

BUFFALO ADDS CONSTRUCTION JOBS



The region of Buffalo Niagara came in third over the past year in terms of areas that added construction jobs. The reason for the added jobs is the development projects in the industries of health care, private-sector, and university. The jump in construction jobs created an 18 percent gain in employment. The area added 3,600 construction jobs from October of 2010 to October of 2011, which upped the total employment in the industry to 23,900 jobs. That is the highest number of construction jobs since 2001. Houston saw an increase of 5,100 jobs and Columbus, Ohio saw an increase of 4,200 jobs during the same time frame, putting them at one and two in the country. The 18 percent gain for Buffalo came in at number five in the country, being topped only by Lake County and Kenosha County in Illinois and Wisconsin; Casper, Wyoming; Grand Forks, North Dakota; and Haverhill-North Andover-Amesbury in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. "It has been far too long since we've had news like this to report here in Buffalo," said Brian Turmail, who is a spokesman for the Associated General Contractors of America. Across the state of New York, there were 8,500 jobs added in construction, which is a three percent increase, for a state total of 325,700 construction jobs. Rochester added 1,700 construction jobs while Albany added 1,600 jobs in the construction sector. New York City dropped 4,000 construction jobs. Downtown Buffalo has also seen a growth in private redevelopment projects. Some of those redevelopment projects include Mark D. Croce's Statler City, Howard A. Zemsky's Larkin district jobs, Rocco R. Termini's Hotel Lafayette and many others. "This is not coincidental. One thing feeds off another," said Rep. Brian Higgins, D-Bufferlo. Political officials and other employment experts claim that even though the job growth in the construction industry is great news, they claim that there could have been even better job growth for the Buffalo area. Roseanne DiPizio is the owner of DiPizio Construction Co. Her company is getting less work compared to a couple of years ago, with no signs of improving in the coming months. DiPizio claims that her company was one of 12 companies bidding on a \$2 million state Department of Transportation project in the Southern Tier of the state. "There's been a huge influx of private money, and we're thankful for it," DiPizio said. "We have not seen any more work coming from the infrastructure segment, which we depend on." "As good as these construction employment numbers are, they could and should have been much better," Turmail said. "While construction employment is heading in the right direction in the Buffalo area, it is tempting to wonder how many more construction workers would be employed today if Congress wasn't years late in passing the highway and transit bill." Information for this article was researched from Buffalonews.com.