

## A Positive Outlook

### Jobs in Nevada: Back in the Black



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**APPLIED  
ANALYSIS**

Jobs are the fundamental building block of any economy, so we can tell a lot about the economic health of a nation, state or region based on the rise and fall of job numbers. More jobs mean more people are earning a living and businesses are expanding, which are positives for any economy. This is why the recent employment news in Nevada is so heartening.

By itself, the August statewide employment number of 1.3 million is impressive, as it represents an all-time high for jobs in Nevada. Even more notable is that this number means the state has finally regained all of the 186,000 jobs it lost amid the Great Recession and economic downturn. To understand how significant this milestone

is, we must look back at how far we've come.

In the years leading up to the Great Recession, Nevada's economy was one of the most prolific in the country. Employment growth was central to that success, as the state added 220,000 new jobs between 2002 and 2006. That period included a two-year span of annual job growth topping 5 percent that helped drive seasonally adjusted employment to a peak of 1,297,600 jobs in mid-2007. Then the recession hit, and over the next three years, more than 186,000 jobs disappeared as the effects of the economic crisis lingered in Nevada for roughly four years.

Since hitting the low point in 2010, employment has grown steadily as the economy transitioned from recovery to stabilization and, finally, to the current expansion that pushed jobs to their highest total in history. Today, Nevada has 2,000 more jobs than the pre-recession peak. Southern Nevada has led the state's job surge with 7,900 more jobs than ever, while the Reno area still trails its all-time high by roughly 1,400 positions. Those numbers should only improve as Nevada remains among the top 10 states for job growth rate.

The recovery of jobs in Nevada is a remarkable milestone, and perhaps even more remarkable considering the breakdown of where that jobs recovery has come from. In 2007, one of the largest employment sectors in the state was construction, with 136,000 jobs. The downturn devastated the industry, and 86,000 jobs were lost in the construction sector alone. That industry has recovered just a fraction of those lost jobs, but several other sectors have helped make up the difference. Leading the way has been the health care and social services sector, which has over 27,000 more jobs today than before the recession. Transportation and utilities (+11,000), leisure and hospitality (+10,000), professional and business services (+10,000), and educational services (+7,000) have each experienced notable job growth since 2007.

This is a double dose of good news for our state's economy. Not only have all the lost jobs returned, but those new jobs are spread across more industries, creating a more diverse economy that is more flexible and more resilient against future economic downturns. While it has taken many years to recover our lost jobs, the new jobs that replaced them have established a stronger foundation for economic growth and stability for years to come.

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