



# OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS REVISITED

Exploring Employment for Sub-Baccalaureate Workers Across Metro Areas and Over Time

## AKRON, OH

New research explores the economic opportunity available in 121 of the largest metro areas in the U.S. The report defines **opportunity employment** as jobs accessible to workers without a bachelor's degree and typically paying above the national annual median wage (\$37,690), adjusted up or down to reflect the local cost of living. Occupations characterized by a high level of opportunity employment are called **opportunity occupations**. Nationally, the research finds that 21.6 percent of total employment can be classified as opportunity employment — a figure that varies greatly across the metro areas analyzed. In this region and nationally, the largest opportunity occupations represent a true cross section of the jobs available in today's economy.

### SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT BY EDUCATION AND WAGES



**16** RANK OUT OF 121 METRO AREAS

### TOP 10 OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS IN 2017

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1 REGISTERED NURSES</b><br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$69,200</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>5,400</b></p>                                 | <p><b>2 SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS</b><br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$34,300</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>4,700</b></p>          |
| <p><b>3 HEAVY AND TRACTOR-TRAILER TRUCK DRIVERS</b><br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$42,600</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>4,500</b></p>           | <p><b>4 BOOKKEEPING, ACCOUNTING, AND AUDITING CLERKS</b><br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$37,100</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>3,100</b></p>       |
| <p><b>5 MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR WORKERS</b><br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$40,300</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>3,000</b></p>                    | <p><b>6 CONSTRUCTION LABORERS</b><br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$45,800</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>2,400</b></p>                              |
| <p><b>7 LICENSED PRACTICAL AND LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSES</b><br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$40,700</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>2,300</b></p> | <p><b>8 SALES REPRESENTATIVES, WHOLESALE AND MANUFACTURING</b><br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$63,300</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>2,000</b></p> |
| <p><b>9 SUPERVISORS OF RETAIL SALES WORKERS</b><br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$38,400</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>2,000</b></p>               | <p><b>10 GENERAL AND OPERATIONS MANAGERS</b><br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$103,200</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>1,600</b></p>                  |

Sources: Authors' calculations using data from BLS Occupational Employment Statistics (May 2017), Burning Glass Technologies (2015–2017), BEA Regional Price Parities (2016), and American Community Survey Five-Year Public Use Microdata Sample (2012–2016). Values are rounded to the nearest 100. Occupations are ranked on unrounded opportunity employment values.

For more information, read "Opportunity Occupations Revisited: Exploring Employment for Sub-Baccalaureate Workers Across Metro Areas and Over Time" by Kyle Fee, Keith Wardrip, and Lisa Nelson and published by the Federal Reserve Banks of Cleveland and Philadelphia, 2019 (available at [www.philadelphiafed.org/community-development/publications/special-reports](http://www.philadelphiafed.org/community-development/publications/special-reports)). The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Federal Reserve Banks of Philadelphia, Cleveland, Atlanta, or the Federal Reserve System.



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# OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS REVISITED

Exploring Employment for Sub-Baccalaureate Workers Across Metro Areas and Over Time

## CINCINNATI, OH-KY-IN

New research explores the economic opportunity available in 121 of the largest metro areas in the U.S. The report defines **opportunity employment** as jobs accessible to workers without a bachelor's degree and typically paying above the national annual median wage (\$37,690), adjusted up or down to reflect the local cost of living. Occupations characterized by a high level of opportunity employment are called **opportunity occupations**. Nationally, the research finds that 21.6 percent of total employment can be classified as opportunity employment — a figure that varies greatly across the metro areas analyzed. In this region and nationally, the largest opportunity occupations represent a true cross section of the jobs available in today's economy.

### SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT BY EDUCATION AND WAGES



**13** RANK OUT OF 121 METRO AREAS

### TOP 10 OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS IN 2017

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1</b> REGISTERED NURSES<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$64,100</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>16,400</b></p>                                | <p><b>2</b> HEAVY AND TRACTOR-TRAILER TRUCK DRIVERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$43,200</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>12,700</b></p>           |
| <p><b>3</b> SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$36,200</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>10,900</b></p>        | <p><b>4</b> MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR WORKERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$40,200</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>10,500</b></p>                    |
| <p><b>5</b> BOOKKEEPING, ACCOUNTING, AND AUDITING CLERKS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$39,100</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>8,000</b></p>      | <p><b>6</b> CONSTRUCTION LABORERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$38,300</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>6,900</b></p>                              |
| <p><b>7</b> LICENSED PRACTICAL AND LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSES<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$45,100</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>6,900</b></p> | <p><b>8</b> SALES REPRESENTATIVES, WHOLESALE AND MANUFACTURING<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$62,700</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>5,600</b></p> |
| <p><b>9</b> SUPERVISORS OF RETAIL SALES WORKERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$36,600</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>5,200</b></p>               | <p><b>10</b> ELECTRICIANS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$47,300</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>5,100</b></p>                                      |

Sources: Authors' calculations using data from BLS Occupational Employment Statistics (May 2017), Burning Glass Technologies (2015–2017), BEA Regional Price Parities (2016), and American Community Survey Five-Year Public Use Microdata Sample (2012–2016). Values are rounded to the nearest 100. Occupations are ranked on unrounded opportunity employment values.

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# OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS REVISITED

Exploring Employment for Sub-Baccalaureate Workers Across Metro Areas and Over Time

## CLEVELAND-ELYRIA, OH

New research explores the economic opportunity available in 121 of the largest metro areas in the U.S. The report defines **opportunity employment** as jobs accessible to workers without a bachelor's degree and typically paying above the national annual median wage (\$37,690), adjusted up or down to reflect the local cost of living. Occupations characterized by a high level of opportunity employment are called **opportunity occupations**. Nationally, the research finds that 21.6 percent of total employment can be classified as opportunity employment — a figure that varies greatly across the metro areas analyzed. In this region and nationally, the largest opportunity occupations represent a true cross section of the jobs available in today's economy.

### SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT BY EDUCATION AND WAGES



**7** RANK OUT OF 121 METRO AREAS

### TOP 10 OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS IN 2017

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1</b> REGISTERED NURSES<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$67,400</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>17,400</b></p>                                | <p><b>2</b> CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$34,500</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>13,300</b></p>            |
| <p><b>3</b> SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$35,700</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>13,000</b></p>        | <p><b>4</b> MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR WORKERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$39,400</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>10,000</b></p>              |
| <p><b>5</b> HEAVY AND TRACTOR-TRAILER TRUCK DRIVERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$41,600</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>9,800</b></p>           | <p><b>6</b> BOOKKEEPING, ACCOUNTING, AND AUDITING CLERKS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$38,600</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>8,200</b></p> |
| <p><b>7</b> LICENSED PRACTICAL AND LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSES<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$45,700</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>6,900</b></p> | <p><b>8</b> CONSTRUCTION LABORERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$47,900</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>6,600</b></p>                        |
| <p><b>9</b> MACHINISTS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$40,100</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>6,200</b></p>  | <p><b>10</b> MEDICAL SECRETARIES<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$34,600</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>5,700</b></p>                         |

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# OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS REVISITED

Exploring Employment for Sub-Baccalaureate Workers Across Metro Areas and Over Time

## COLUMBUS, OH

New research explores the economic opportunity available in 121 of the largest metro areas in the U.S. The report defines **opportunity employment** as jobs accessible to workers without a bachelor's degree and typically paying above the national annual median wage (\$37,690), adjusted up or down to reflect the local cost of living. Occupations characterized by a high level of opportunity employment are called **opportunity occupations**. Nationally, the research finds that 21.6 percent of total employment can be classified as opportunity employment — a figure that varies greatly across the metro areas analyzed. In this region and nationally, the largest opportunity occupations represent a true cross section of the jobs available in today's economy.

### SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT BY EDUCATION AND WAGES



**47** RANK OUT OF 121 METRO AREAS

### TOP 10 OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS IN 2017

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1</b> REGISTERED NURSES<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$62,500</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>16,100</b></p>                                | <p><b>2</b> HEAVY AND TRACTOR-TRAILER TRUCK DRIVERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$44,500</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>14,100</b></p>            |
| <p><b>3</b> SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$36,500</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>9,100</b></p>         | <p><b>4</b> MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR WORKERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$38,400</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>8,900</b></p>                      |
| <p><b>5</b> CONSTRUCTION LABORERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$36,800</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>6,500</b></p>                             | <p><b>6</b> BOOKKEEPING, ACCOUNTING, AND AUDITING CLERKS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$40,100</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>6,500</b></p>        |
| <p><b>7</b> LICENSED PRACTICAL AND LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSES<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$41,600</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>5,800</b></p> | <p><b>8</b> SUPERVISORS OF FOOD PREPARATION AND SERVING WORKERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$36,800</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>5,200</b></p> |
| <p><b>9</b> ELECTRICIANS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$44,800</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>4,400</b></p>                                      | <p><b>10</b> POLICE AND SHERIFF'S PATROL OFFICERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$72,900</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>4,400</b></p>               |

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# OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS REVISITED

Exploring Employment for Sub-Baccalaureate Workers Across Metro Areas and Over Time

## DAYTON, OH

New research explores the economic opportunity available in 121 of the largest metro areas in the U.S. The report defines **opportunity employment** as jobs accessible to workers without a bachelor's degree and typically paying above the national annual median wage (\$37,690), adjusted up or down to reflect the local cost of living. Occupations characterized by a high level of opportunity employment are called **opportunity occupations**. Nationally, the research finds that 21.6 percent of total employment can be classified as opportunity employment — a figure that varies greatly across the metro areas analyzed. In this region and nationally, the largest opportunity occupations represent a true cross section of the jobs available in today's economy.

### SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT BY EDUCATION AND WAGES



**15** RANK OUT OF 121 METRO AREAS

### TOP 10 OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS IN 2017

1

#### REGISTERED NURSES

Annual Median Wage: **\$65,200**  
Opportunity Employment: **8,100**

2

#### SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS

Annual Median Wage: **\$35,500**  
Opportunity Employment: **4,100**

3

#### HEAVY AND TRACTOR-TRAILER TRUCK DRIVERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$39,900**  
Opportunity Employment: **4,000**

4

#### LICENSED PRACTICAL AND LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSES

Annual Median Wage: **\$44,400**  
Opportunity Employment: **3,600**

5

#### MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR WORKERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$38,300**  
Opportunity Employment: **3,200**

6

#### BOOKKEEPING, ACCOUNTING, AND AUDITING CLERKS

Annual Median Wage: **\$38,000**  
Opportunity Employment: **2,500**

7

#### MACHINISTS

Annual Median Wage: **\$45,400**  
Opportunity Employment: **2,200**

8

#### SUPERVISORS OF FOOD PREPARATION AND SERVING WORKERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$34,400**  
Opportunity Employment: **2,200**

9

#### SUPERVISORS OF RETAIL SALES WORKERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$39,200**  
Opportunity Employment: **1,800**

10

#### AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE TECHNICIANS AND MECHANICS

Annual Median Wage: **\$35,100**  
Opportunity Employment: **1,700**



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FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ATLANTA

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# OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS REVISITED

Exploring Employment for Sub-Baccalaureate Workers Across Metro Areas and Over Time

## LEXINGTON-FAYETTE, KY

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### SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT BY EDUCATION AND WAGES



**8** RANK OUT OF 121 METRO AREAS

### TOP 10 OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS IN 2017

1

#### ASSEMBLERS AND FABRICATORS

Annual Median Wage: **\$45,800**  
Opportunity Employment: **14,100**

2

#### REGISTERED NURSES

Annual Median Wage: **\$61,400**  
Opportunity Employment: **5,600**

3

#### HEAVY AND TRACTOR-TRAILER TRUCK DRIVERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$41,300**  
Opportunity Employment: **3,400**

4

#### SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS

Annual Median Wage: **\$35,000**  
Opportunity Employment: **3,000**

5

#### SUPERVISORS OF RETAIL SALES WORKERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$36,500**  
Opportunity Employment: **1,700**

6

#### BOOKKEEPING, ACCOUNTING, AND AUDITING CLERKS

Annual Median Wage: **\$37,100**  
Opportunity Employment: **1,600**

7

#### SALES REPRESENTATIVES, WHOLESALE AND MANUFACTURING

Annual Median Wage: **\$47,000**  
Opportunity Employment: **1,300**

8

#### GENERAL AND OPERATIONS MANAGERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$81,200**  
Opportunity Employment: **1,200**

9

#### ELECTRICIANS

Annual Median Wage: **\$45,300**  
Opportunity Employment: **1,100**

10

#### SUPERVISORS OF OFFICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT WORKERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$50,000**  
Opportunity Employment: **1,100**



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# OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS REVISITED

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## PITTSBURGH, PA

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### SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT BY EDUCATION AND WAGES



**55** RANK OUT OF 121 METRO AREAS

### TOP 10 OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS IN 2017

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1</b> REGISTERED NURSES<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$63,200</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>18,100</b></p>                                | <p><b>2</b> HEAVY AND TRACTOR-TRAILER TRUCK DRIVERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$45,000</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>14,200</b></p>            |
| <p><b>3</b> MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR WORKERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$37,100</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>10,600</b></p>                   | <p><b>4</b> CONSTRUCTION LABORERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$38,600</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>9,700</b></p>                               |
| <p><b>5</b> BOOKKEEPING, ACCOUNTING, AND AUDITING CLERKS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$36,700</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>7,700</b></p>      | <p><b>6</b> CARPENTERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$51,600</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>6,100</b></p>  |
| <p><b>7</b> LICENSED PRACTICAL AND LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSES<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$44,600</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>6,000</b></p> | <p><b>8</b> AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE TECHNICIANS AND MECHANICS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$37,200</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>5,800</b></p>        |
| <p><b>9</b> SUPERVISORS OF RETAIL SALES WORKERS<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$38,000</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>5,700</b></p>               | <p><b>10</b> SALES REPRESENTATIVES, WHOLESALE AND MANUFACTURING<br/>Annual Median Wage: <b>\$63,000</b><br/>Opportunity Employment: <b>5,100</b></p> |

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# OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS REVISITED

Exploring Employment for Sub-Baccalaureate Workers Across Metro Areas and Over Time

## TOLEDO, OH

New research explores the economic opportunity available in 121 of the largest metro areas in the U.S. The report defines **opportunity employment** as jobs accessible to workers without a bachelor's degree and typically paying above the national annual median wage (\$37,690), adjusted up or down to reflect the local cost of living. Occupations characterized by a high level of opportunity employment are called **opportunity occupations**. Nationally, the research finds that 21.6 percent of total employment can be classified as opportunity employment — a figure that varies greatly across the metro areas analyzed. In this region and nationally, the largest opportunity occupations represent a true cross section of the jobs available in today's economy.

### SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT BY EDUCATION AND WAGES



**1** RANK OUT OF 121 METRO AREAS

### TOP 10 OPPORTUNITY OCCUPATIONS IN 2017

1

#### ASSEMBLERS AND FABRICATORS

Annual Median Wage: **\$39,400**  
Opportunity Employment: **7,900**

2

#### REGISTERED NURSES

Annual Median Wage: **\$62,600**  
Opportunity Employment: **5,000**

3

#### HEAVY AND TRACTOR-TRAILER TRUCK DRIVERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$38,600**  
Opportunity Employment: **5,000**

4

#### SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS

Annual Median Wage: **\$34,800**  
Opportunity Employment: **3,600**

5

#### MACHINISTS

Annual Median Wage: **\$55,900**  
Opportunity Employment: **2,900**

6

#### MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR WORKERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$39,600**  
Opportunity Employment: **2,900**

7

#### LICENSED PRACTICAL AND LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSES

Annual Median Wage: **\$44,800**  
Opportunity Employment: **2,000**

8

#### BOOKKEEPING, ACCOUNTING, AND AUDITING CLERKS

Annual Median Wage: **\$37,400**  
Opportunity Employment: **1,900**

9

#### CONSTRUCTION LABORERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$35,800**  
Opportunity Employment: **1,800**

10

#### HELPERS--PRODUCTION WORKERS

Annual Median Wage: **\$34,400**  
Opportunity Employment: **1,800**



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF PHILADELPHIA

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF CLEVELAND



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ATLANTA

Sources: Authors' calculations using data from BLS Occupational Employment Statistics (May 2017), Burning Glass Technologies (2015–2017), BEA Regional Price Parities (2016), and American Community Survey Five-Year Public Use Microdata Sample (2012–2016). Values are rounded to the nearest 100. Occupations are ranked on unrounded opportunity employment values.

For more information, read "Opportunity Occupations Revisited: Exploring Employment for Sub-Baccalaureate Workers Across Metro Areas and Over Time" by Kyle Fee, Keith Wardrip, and Lisa Nelson and published by the Federal Reserve Banks of Cleveland and Philadelphia, 2019 (available at [www.philadelphiafed.org/community-development/publications/special-reports](http://www.philadelphiafed.org/community-development/publications/special-reports)). The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Federal Reserve Banks of Philadelphia, Cleveland, Atlanta, or the Federal Reserve System.