The New York State Department of Labor recently released revised jobs and labor force numbers for 2017 and earlier. Jobs and labor force data are revised at the end of each year for each state and the nation as more complete information becomes available, using methods set by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This federally mandated process is called benchmarking.

Expansion Continues
New York State’s annual average private sector job count increased by 109,700, or 1.4%, to 8,067,400 in 2017, a new all-time high. This also marks the state’s eighth consecutive year of job growth since 2009, the end of the state’s last recession.

Statewide Analysis
Between 2016 and 2017, educational and health services (private) added the most jobs (+55,100) of any major industry sector in New York. See the table on page 3 for additional industry detail. Sector gains were centered in health care and social assistance (+52,800), especially ambulatory health care services (+27,500).

The professional and business services sector added 23,400 jobs in 2016-17. Sector employment gains were centered in administrative and support services (+11,100) and professional, scientific and technical services (+10,900).

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In January...
Focus on the Finger Lakes

Economic Expansion Continues in the Finger Lakes
by Tammy Marino, Labor Market Analyst, Finger Lakes

Since the end of the national recession in 2009, the Finger Lakes region has enjoyed eight years of uninterrupted economic expansion. From the second quarter of 2009 (2q2009) to the second quarter of 2017 (2q2017), the region’s private sector job count grew from 443,000 to 469,800, an increase of 26,800, or 6.0%, per data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages program. In addition, total wages paid by private sector employers in the region jumped by nearly 27%.

Recent job growth has been centered in a diverse set of industry sectors. Here, we take a closer look at the three industry sectors -- health care and social assistance, accommodation and food services, and professional and technical services -- that added the most jobs in the region between 2q2009 and 2q2017.

Which Sectors Are Adding the Most Jobs?
Between 2q2009 and 2q2017, the health care and social assistance sector added 9,000 jobs, accounting for more than one-third of total private sector job gains in the region. Sector job gains were largest in hospitals (+4,600), ambulatory health care services (+2,100) and nursing and residential care facilities (+1,900).

Employers in the health care and social assistance sector also make a significant contribution to the region’s economy in terms of the wages they pay. For the year period ending 2q2017, workers in this sector earned more than $3.7 billion, or nearly 17% of the region’s total private sector wages.

Hospitals rank among the largest employers in the region. Strong Memorial and Highland hospitals, affiliates of the University of Rochester Medical Center, and Rochester General and Unity hospitals, affiliates of Rochester Regional Health, are all among the region’s largest private sector employers, per the infoUSA database.

In 2q2009-2q2017, employment in accommodation and food services grew by 5,900, with 80% of this growth due to an expanding restaurant and bar industry. Arguably the most significant recent development in the Finger Lakes region’s $1.6 billion tourism sector was the opening of the del Lago Resort & Casino in Seneca County in February 2017. With more than 1,200 employees, it is now one of the largest private sector employers in the county, according to published reports.

The casino makes several important contributions to the overall Finger Lakes economy. First, it injects money into the region through its purchases of locally produced goods and services. Spending by the casino ripples through the economy many times over. Second, the casino serves as an “export industry” as it attracts many visitors who live outside of the region. Spending by these visitors to the region, in turn, generates additional employment and income in a variety of industries throughout the regional economy via the multiplier effect.

Employment in professional and technical services expanded by 5,600 in 2q2009-2q2017. Industries in this sector include accounting, engineering, computer services and advertising, to name but a few. Many positions in these industries require additional education and training, so wage levels tend to be higher than in other sectors. Salaries for workers in this sector average $68,700, which is 44% higher than the region’s private sector average of $47,700. This sector’s strong track record of job growth is expected to continue, with employment projected to expand by more than 22% in 2014-2024.

Looking Ahead
Over the past eight years, a diverse set of industry sectors contributed to job growth in the Finger Lakes labor market. Looking ahead, several new exciting projects promise to add to the region’s private sector job count.

One of these is Clearwater Organic Farms, which will construct a 475,000-square-foot hydroponic greenhouse at the Eastman Business Park in Rochester. They will produce fresh, organic leafy greens year-round. The $50.6 million project will eventually employ more than 100 workers. Another upcoming project is the $200 million expansion of the HP Hood dairy plant in Batavia (Genesee County), which is expected to result in 230 new jobs over a five-year period.

Economic Expansion... from page 1

Leisure and hospitality added 20,400 jobs over the year. Job gains were focused in accommodations and food services (+17,900), especially food services and drinking places (+13,300).

Manufacturing (-5,400) lost the most employment in 2017. Factory job losses were concentrated in durable goods (-5,100), especially machinery manufacturing (-1,300).

Area Jobs Summary
Among the state’s 15 metro and labor market areas, New York City experienced the strongest private sector job growth in 2017, on both an absolute (+81,200) and percentage (+2.1%) basis. Mirroring statewide trends, the three major industry groups adding the most jobs in the city in 2016-17 were educational and health services (+34,700), professional and business services (+20,000) and leisure and hospitality (+11,900).

Among the state’s other metro areas, private sector job growth in 2017 was most rapid in:
- Kingston (+1.5%)
- Dutchess-Putnam (+1.3%)
- Orange-Rockland-Westchester (+1.3%)
- Albany-Schenectady-Troy (+1.1%)
- Nassau-Suffolk (+1.1%)

Only two metro areas in the state -- Elmira (-1.0%) and Watertown-Fort Drum (-0.3%) -- lost private sector jobs last year.

In the 24 counties located outside of metropolitan areas, the combined private sector job count increased by 0.2% in 2017. The five counties with the most rapid job growth between 2016 and 2017 include: Seneca (+13.8%), Sullivan (+3.0%), Montgomery (+1.8%), Clinton (+1.6%), and Greene (+1.0%).

Labor Force Statistics
Newly revised labor force data show that New York State’s unemployment rate dipped from 4.8% in 2016 to 4.7% in 2017. This was the state’s lowest annual unemployment rate since 2007, before the last recession.

A significant drop in New York City’s jobless rate, from 5.2% to 4.5%, contributed to the
The newly benchmarked jobs and labor force data show that New York State’s economic expansion continued last year. Moreover, this represented the state’s eighth consecutive year of private sector job growth. Between 2009 and 2017, the state’s economy added more than one million private sector jobs.

by Kevin Alexander and Kayla Baker
The New York State Department of Labor is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

For the year ending January 2018, private sector jobs in the Southern Tier rose by 400, or 0.2 percent, to 219,000. The greatest gains were in leisure and hospitality (+500), educational and health services (+3,000), leisure and hospitality (+3,800), professional and business services (+900) and educational and health services (+600). Losses were centered in professional and business services (-500) and other services (-200). Losses were centered in professional and business services (-500) and trade, transportation and utilities (-500).

For the year ending January 2018, private sector jobs in the Capital Region rose by 7,500, or 1.8 percent, to 432,300. The greatest gains were in leisure and hospitality (+3,200), educational and health services (+2,600), professional and business services (+900), trade, transportation and utilities (+700) and manufacturing (+500). Losses occurred in information (-300).

Private sector jobs in the Syracuse metro area fell over the year by 600, or 0.2 percent, to 252,800 in January 2018. Growth was centered in educational and health services (+600) and manufacturing (+400). The largest job losses occurred in financial activities (-500), leisure and hospitality (-500) and natural resources, mining and construction (-500).

Private sector jobs in the Rochester metro area increased over the year by 2,800, or 0.6 percent, to 446,100 in January 2018. Gains were greatest in educational and health services (+3,500), trade, transportation and utilities (+600), natural resources, mining and construction (+500) and manufacturing (+400). Losses were concentrated in leisure and hospitality (-1,400).

Private sector jobs in the Buffalo-Niagara Falls metro area rose over the year by 8,000, or 17 percent, to 466,200 in January 2018. The greatest gains were in educational and health services (+2,700), professional and business services (+2,400), other services (+2,200), leisure and hospitality (+2,100) and financial activities (+800). Losses occurred in trade, transportation and utilities (-2,100).

For the 12-month period ending January 2018, the private sector job count in the Mohawk Valley rose by 300, or 0.2 percent, to 142,700 in January 2018. Employment gains were centered in educational and health services (+600). Job losses were greatest in manufacturing (-300).