

Lubbock Avalanche Journal

Story last updated at 2:08 a.m. Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Local job picture looking brighter

THERE WAS A welcome surprise among unemployment numbers in the latest report out of Austin. Although the Lubbock/Crosby County area's jobless rate is up slightly - by an unadjusted 0.6 percent - thousands of Lubbock residents have been added to the work force in the past year alone.

What does this mean to you? While employers in other areas of the state are tightening their belts, implementing hiring freezes and/or laying off workers, Lubbock businessmen and women have been able to offer more jobs to qualified applicants.

Lubbock's annual job growth rate in 2006 was the best in more than 10 years, according to the Texas Workforce Commission. Employers in Lubbock and surrounding area created new 5,500 jobs during the 12-month period.

Almost every industry sector has shown growth the past year, said Terri Patterson, director of work force development for the Lubbock Economic Development Alliance: "Construction is strong, our universities continue to grow and the banks are reporting strong increases. And for the first time in the past few years, Lubbock is on the radar screen for site selectors and companies looking to expand!"

ON THE NET:

- Want more information?
- [Lubbock Eco Development](#)
- [Texas Workforce](#)

Lubbock truly is the "Hub" of this area, noted Martin Aguirre, chief executive officer of WorkSource of the South Plains. "Our work force of individuals in the South Plains has an established history of having the initiative, ethics and values that are desirable for employers to locate or expand here," he said.

Our challenge as a community, he added, is to educate our work force to meet the needs of employers and retain many of our best and brightest in Lubbock.