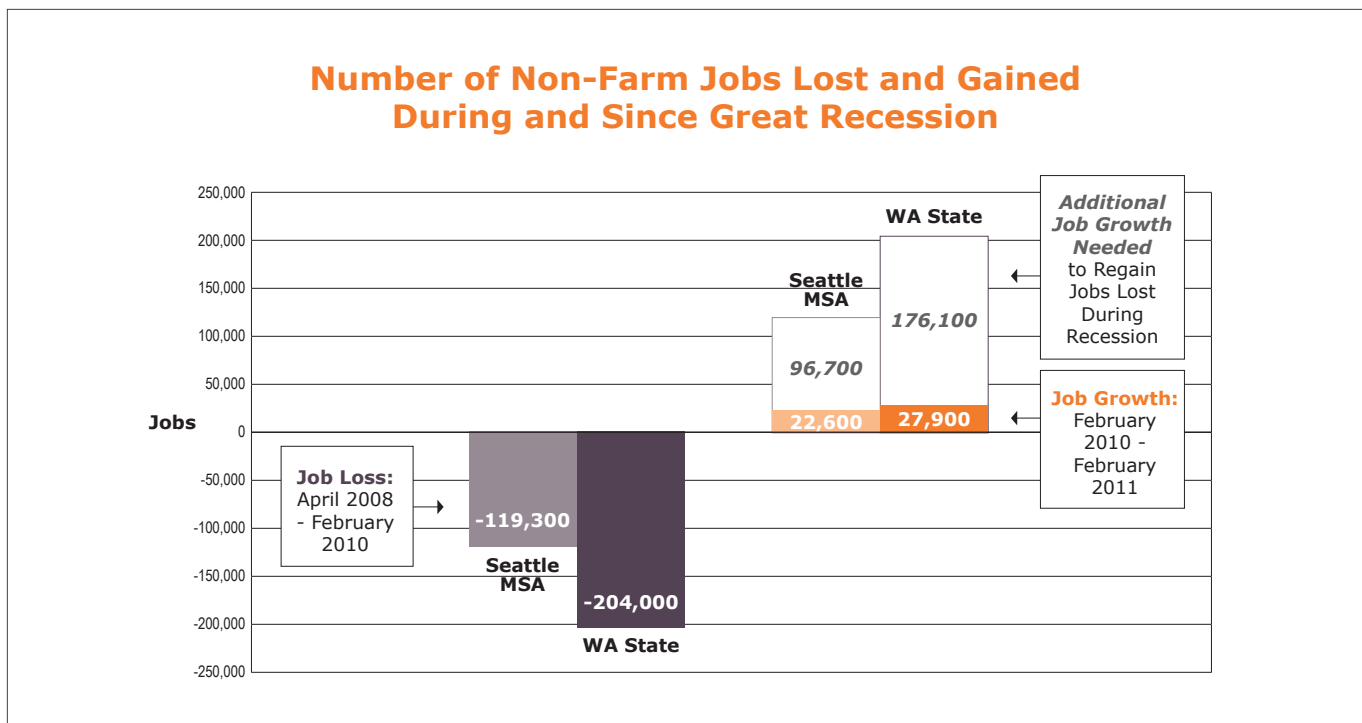
APRIL 2010

FOCUS: WA STATE & SEATTLE MSA

The Great Recession: Taking Stock of Jobs Gained, Jobs Lost

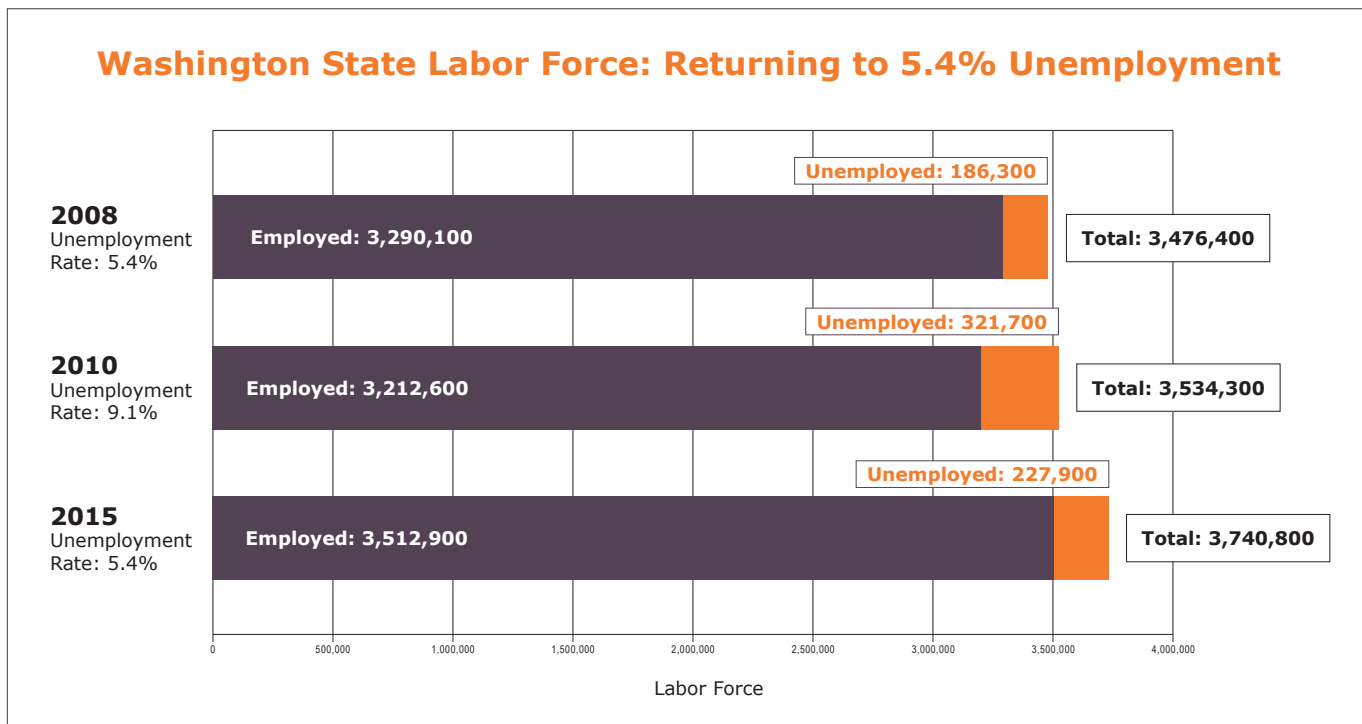
Washington State added 1,100 jobs in March 2011, while statewide unemployment crept up to 9.2% from 9.1% in February, likely the result of more people entering the labor market who had previously stopped looking for work. Both Washington and the Seattle area (Seattle-Bellevue-Everett metro) have been adding jobs since peak unemployment in February 2010.

Let's look beyond the numbers:



Source: Data provided by Washington State Employment Security Department and represents seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment series (CES series).

In addition, the state has estimated how many jobs we will have to add in Washington from 2010 – 2015 to return to 5.4% unemployment – the rate our state experienced in 2008 before the labor market effects of the Great Recession truly kicked in. These numbers account for both the need to regain jobs lost during the Great Recession as well as new entrants into the labor market due to normal population growth.



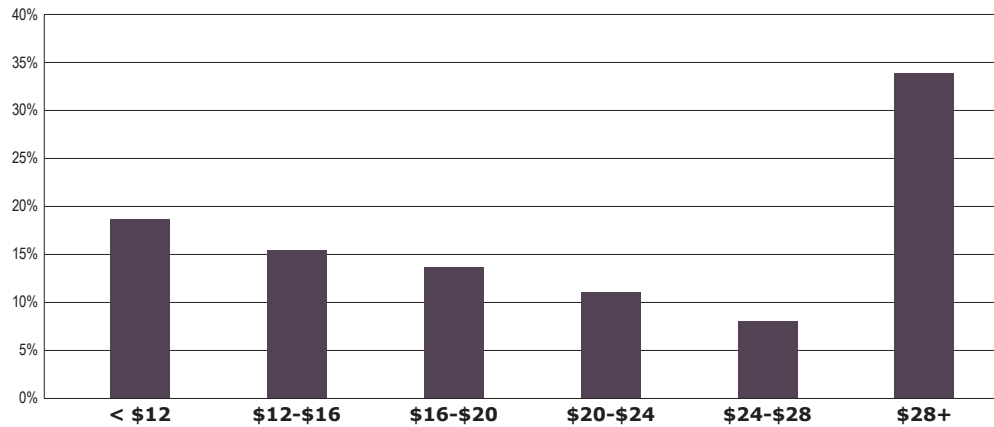
Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management, see <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/economy/longterm/2011/ly11ch2.pdf>

As the above chart demonstrates, Washington’s total labor force is projected to increase by more than 200,000 in the 5-year period from 2010 – 2015 (3,534,300 to 3,740,800). In that same period, the state must add 300,000 jobs (3,212,600 to 3,512,900) – an average of 60,000 jobs per year – to return to a 5.4% unemployment rate in 2015. As demonstrated in the first graph, Washington is still a long way from adding jobs at this rate.

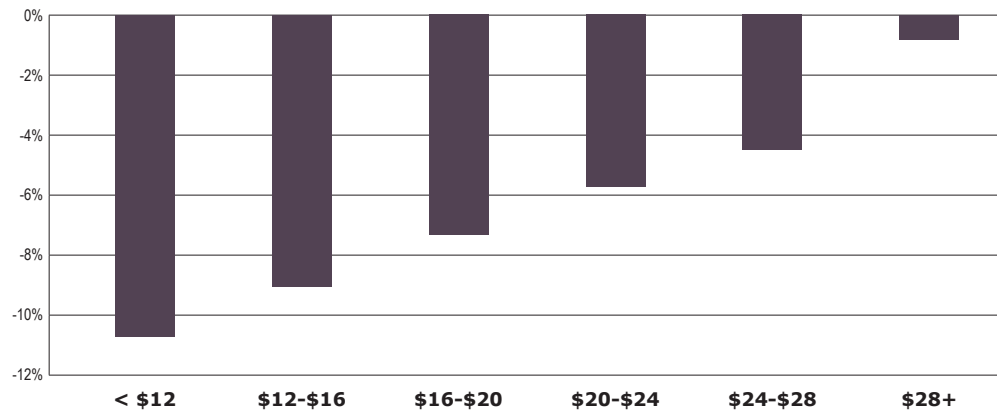
Finally, we have some information about the type (by wage) of jobs lost in Washington State during the Great Recession.

The first chart on the next page (p.3) depicts all jobs in Washington State in 2009 by hourly wage, providing a picture of the total percentage of jobs in each wage category. The second chart depicts jobs lost in the state in 2008 – 2009, also by wage. As is evident, the lower the wage, the greater the percentage of jobs lost; conversely, the higher the wage, the smaller the percentage of jobs lost.

Employment by Hourly Wage in Washington State in 2009



Job Loss by Hourly Wage in 2008 - 2009



Source: Adapted from Washington State Employment Security Department, LMEA, from PowerPoint presentation, *Washington's Economy: Gearing Up, Holding in Neutral, or Winding Down?* (16th Annual Economic Symposium on Labor Market Information) October 29, 2010.

BEYOND THE HEADLINES: Policy & Labor Market Updates for Those Working to Help Low-Income and Low-Skill Individuals Advance through Education, Training & Living-Wage Jobs

About Seattle Jobs Initiative

Seattle Jobs Initiative creates opportunities for students, workers and business to succeed by helping education and job training programs meet the demands of a new economy. We find and apply solutions for people to gain the skills they need for good jobs that create prosperity for all in today's marketplace.

Supported by the City of Seattle Office of Economic Development

Contact Information

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