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Our Mission:

The mission of the South Plains workforce system is to meet the needs of the region's employers for a highly skilled workforce by educating and preparing workers.

Upcoming Events

- Tuesday -

- December 14, 2021 -

Workforce Solutions South
Plains

Virtual Job Fair

9am - 3pm

November 2021 Newsletter
Lubbock MSA and Regional Unemployment


Lubbock's MSA unadjusted unemployment rate for October 2021 is 3.8%, a decrease of 0.1% from September's adjusted rate of 3.9%. Amarillo MSA recorded the lowest, not seasonally adjusted, unemployment rate at 3.3%, followed by the Austin-Round Rock MSA at 3.4% and College Station-Bryan MSA at 3.7%. All data impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.


- Next Virtual Job Fair -
- January 2022 -
Date and time TBD
Hosted by Workforce
Solutions
South Plains


*Employment estimates released by TWC are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. All estimates are subject to revision. To access this and more employment data, visit TexasLMI.com.

The TWC Lubbock MSA and South Plains WDA Economic Profiles provide a breakdown of employment by industry. Click on the images to the right to access the profiles.

(Image located on page 3)

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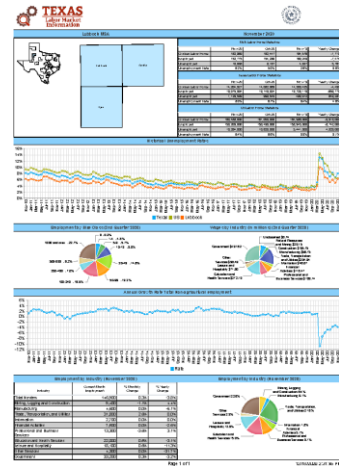
CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

Metro Areas (Seasonally Adjusted)

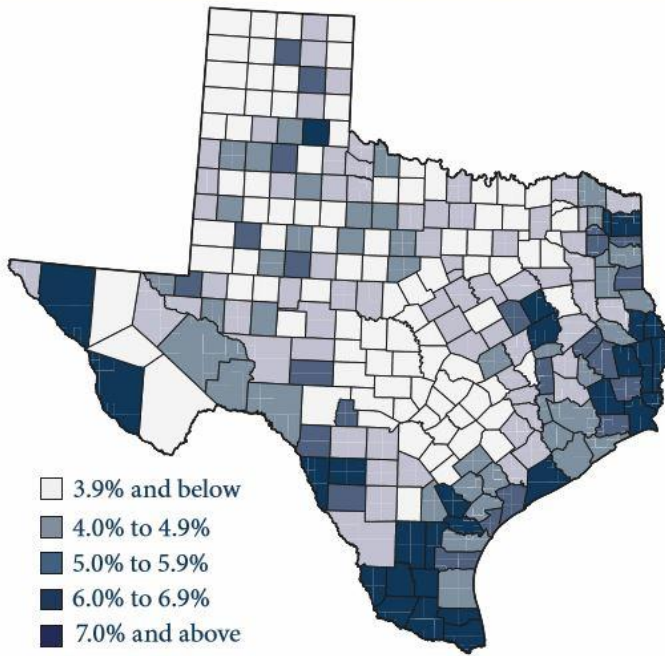
Metro Areas	Apr 2017	Monthly Change	Annual Change	Annual % Change
Abilene MSA	68,100	100	700	1.0
Amarillo MSA	121,300	-1,100	1,200	1.0
Austin-Round Rock MSA	1,021,900	-400	29,300	3.0
Beaumont-Port Arthur MSA	164,000	900	-800	-0.5
Brownsville-Harlingen MSA	143,000	100	2,700	1.9
College Station-Bryan MSA	115,900	-400	2,500	2.2
Corpus Christi MSA	192,400	-100	1,400	0.7
Dallas-FW-Arlington MSA	3,582,400	-18,000	99,600	2.9
Dallas-Plano-Irving MD	2,555,000	-15,600	76,600	3.1
Fort Worth-Arlington MD	1,027,800	-3,200	22,600	2.2
El Paso MSA	317,000	400	9,200	3.0
Houston MSA	3,044,300	13,700	44,000	1.5
Killeen-Temple MSA	146,600	500	3,600	2.5
Laredo MSA	104,000	100	2,300	2.3
Longview MSA	96,700	300	-600	-0.6
Lubbock MSA	146,300	-1,000	800	0.5
McAllen MSA	256,700	600	4,900	1.9
Midland MSA	87,800	-100	100	0.1
Odessa MSA	69,800	100	-200	-0.3
San Angelo MSA	48,600	400	-500	-1.0
San Antonio MSA	1,035,600	3,800	24,800	2.5
Sherman-Denison MSA	47,000	100	1,000	2.2
Texarkana MSA	60,200	-500	-800	-1.3
Tyler MSA	106,200	400	2,300	2.2
Victoria MSA	42,000	200	-300	-0.7
Waco MSA	120,400	600	2,200	1.9
Wichita Falls MSA	58,000	400	-100	-0.2

- ### Highlights
- (MSA industry data are not seasonally adjusted)
- Seventeen of 26 areas grew in April for a combined increase of 22,700 jobs. Nineteen areas grew over the year, while seven areas contracted.
 - The Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA accounted for more than half of all area employment gains over the month. The MSA increased its annual growth rate to 1.5 percent.
 - The San Angelo MSA grew fastest in percentage terms with a 0.8 percent April expansion. Per not seasonally adjusted industry data, Retail Trade and Other Services each added 200 jobs over the month, while Government was down 200 positions.
 - The Dallas-Plano-Irving MD led in actual and percentage job growth annually. Professional and Business Services led all major industries with 21,000 positions gained, followed by Leisure and Hospitality with 10,900 jobs added.
 - The Beaumont-PA and the Texarkana MSAs lost the most jobs annually. The loss of 2,100 jobs in Retail was primarily responsible for the contraction in the Beaumont-PA MSA, while employment losses in Texarkana were spread across industries.

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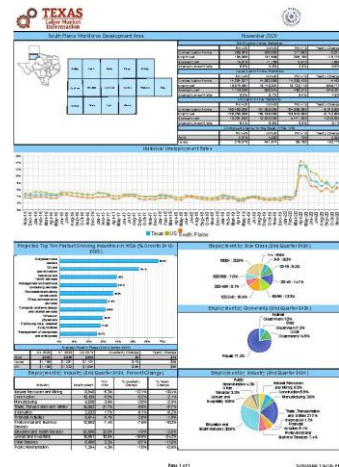


County Unemployment Rates



(Image located on page 6)

**Click image to
view full report:
Lubbock Metropolitan
Statistical Area (MSA)**



In 1997, Warren Buffett, the famous investor and multi-billionaire, proposed a thought experiment.

“Imagine that it is 24 hours before you are going to be born,” he said, “and a genie comes to you.”¹

“The genie says you can determine the rules of the society you are about to enter and you can design anything you want. You get to design the social rules, the economic rules, the governmental rules. And those rules are going to prevail for your lifetime and your children’s lifetime and your grandchildren’s lifetime.”

“But there is a catch,” he said.

“You don’t know whether you’re going to be born rich or poor, male or female, infirm or

able-bodied, in the United States or Afghanistan. All you know is that you get to take one ball out of a barrel with 5.8 billion balls in it. And that's you.”²

“In other words,” Buffett continues, “you’re going to participate in what I call the Ovarian Lottery. And that is the most important thing that’s ever going to happen to you in your life. It’s going to determine way more than what school you go to, how hard you work, all kinds of things.”³

Buffett has long been a proponent for the role of luck in success. In his 2014 Annual Letter, he wrote, “Through dumb luck, [my business partner] Charlie and I were born in the United States, and we are forever grateful for the staggering advantages this accident of birth has given us.”⁴

When explained in this way, it seems hard to

deny the importance of luck, randomness, and good fortune in life. And indeed, these factors play a critical role. But let's consider a second story.

The Story of Project 523

In 1969, during the fourteenth year of the Vietnam War, a Chinese scientist named Tu Youyou was appointed the head of a secret research group in Beijing. The unit was known only by its code name: Project 523.

China was an ally with Vietnam, and Project 523 had been created to develop antimalarial medications that could be administered to the soldiers. The disease had become a huge problem. Just as many Vietnamese soldiers were dying from malaria in the jungle as were dying in battle.

Tu began her work by looking for clues

anywhere she could find them. She read manuals about old folk remedies. She searched through ancient texts that were hundreds or thousands of years old. She traveled to remote regions in search of plants that might contain a cure.

After months of work, her team had collected over 600 plants and created a list of almost 2,000 possible remedies. Slowly and methodically, Tu narrowed the list of potential medications down to 380 and tested them one-by-one on lab mice.

“This was the most challenging stage of the project,” she said. “It was a very laborious and tedious job, in particular when you faced one failure after another.”⁵

Hundreds of tests were run. Most of them yielded nothing. But one test—an extract from the sweet wormwood plant known as

qinghao—seemed promising. Tu was excited by the possibility, but despite her best efforts, the plant would only occasionally produce a powerful antimalarial medication. It wouldn't always work.

Her team had already been at work for two years, but she decided they needed to start again from the beginning. Tu reviewed every test and re-read each book, searching for a clue about something she missed. Then, magically, she stumbled on a single sentence in *The Handbook of Prescriptions for Emergencies*, an ancient Chinese text written over 1,500 years ago.

The issue was heat. If the temperature was too high during the extraction process, the active ingredient in the sweet wormwood plant would be destroyed. Tu redesigned the experiment using solvents with a lower boiling point and, finally, she had an antimalarial medication that

worked 100 percent of the time.

It was a huge breakthrough, but the real work was just beginning.

The Power of Hard Work

With a proven medication in hand, it was now time for human trials. Unfortunately, there were no centers in China performing trials for new drugs at the time. And due to the secrecy of the project, going to a facility outside of the country was out of the question.

They had reached a dead end.

That's when Tu volunteered to be the first human subject to try the medication. In one of the boldest moves in the history of medical science, she and two other members of Project 523 infected themselves with malaria and received the first doses of their new drug.

It worked.

However, despite her discovery of a breakthrough medication and her willingness to put her own life on the line, Tu was prevented from sharing her findings with the outside world. The Chinese government had strict rules that blocked the publishing of any scientific information.

She was undeterred. Tu continued her research, eventually learning the chemical structure of the drug—a compound officially known as artemisinin—and going on to develop a second antimalarial medication as well.

It was not until 1978, almost a decade after she began and three years after the Vietnam War had ended, that Tu's work was finally released to the outside world. She would have

to wait until the year 2000 before the World Health Organization would recommend the treatment as a defense against malaria.

Today, the artemisinin treatment has been administered over 1 billion times to malaria patients. It is believed to have saved millions of lives. Tu Youyou is the first female Chinese citizen to receive a Nobel Prize, and the first Chinese person to receive the Lasker Award for major contributions to medical science.

Luck or Hard Work?

Tu Youyou was not fabulously lucky. My favorite fact about her is that she has no postgraduate degree, no research experience abroad, and no membership in any of the Chinese national academies—a feat that has earned her the nickname “The Professor of the Three No’s”.⁶

But damn was she a hard worker. Persistent. Diligent. Driven. For decades she didn't give up and she helped save millions of lives as a result. Her story is a brilliant example of how important hard work can be in achieving success.

Just a minute ago, it seemed reasonable that the Ovarian Lottery determined most of your success in life, but the idea that hard work matters feels just as reasonable. When you work hard you typically get better results than you would with less effort. While we can't deny the importance of luck, everyone seems to have this sense that hard work really does make a difference.

So what it is? What determines success? Hard work or good fortune? Effort or randomness? I think we all understand both factors play a role, but I'd like to give you a better answer than "It depends."

Here are two ways I look at the issue.

Absolute Success vs. Relative Success

**- to be continued next month with the
Footnotes -**

Texas Economy added 56,600 non-farm jobs over the Month.

State unemployment rate is 5.4 percent for October

AUSTIN – In October 2021, Texas' unemployment rate was 5.4%, down 0.2% from September 2021.

Read the full [press release](#).

Sources:

Texas Labor Market Review

<https://texaslmi.com/api/GetHomeLinks/TLMR>

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