

EMPLOYMENT LEVELS RISING IN ARKANSAS



The unemployment rate in areas all around the country are beginning to decline. In fact, the unemployment rate for the state of Arkansas is considerably lower than it was just one year before, which suggests that the chances of finding a job have become much better for students and recent college graduates. The national unemployment rate has finally fallen below the 8 percent rate, which is something it has not done since January of 2009. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for the nation as a whole during the month of September was at 7.8 percent. For the state of Arkansas, the unemployment rate during the month of September in 2012 was at a low 7.1 percent. The state has already had a lower unemployment rate than the nation, having been under the 8 percent mark since October of 2011. The northwest area of the Arkansas region seems to be doing even better than the state as a whole, as well as the nation. This means that recent college graduates from UA may have an easier time finding employment in the current job market. Angela Seawood Williams, the director for the University Career Development Center, has said, "The latest report we have was for 2010-2011. Fifty-two percent of UA graduates responded to post-graduate placement surveys, and the placement rate for those who responded was 81 percent." With a low unemployment rate, a larger portion of students are working while attending school as well, stating that it has been much easier to find employment. A senior at the university, Sherri Higgins, has said, "I have two jobs, actually, an internship and an on-campus job while still taking 15 hours of coursework." She also said, "I've worked since I was 16, so it's nothing new to me. Gaining experience in the real world while taking coursework is beneficial for me, personally." Higgins believes that gaining as much experience as she possibly can now is ideal for finding better employment in the future. She even said, "How do you expect to get a great job in the future if you don't have experience to show you can do anything?" And, along with Higgins, a large number of students in the Fayetteville area believe that it is fairly easy to find employment. Higgins believes that for those who want a job in Fayetteville, the job is always there. In the meantime, a separate student studying accounting, Michael Ludolph, says that there are jobs available but feels that the ease of finding employment will ultimately depend on what the person is willing to take.