



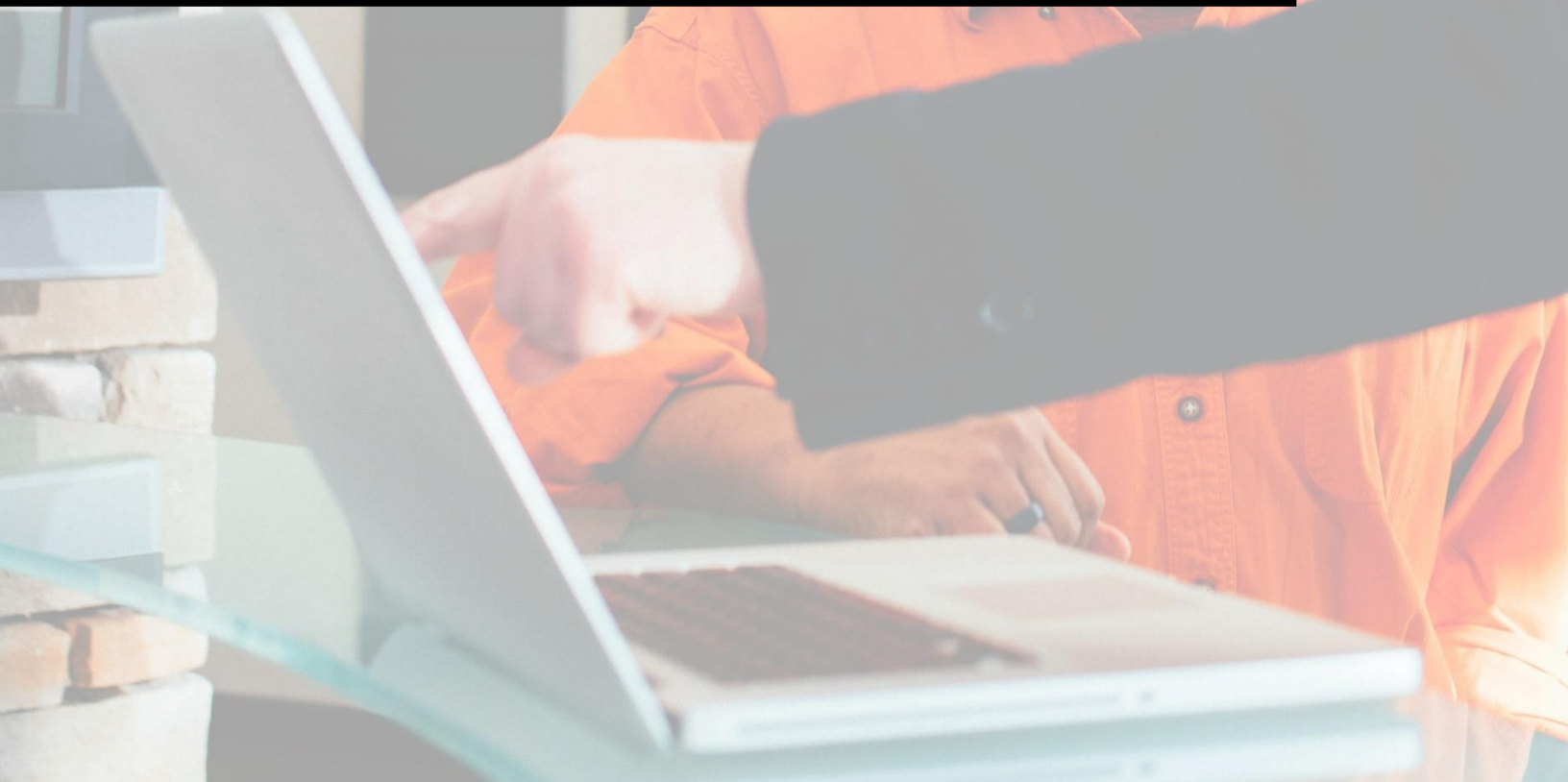
**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™**  
NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING  
& ANALYSIS RESEARCH CENTER

# IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS IN COLUMBUS, MS

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Occupations, Job-Openings, and Median  
Earnings

*July 2021*



# **WORKFORCE PROFILE FOR OLIVE BRANCH, MS**

Occupations, Job-Openings, and Median Earnings

*July 2021*

## **About Mississippi's State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)**

Mississippi's State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) is one of the most comprehensive systems in the country and includes administrative records from more than 25 education, workforce, and human service agencies in the state. The SLDS allows for the alignment of multiple sources of de-identified administrative data over time to evaluate educational or workforce strategies in terms of real outcomes, such as entrance into employment, wages, and skill gains.

## **About NSPARC**

Mississippi State University's National Strategic Planning & Analysis Research Center (NSPARC) is an internationally recognized multidisciplinary social and data science research center that provides tailored research, analysis, and software architecture services with an emphasis on workforce and economic development. The Center engages in convergent research and creates customized data and software solutions unique in the country. The Center is home to experts across disciplines including sociology, economics, statistics, computer science, communication, and engineering. NSPARC recognizes the importance of multidisciplinary research and an inclusive model of collaboration to provide strategic solutions for government, industry, and non-profit entities.

## OVERVIEW

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This brief provides data pertaining to the workforce of Columbus, MS. Data are included the job openings advertised within the city, and the median earnings for workers in those occupations. This brief also compares these earnings against Mississippi's median earnings (\$15.73 per hour or \$32,710 per year).

This report indicates that there are multiple in-demand occupational categories in Columbus, MS; the top 5 categories include 1) *Food Preparation and Serving*, 2) *Healthcare Practitioners*, 3) *Healthcare Support*, 4) *Transportation and Material Moving*, and 5) *Sales*.

When limiting this list to only the occupational categories that earn more than Mississippi's median earnings (\$32,710 annually), the top 5 in-demand occupational categories are 1) *Healthcare Practitioners*, 2) *Production*, 3) *Installation, Maintenance, and Repair*, 4) *Management*, and 5) *Architecture and Engineering*.

In addition to examining occupational **categories**, this report also examines the specific in-demand occupations in Columbus, MS, that earn more than Mississippi's median earnings. The top 5 in-demand occupations include 1) *Registered Nurses*, 2) *Aircraft Mechanics, Service, and Avionics Technicians*, 3) *Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses*, 4) *Industrial Engineers*, and 5) *General, Operations, and Other Managers*.

## DATA

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The data for this analysis were obtained from Mississippi's State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). Data on job openings were contributed to the SLDS by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security's (MDES) state job board, Mississippi Works. Mississippi Works allows employers to create job announcements, and it allows job seekers to search and apply for jobs; approximately 160,000 job seekers have used this service in the last year, and approximately 43,000 companies are registered in the system.

For this study, we consider only job openings that have been open during the past 12 months (July 2020 – July 2021). However, real-time data from Mississippi Works can also be used to determine the number of people that are looking for work (job seekers), and can provide important information pertaining to their place of residence, educational background, previous occupations, skills, and years of experience.

## INDICATORS

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The following indicators were utilized to conduct this analysis:

**Job Openings** – An actively advertised job opening posted on Mississippi Works within the past 12 months (July 2020 – July 2021) which specifies that the job site or employer location is in the city of Columbus, MS.

**Probable Job Openings** – The actively advertised job openings posted on Mississippi Works within the past 12 months (July 2020 – July 2021) which lists Columbus, MS, as one potential location for work, and which is posted by an employer with a physical presence in the city.

**Hourly Earnings / Salary** – The median hourly wage or median annual salary earned by Mississippian’s working in a specified occupation.

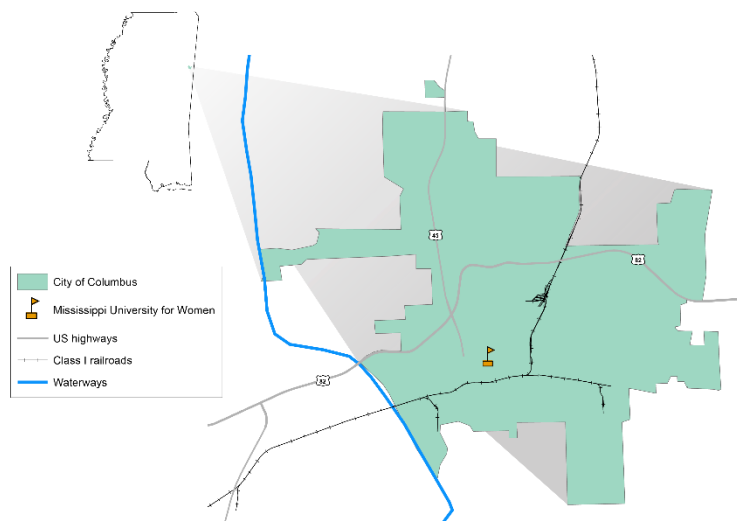
Appendix A also contains the following demographic indicators describing the population of Columbus, MS:

**Total Population** – The annual estimate of the region’s total resident population created by the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey program.

**Population by Age** – The breakdown of the region’s population within specific age brackets that are predefined within the U.S. Census Bureau’s population estimates.

**Population by Educational Attainment** – The breakdown of the region’s population within specific educational brackets that are predefined within the U.S. Census Bureau’s population estimates.

FIGURE 1. COLUMBUS, MS



**TABLE 1: JOB OPENINGS AND AVERAGE EARNINGS IN COLUMBUS, MS,  
BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY, JULY 2020 – JULY 2021**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Job Openings</b>	<b>Probable Job Openings</b>	<b>Total Openings</b>	<b>Hourly Earnings</b>	<b>Annual Earnings</b>	<b>Exceeds MS Median Earnings</b>
Food Preparation and Serving	839	60	<b>899</b>	\$9.30	\$19,340	
Healthcare Practitioners	109	330	<b>439</b>	\$26.06	\$54,210	✓
Healthcare Support	380	43	<b>423</b>	\$11.13	\$23,160	
Transportation and Material Moving	350	66	<b>416</b>	\$14.55	\$30,260	
Sales	230	176	<b>406</b>	\$11.51	\$23,950	
Production	250	47	<b>297</b>	\$16.48	\$34,270	✓
Office and Administrative Support	137	152	<b>289</b>	\$15.12	\$31,450	
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	169	96	<b>265</b>	\$20.13	\$41,880	✓
Building Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	230	31	<b>261</b>	\$10.80	\$22,460	
Management	131	49	<b>180</b>	\$35.65	\$74,150	✓
Architecture and Engineering	79	66	<b>145</b>	\$35.31	\$73,440	✓
Construction and Extraction	93	23	<b>116</b>	\$18.62	\$38,730	✓
Business and Financial Operations	57	20	<b>77</b>	\$27.97	\$58,180	✓
Computer and Mathematical	22	17	<b>39</b>	\$31.34	\$65,190	✓
Community and Social Service	30	7	<b>37</b>	\$18.15	\$37,750	✓
Personal Care and Service	28	8	<b>36</b>	\$9.99	\$20,780	
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	19	12	<b>31</b>	\$18.27	\$38,010	✓
Educational Instruction and Library	21	5	<b>26</b>	\$20.36	\$42,350	✓
Protective Service	17	6	<b>23</b>	\$15.20	\$31,610	
Life, Physical, and Social Science	9	5	<b>14</b>	\$27.63	\$57,480	✓
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	1	0	<b>1</b>	\$16.43	\$34,170	✓
<b>Total</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>\$15.73</b>	<b>\$32,710</b>	<b>N/A</b>

*Notes: This table reports the total job openings in Mississippi Works within the past 12 months (July 2020 – July 2021). Openings are grouped by Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code categories. This table also reports the median hourly and median annual earnings for each occupational group.*

*Source: Mississippi Department of Employment Security, 2021; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021.*

TABLE 2: TOP 20 IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS IN COLUMBUS, MS, EARNING MORE THAN THE MS MEDIAN WAGE, BY NUMBER OF JOB OPENINGS, JULY 2020 – JULY 2021

Occupation	Job Openings	Probable Job Openings	Total Openings	Hourly Earnings	Annual Salary
Registered Nurses	8	193	<b>201</b>	\$28.77	\$59,850
Aircraft Mechanics, Service, and Avionics Technicians	53	43	<b>96</b>	\$31.98	\$66,520
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	32	33	<b>65</b>	\$19.26	\$40,060
Industrial Engineers	31	31	<b>62</b>	\$37.75	\$78,520
General, Operations, and Other Managers	39	13	<b>52</b>	\$33.25	\$69,160
Production Workers, All Other	49	0	<b>49</b>	\$16.14	\$33,560
First-Line Supervisors of Production Workers	16	21	<b>37</b>	\$27.73	\$57,680
Chemical Plant and System Operators	37	0	<b>37</b>	\$35.32	\$73,470
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	30	0	<b>30</b>	\$22.48	\$46,770
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	19	6	<b>25</b>	\$17.04	\$35,440
Accountants and Auditors	16	8	<b>24</b>	\$28.85	\$60,000
Bus, Truck, Diesel Mechanics and Engine Specialists	13	10	<b>23</b>	\$19.06	\$39,650
Computer and Information Systems Managers	20	0	<b>20</b>	\$46.42	\$96,550
Computer User Support Specialists	8	9	<b>17</b>	\$22.36	\$46,510
Medical and Health Services Managers	8	8	<b>16</b>	\$42.29	\$87,960
Education Administrators, Kindergarten – Secondary	15	0	<b>15</b>	-	\$76,910
Food Service Managers	9	6	<b>15</b>	\$23.05	\$47,940
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	15	0	<b>15</b>	\$15.96	\$33,200
Pharmacists	2	13	<b>15</b>	\$59.94	\$124,680
Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	7	8	<b>15</b>	\$16.97	\$35,300

Notes: This table reports the top in-demand occupations (as determined by number of job openings) in Mississippi Works within the past 12 months (July 2020 – July 2021), for which the median earnings exceed Mississippi’s median earnings (\$15.73 per hour or \$32,710 per year).

Source: Mississippi Department of Employment Security, 2021; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021.

## APPENDIX A: COLUMBUS, MS, DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

TABLE A1: POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS  
OF COLUMBUS, MISSISSIPPI

	Number	Percent
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>24,083</b>	
<b>Population by Age</b>		
Less than 18 years old	5,338	22.2%
Ages 18-24	2,652	11.0%
Ages 25-34	3,287	13.6%
Ages 35-44	2,523	10.5%
Ages 45-54	2,745	11.4%
Ages 55-64	3,069	12.7%
Ages 65+	4,469	18.6%
<b>Population by Educational Attainment</b>		
Less Than High School Graduate	2,700	16.8%
High School Graduate / GED	4,955	30.8%
Some College or Associate's Degree	4,811	29.9%
Bachelor's Degree	2,036	12.7%
Graduate or Professional Degree	1,591	9.9%

*Notes: This table reports the total population, age breakdown, and educational attainment of individuals within Columbus, MS. The "Population by Age" section provides percentages which are calculated using the regions total population as the denominator. The "Population by Educational Attainment" section provides data only on those age 25 or older; the percentages in this section are calculated using a denominator of 16,093. Data are reported for 2019.*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2021.*

