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VOICES FROM THE FIELD:

Conversations About Quality Jobs with Washington County Employers

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MARCH 2018

Dear Reader,

Maine's average unemployment rate has been below 4% for 26 consecutive months. However, not all employees and employers are benefiting from the tight labor market. The economy may be doing well overall, but it is not working for everyone. Compensation for people at the lower end of the income scale is lagging, while for many, access to health insurance and pensions or retirement savings continue to move further out of reach.

If you work hard and full-time, you shouldn't be poor. While that's been an American value for a long time, it hasn't been the reality for many Americans. Wages are an important part of what makes a good job, but increasingly, access to health insurance, the ability to put aside savings, even having advance notice of work schedules are highly valued and are important ingredients helping people to build more secure livelihoods for themselves and their families.

More than anywhere in the U.S., rural regions are being left behind in our changing economy. Once dominant contributors to national jobs, productivity, and exports, rural communities have lost industries that kept families employed for generations. We have much to learn from the experiences of employers and workers in these towns, and their voices should inform regional and national efforts to build more vibrant and sustainable rural economies in Maine and the U.S.

In 2017, CEI's Workforce Solutions Director, Paul Scalzone, and Washington County Business Advisor, Ruth Cash-Smith, conducted in-depth, confidential interviews with 14 Washington County employers—work that was made possible by an anonymous donor. Their perspectives provide real, on-the-ground context as people and policymakers in states and the nation debate the changing quality of work. This summary report should not be construed as positive or negative but rather a compilation of the realities that over a dozen rural Maine businesses face in their efforts to attract and retain employees.

Betsy Biemann, CEO
Coastal Enterprises (CEI)
Brunswick, ME

1 Introduction

Overview

A few years ago, Coastal Enterprises (CEI), a mission-driven leader in rural business development, began to focus greater attention on job quality. Due to a plummeting unemployment rate and resulting difficulties hiring and retaining workers, employers were looking for ways to be more attractive to employees. At the same time, national and state economic trends were replacing middle class jobs with lower-wage jobs with fewer benefits, meaning that more families were one health event

away from poverty. However, these trends were playing out differently across the nation, particularly between urban and rural regions. Although the Aspen Institute, Hitachi Foundation, and other national initiatives were investigating and conducting research aimed at addressing job quality and the U.S. workforce, few were diving into the experience of rural employers and workers.

CEI decided in 2016 to make good jobs an integral part of its three-year strategic plan.

CEI decided in 2016 to make good jobs an integral part of its three-year strategic plan. To assist us with our work—and with funding from NeighborWorks—we hired nationally recognized consultant, Steven Dawson, to advise this effort, which included the formation of an internal CEI Quality Jobs Team exploring how CEI could embed the promotion of jobs quality throughout its activities. Later in 2017, CEI had the opportunity to learn about the experiences of rural employers directly.

Voices of Business Owners in Washington County

In 2017, CEI secured funding for a project in Washington County, centered on conducting employer interviews with 14 diverse businesses, 57% of whom were former or existing CEI clients and 43% who had no previous interaction with CEI.

From May to August, confidential employer interviews were conducted at business sites by two CEI business practitioners with extensive experience working directly

with employers in Washington County. CEI's Workforce Director, Paul Scalzone, and Certified Business Advisor, Ruth Cash-Smith, met with employers to learn more about their opinions on quality jobs and workforce needs. Although the type of employment varied considerably across the employers who were interviewed, these Washington County businesses were extremely creative in finding ways to attract and retain workers, as detailed further in this report.

In addition to workforce concerns, businesses in Washington County face other considerable challenges: geographic isolation; an aging population; lack of technology infrastructure; the second-lowest income per capita in the state; few transportation options; substance abuse; and significant reliance on low-income support systems. [See Appendix for Washington County Income Statistics.]



Methodology

As business and workforce development practitioners, CEI consciously chose to approach conversations with the 14 employers in Washington County using a qualitative primary research method. To provide an overview of the process, these excerpts are shared from researchers Jane Sutton and Zubin Austin's article, "Qualitative Research: Data Collection, Analysis and Management."

The role of the researcher in qualitative research is to attempt to access the thoughts and feelings of study participants...This is not an easy task, as it involves asking people to talk about things that may be very personal to them...It is their voices that the researcher is trying to hear, so that they can be interpreted and reported on for others to read and learn from.

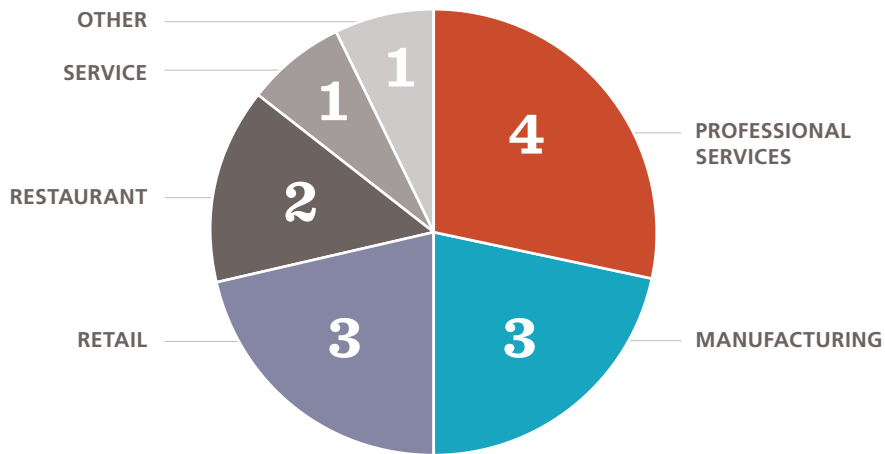
Qualitative research also requires reflection on the part of researchers, both before and during the research process, as a way of providing context and understanding for the report readers.

An important point about qualitative research is that there is no attempt to generalize the findings to a wider population. Qualitative research is used to gain insights into people's feelings and thoughts, which may provide the basis for a future stand-alone qualitative study or help researchers to map out survey instruments or use in a quantitative study.

Employer Demographics

2

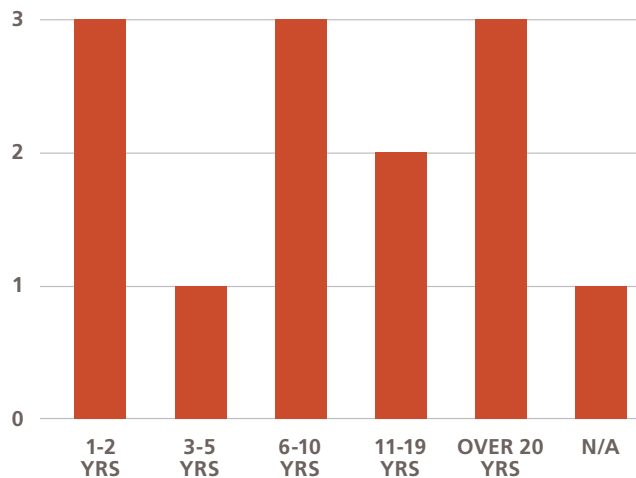
Business Sectors



Employer Locations in Washington County

CALAIS (2)
CUTLER (1)
EASTPORT (2)
JONESPORT (1)
LUBEC (1)
MACHIAS (4)
MILBRIDGE (1)
PENBROKE (1)
PERRY (1)

Duration of Ownership



Employers interviewed have owned their businesses for differing lengths of time.

3 Employer Responses

CEI staff met with 14 employers, each for two hours, to discuss their business and their workforce. Below is a summary of topics discussed and employer responses to our questions.

1. What is a quality job?

- Contributes to family's financial stability
- Pays a livable income
- Provides benefits (traditional/non-traditional)
- Ensures a safe & clean workplace
- Supervises in a fair, responsive and supportive manner
- Champions employee engagement
- Offers growth opportunities (wage, technical, advancement, personal)
- Allows for work-life balance

2. What are the characteristics of a quality job?

- Like your job, get paid fairly; work for a boss who stays out of your hair; flexibility counts
- Treat employees well or they'll go start their own businesses
- All employees are cross-trained; keep employees informed; offer opportunities to grow with business; if you add value, you get paid more
- A quality job implies a higher wage. Pay them; treat them fairly; give them a career ladder
- Comes down to job fit; if they enjoy the job, they stay. Employees cruise between job slots and between two locations. Scheduling flexibility is related to a quality job. Publish schedules two weeks in advance
- Quality of life; living wage; work is enjoyable and not miserable

- Livable wage; ideally, healthcare. At the end of the day our employees can say I made a contribution or that my work mattered. Staff buy-in to doing the work that must be done.
- Pays well; benefits; safe conditions; fair and respectful employer and potential for growth.
- Good pay, good ambiance, good boss.
- Place where I can grow; pursuing my passion. I have interest in my job every day; I make a contribution to my community; safe work environment.
- Good working environment; safety; offers co-workers and management support. Livable wage. Time off for your family and time off for your health.
- Better than minimum wage; employer values the person and their skills; provides satisfaction to the employee; job security; provides a sense of self-worth and pride in their work.
- A great place to work, good pay, flexible hours, and good benefits.
- Known in the industry as the spot to work.(2)
- The mark of a quality job is that the employer trusts the employees.
- Provide health insurance; pay more than minimum wage; create a positive culture; offer career ladders.
- Being able to offer enough hours so the employees make a decent salary.
- For women with young children, it means part-time work.
- Respect, flex-time, insurance, healthy and clean work environment.
- There are limits to a job. Fair compensation; nice environment. Trust is a big piece; decision by consensus; flexibility regarding nature of the work. It's a place you want to go and do the work every morning.



3. Do these same job characteristics apply in Maine and in the U.S.?

- These qualities are both applicable on a state and national level. (5)
- Not sure/Not necessarily. (2)
- Quality jobs are the same everywhere; size doesn't matter. Quality job means respect for each other.
- In the U.S., I think quality jobs are more about money, healthcare and retirement plans. Younger people today are less inclined to make it all about the money.
- The gap is getting bigger and bigger about what a quality jobs means nationally. The U.S. has not replaced high-end blue-collar positions.

4. As an employer, what can you say about the effects of Washington County culture on the workforce?

- You're in Washington County for three reasons: by birth; by choice; or by circumstance. Regardless of reason, most people say they are glad to get away from the rat race.
- People with careers who move to Washington County may not find they can—or even want—to pursue those careers any more.
- Historically there's lots of underground economy in Washington County.
- The iconoclastic nature of the Downeast workforce: very smart; Yankee ingenuity; closed culture; prideful; independent; reliance on traditional ways of thinking and behaving; territorial; a dichotomy in thinking about social supports; a deep respect for and long tradition of seasonal employment; addictions.
- Employee lifestyle choices affect the entire workplace.
- Downeast self-esteem issues are prevalent.
- The nature of Downeast means males dominate what females can or cannot do in the workforce and at home.
- In terms of employees 30 years and younger, there's an attitude of "This is owed to me."
- The Downeast work ethic is not what is used to be...No understanding of what a job entails due to entitlement government subsidies.

5. Would your employees say they have a quality job?

YES

Yes, because work fits around their lifestyle choices and they get paid well.

Absolutely! Employees have a sense of pride which is not allowed in some other work places. Gives all employees respect; team approach works. Overtime is expected and employees are paid for it.

Our employees contribute to all our processes. They also keep their own hours and time sheets.

From my unique perspective as an owner, I'd like to think so. But the responses would vary depending on the individual employees.

Yes. They received a \$1/hr. increase in wages; we've also become more selective in choosing our clientele.

Yes, happy co-workers, good boss, they get paid a dollar more an hour each year.

I think so.

UNSURE

I honestly don't know.

That would depend on the employee being asked.

Employees would say, "Well, at least I'm not getting cold and dirty."

Employees don't value quality jobs. You can't teach "Give a damn."

I think the term "quality job" is offensive. There's is a real need for jobs in Washington County, not just quality jobs.

Give me quality employees and I'll give you quality jobs.

Employee lifestyle is a big nut for me to crack. I can count on only 50% of my employees to do their jobs.

6. Do you, as an employer, have a quality job?

YES

I would like to work at my place if I were an employee.

I can run my company remotely and go out of state some of the time.

Yes, I was well over 40 when I started this company for a lifestyle change. What a prideful thing it is for me to provide jobs in Washington County.

Absolutely; I like the people who I work with and am respected and appreciated.

I have high satisfaction from being an employer.

Customer satisfaction makes me feel great.

Yes, I created myself a quality job by starting this business.

Yes, it's my passion. I like things done right and to my own aesthetic. Plus, I have rewarding relationships with my employees who are just like family.

Yes, because this business is the family tie that holds us all together.

YES, BUT ...

Yes, I have a quality job, but I can't afford to provide myself with health insurance through work—sometimes I can't even afford to pay myself.

Yes, I feel I'm the luckiest man in the world...but no company health insurance.

Yes, but I don't have benefits nor a balanced work and family life.

Yes, but my day is never the same.

Yes, but no health insurance.

Yes, but not year-round employment.

Yes, but extremely stressful in high season.

PROBABLY NOT

I honestly don't know. I'm not doing my passion. I'm doing my job out of necessity due to a lack of qualified workforce to assume the position and role that I play in the business. It is virtually impossible to hire someone to do what I have to do. I've tried and it doesn't work.

No; the stress cost is too high.

7. Benefits provided by employer

VACATION (5 OF 14)

One week paid vacation (2)
2-6 weeks paid vacation
Paid vacation
Paid vacations of 1-3 weeks

BONUSES (8 OF 14)

\$500 perfect attendance bonus every December
\$200-500 bonus in June
\$100 holiday bonus
\$50,000 set aside annually for quarterly profit-sharing
Offers 5-10-15 year anniversary bonuses
Bonus program that encourages continuous improvement
Bonuses
Back-of-house bonuses on busiest nights

RETIREMENT (3 OF 14)

6% match on 401K

TIME OFF (7 OF 14)

3 paid holidays (4)
Allow employees to take time off with notice but it's unpaid
Paid employee birthday on a day employee chooses
Closes in inclement weather

WORKPLACE (5 OF 14)

Invite employees to take ownership in operational processes
Open door policy to boss
Welcome and respond to employee feedback
Demonstrate and support the belief that it is important for employees to be present for their families
Create an environment where employees feel informed and emotionally vested in company's success

SKILL TRAINING/ ADVANCEMENT (4 OF 14)

Provide on-site training (2)
Offer opportunity to advance
Incentivize employees through pay bumps for those who learn more

HEALTHCARE (6 OF 14)

Sponsors health care (3)
Contributes \$200 per month to health plan of choice upon monthly proof
Dental insurance, no health (2)

SCHEDULES (9 OF 14)

Work four, 10-hour days (2)
Flexible hours (2)
Offer year-round employment
Allow employees to adjust schedules to cover needs
Accommodate "seasonal only" workforce needs
Close Sundays at 2:00 PM
Close at 2:00 PM day before Christmas and Thanksgiving

8. Notable challenges facing employers interviewed:

Finding and Retaining Productive Front-Line Workers

- If your business strategy depends primarily on low-wage workers, you face a much greater chance of employee turnover, fluctuations in quality and increased stress.
- The lack of childcare support systems impact women workers in terms of schedules and attendance.
- Lack of transportation remains a real barrier for workers to get to and from the job. These include affordability, distance from home to work, legal infractions and loss of driver's license.
- In Washington County, local employees with ingrained seasonal rhythms (including hunting, fishing, berry raking, wreathing, etc.) are apt to require adjustments in their work schedules.
- There is not a career out there for every person and, as employers, we should not lead employees to believe there is. Instead, we need to make a clear distinction between a job and a career.
- Jobs will disappear if everybody has to have a quality job.
- For us to survive as employers, we've had to make our own non-quality jobs into quality jobs. To do this, we had to demonstrate to our employees that we are not hung up on being "bosses" but are team players, too, and work as hard as they do, if not harder.
- Upskilling the workforce doesn't work for the worker bee level. These employees just want a sense of satisfaction at completing the task at hand. When they leave at the end of the shift they don't want to think about work until the next time they clock in.
- I can't offer a career path, but I can offer pay increases tied to productivity, training, and attendance.
- Some employees work two jobs out of necessity or else they deliberately choose not to work more hours so that they can be eligible for public benefits.
- Are workers artificially stopping themselves from thriving in a job so they can retain low-income status? Mainers tend to demonize people who are taking advantage of lawful activity to make the system work to ensure their family security (MaineCare, Food Stamps, LiHEAP, etc.).

- I have trouble attracting seasonal personnel, yet the tourism industry depends on it. (4)
- We need to change the mind set about welfare and its restrictions as it relates to our workforce. I believe disadvantaged locations should require employers to protect employees from making bad decisions about jobs, benefits, and subsidized living benefits.
- Work has to fit around employee lifestyle choices.
- Lack of dependability with younger employees: they either care or they don't. Attendance is a huge issue. They also lack attention to detail and cannot make change.
- Somewhere along the way, young people didn't learn how to work. There's an erosion of the Downeast work ethic because they've been given all kinds of privileges to make up for their broken homes as they grow up.



Recent Hike in Minimum Wage

- We are truly struggling with the minimum wage increase. It's not fair for new employees to come in at \$9 /hr. Because we respect and want to retain our workers, we've had to increase some of their wages up to \$12.50/hr. What this means is that we've had to cut back in other areas. We shifted our hours of operation, cut back on days of operation. Managers had to cut back hours. We even had to raise our prices by 5%.
- Whether I pay \$7.50 or \$9.00 an hour, it's still an insult to the people who work for me—but it's better than nothing.
- Regardless of minimum wage law, it's not about what you pay workers, it's all about how you treat them.



Workers Comp/Health Insurance

- We feel the struggle it is for a business to provide quality healthcare. Small business is carrying the torch but is getting beat up for it.
 - I'm double paying workers' comp and health insurance. I'm paying for everything that could happen and for everything that doesn't happen to my employees.
 - I'm required to offer workers' comp, so in my mind, I'm already buying my employees insurance. This makes no sense since I'd rather buy them 24 hour insurance instead. There's an unstated policy that any injury that occurs in any 24-hour period is a workers' comp issue, day or night.
-
- I can't survive and offer health insurance to my employees. As it is, I have to pay \$1,400/month for my family of four to be insured, with a \$5,000 out-of-pocket deductible. That's \$21,800 just to get health insurance for my family.
 - Healthcare should be an individual responsibility, not a system responsibility.

Technology

- Internet access and speed remains a huge hurdle for Washington County. (2)
- It's troubling that technology changes so rapidly it is making people obsolete.
- It is critical that employees need to think strategically. "If somebody is looking for a job they don't need to think about, they won't last with us."
- What our culture tells people about the way they should be is not what business is looking for in employees.
- Continual learning is essential to every single employee everywhere. In our industry, regulations can't keep pace and the sector changes often which results in access to care getting worse.

Industry Regulations

- My industry suffers from insane Federal regulation-FDA, ATF, CDC, OSHA, legalized marijuana, etc. (3)

9. Workplace investments that employers are making to boost employee retention (14 out of 14 employers)

- Provide good gear
- Built employees a shower
- Upgrade equipment from owner investment back into the business
- Host monthly barbecue
- Christmas party
- Paid driver transports employees to work
- Give gas cards from home-to-office travel
- Paid lunch hour
- Owner serves homemade soup once a week and everyone eats together
- Parents can bring children to workplace if/when needed
- Hosts annual company birthday party (up to 200 guests)
- Company culture is strong on environmental politics
- Paid gym memberships
- High-quality company-branded jackets
- Company shirts
- Allows pay advances
- Holiday grocery gift cards
- Mileage reimbursement at 50 cents





- Use company LL Bean credit card to pay for shipping products, then amass the \$600-\$700 worth of coupons which is considered “our” money that we divide up at a celebration around the holiday.

10. Other salient employer comments

- Importance of employees buying into the idea that their work affects the business’s viability. (3)
- A belief that it is the business owner’s responsibility to create and sustain the work environment.
- Quality of life choices and work-home balance are significant concerns for both the employer and the employee.
- Employees value making a meaningful contribution.
- Flexibility in scheduling is key regardless of the rate of pay.
- Providing honest and timely feedback, while difficult, serves both the employee and the employer.
- Workers with local or shorter commutes are more likely to stay in their jobs.
- Quality jobs set up with government dollars will not stick because it’s creating jobs with false money.
- When hard times hit, business owners must rely upon their abiding passion and interests to sustain themselves.
- Our workforce is stable; however, the reason they come to us is not why they stay. Employees stay because of retirement, healthcare and camaraderie.

11. Employer recommendations

Washington County employers shared common tips, which are echoed in current literature about jobs quality.

-
- 1. Use on-boarding to firmly set employee expectations and policies.*
 - 2. Operate your business in a way that reinforces your company values.*
 - 3. Make employee engagement one of your top priorities, which can result in system-wide problem solving, workforce retention and recruitment.*
 - 4. Communicate clearly and cohesively. Employee performance and retention can suffer when owners and supervisors communicate in an oblivious, aloof or arrogant manner.*
 - 5. Help your employees overcome barriers to become the quality workforce you want them to be.*
 - 6. Meet the challenge to upgrade the rapidly changing technology and requisite skills that directly relate to running your business.*
 - 7. Consider offering dental or health insurance contributions if your business can not afford to provide health insurance.*
 - 8. Evaluate and consider how you hire and retain workers.*
 - 9. Ask yourself if the stress and financial return of running a small business is greater than your becoming an employee for another company.*
 - 10. To cope with owner stress, build in time for activities that take you away from the business so you can refresh yourself.*
-

4 Interviewers' Reflections

When asked about what constitutes a quality job, one employer quipped, “Do you mean what I think or what my employee thinks?” This off-handed statement stuck with us as we considered how perspective influences both employer responses and our findings.

That said, we have challenged ourselves to put together this report in a manner that honors the employer responses, and then synthesizes interviewer reflections.

Unanticipated stipend opportunity provided significant benefits to some employers

When we first approached our conversation with the 14 employers, we did not foresee the possibility of leveraging a small pool of funding that could assist some of them in addressing the workplace challenges they were sharing with us.

However, when we considered the potential resources available, we made the decision to allocate funds that would create opportunity for employers and employees to improve job quality. Once funding was available, some of the employers were invited to apply for small grants to implement low-cost solutions to their problems.

This funding opportunity came about due to the generosity of an anonymous funder and from a CEI Capital Management New Markets Tax Credit Community Benefit Agreement with St. Croix Tissue Plant in Baileyville.

We witnessed first hand that small amounts can yield large results in the workplace and in worker satisfaction. Funds were deployed to food operations, manufacturers, and service and professional service business owners, who used them to:

- create a dedicated employee break room
- install a heat pump for office personnel
- install a new, energy-efficient heater

- improve lighting
- purchase a computer and two stand-up work desks
- offset hiring and training a second full-time professional employee
- implement a professional skills training initiative
- modify the building and/or equipment to launch two new business ventures
- purchase new equipment to improve worker conditions in two food operations

What worked in connecting with the 14 rural employers

- Used CEI staff who had existing relationships with the community.
- Identified and earmarked a small pool of unrestricted funding that could be used to make one-time workplace improvements that would boost employment quality.
- Used credible resources and local access networks to hone work plan.
- Set aside pre-conceived agendas and assumptions of what might be heard.
- Contacted employers and set appointments with the caveat that all responses would be confidential.
- Focused on engaged listening with employers.
- Probed for identification of problem areas in businesses.
- Linked business with existing resources and referrals.
- Invited some employers to submit proposals for problem remediation funds.

Small amounts [of funding] can yield large results in the workplace and in worker satisfaction.

5

Acknowledgements

Thank You to our anonymous funder, as well as to the CEI Capital Management New Markets Tax Credit Community Benefits Agreement with St. Croix Tissue. We are grateful for Glenn Mills, Chief Economist at the Center for Workforce Research, Maine Department of Labor, for providing Washington County labor statistics.

We extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to the 14 Washington County employers who carved out time to meet with us and openly discussed their insights and opinions in an unflinchingly honest and individualistic way.

Thanks also to:

- Jane Blackwood, Executive Director, Axiom Education & Training Center
- Joseph Cassidy, President, Washington County Community College
- Alex Clifford, (former) Academic Dean, Washington County Community College
- Susan Corbett, CEO, Axiom Technologies
- Mike Day, Employment Specialist, Maine Department of Labor CareerCenter, Machias
- Nichole Jamison, Regional Director, Maine Department of Labor CareerCenters
- Jennifer Peters, Assistant Director, Sunrise County Economic Council
- Charles Rudelitch, Executive Director, Sunrise County Economic Council

Washington County Statistics

6

Washington County Statistics

- Total Population as of 2016: **31,450**
- Average wage: **\$34,756**, or **\$18.25/hour**
- Labor force: **14,100**
- For the period from 2011 to 2015, Washington County's estimated labor force participation rate was **53.7%** and Maine's was **63.6%**. Some of the lower participation is because a higher share of population is retirement age: **26% in Washington vs. 21% statewide**. According to Maine Center for Economic Policy (MECEP)'s State of Working Maine 2017, Maine's labor work force participation was 82% in 2017.
- Second-lowest median household income at **\$38,083** (statewide: **\$49,331**)
- A total of **\$357 million** were paid in wages in Washington County
\$262 million in private wages (see chart below)
\$95 million in government wages

Year	NAICS	NAICS Title	Establishments	Average Employment	Total Wages	Average Weekly Wage
2016	10	Total, All Industries	1,027	7,683	\$261,805,289	\$655
2016	11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hu	91	412	\$16,566,605	\$772
2016	22	Utilities	6	67	\$4,843,910	\$1,390
2016	23	Construction	108	281	\$10,476,531	\$717
2016	31-33	Manufacturing	52	1,139	\$51,105,700	\$863
2016	42	Wholesale Trade	52	236	\$7,914,695	\$644
2016	44-45	Retail Trade	147	1,658	\$39,127,867	\$454
2016	48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	51	228	\$7,115,858	\$601
2016	51	Information	12	74	\$3,182,107	\$833
2016	52	Finance and Insurance	35	305	\$15,578,072	\$983
2016	53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	12	38	\$995,987	\$510
2016	54	Professional and Technical Services	56	165	\$6,947,550	\$809
2016	55	Management of Companies and Ent	5	83	\$5,116,286	\$1,190
2016	56	Administrative and Waste Services	46	193	\$5,761,238	\$573
2016	61	Educational Services	11	137	\$4,525,994	\$637
2016	62	Health Care and Social Assistance	98	1,724	\$66,200,750	\$739
2016	71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	10	30	\$480,667	\$312
2016	72	Accommodation and Food Services	93	676	\$9,905,821	\$282
2016	81	Other Services, Except Public Admin	140	225	\$5,466,298	\$467

- Androscoggin
- Arundel
- Cumberland
- Franklin
- Hancock
- Kennebec
- Knox
- Lincoln
- Oxford
- Penobscot
- Piscataquis
- Sagadahoc
- Somerset
- Waldo
- Washington
- York

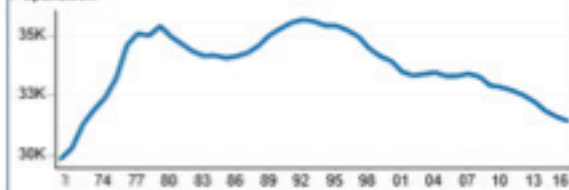
Washington County



2014 Median Household Income



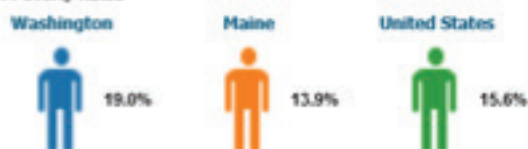
Population



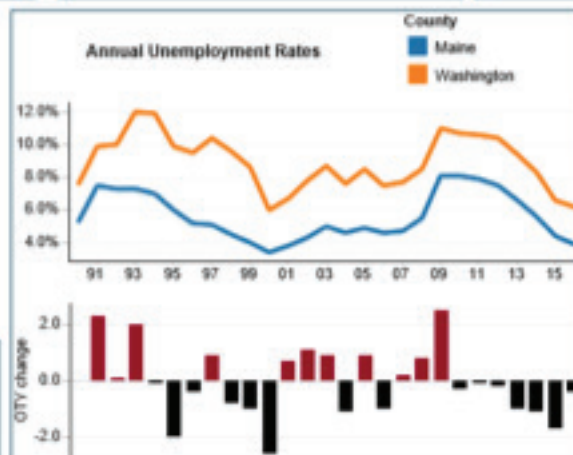
2014 Population by Age



2014 Poverty Rates



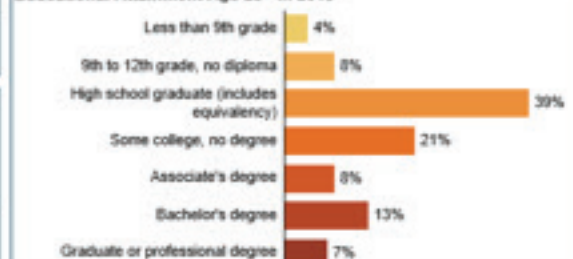
Monthly Unemployment Insurance Claims



2016 Average Annual Covered Private Employment by Major Industry



Educational Attainment Age 25+ in 2013



Source: <http://www.maine.gov/labor/cwri/county-economic-profiles/countyProfiles.html>

Maine.gov Center for Workforce Research and Information

Select Perspectives on Quality Jobs

"While businesses are increasingly coming around to the view that certain basic skills can be taught, job candidates must have innate 'soft' skills, such as the ability to work well with colleagues and deal professionally with customers...but candidates with some rough edges are becoming more attractive because employers have little choice...The low 4.4% unemployment rate means there are fewer committed workers. The U.S. Department of Labor reported a record 6.2 million job openings in July," according to Tom Gimbel, CEO of LaSalle Network, a staffing agency in the Chicago area.

—"Got a Pulse? You May Be Right for the Job."
USA Today, September 18, 2017

"Thoughtless jobs are gone for us...we've automated those types of jobs so that they don't exist at our company."

—Marty Richard, Manager of Tissue Operations,
St. Croix Tissue

"Aptitude and attitude are more important than skills, we can teach those—we'll take attitude over skills any day."

—Mainebiz Employer Forum on Workforce
Development, June 2017

"Among employers we were fascinated to hear that work ethic was the biggest missing skill. Work ethic comes from social factors like parenting, work opportunities you have as a teenager, and the type of role models you're exposed to while you're growing up. It's important but it's difficult to teach."

—Mathew Hora, *Beyond the Skills Gap: Preparing College Students for Life and Work* 2016

"A central question for policy makers will be how to design policies that are good for both businesses and their workforces...care must be taken to create policies that provide incentives and support for businesses to improve job quality, rather than policies that punish businesses for failing to meet job quality standards."

—Pacific Community Ventures: Public Policy and
Investments in Quality

"Tension exists in some regions between the need for employment and the need for quality jobs...some experts have argued that enabling the creation of even low wage jobs is more feasible than generating jobs with benefits and living wages."

—Pacific Community Ventures: Public Policy and
Investments in Quality

"The province of defining job quality should not be ceded solely to employers but should in addition be articulated by all those in the community who seek an equitable society and a robust economy."

—Steven L. Dawson: "Make Bad Jobs Better...
Forging a Better Jobs Strategy" *The Pinkerton Papers*, June 2016

"Ours is the most prosperous economy in history. Yet too many people devote their energies daily to jobs that offer low pay, little security, unpredictable schedules, no benefits, and a paucity of respect. We need to summon both the courage and imagination to envision a system in which all work can be good work."

—Maureen Conway Executive Director, Mark Popovich, Director, Good Companies/Good Jobs Initiative, *The Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program*, February 8, 2017



Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI) helps to grow good jobs, environmentally sustainable enterprises, and shared prosperity in Maine and in rural regions across the country by integrating financing, business and industry expertise, and policy solutions. CEI envisions a world in which communities are economically and environmentally healthy, enabling all people, especially those with low incomes, to reach their full potential.





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