

March 2025

In-State Regions of Employment for Mississippi Public University and Community College Graduates



Prepared by Mississippi State University's NSPARC

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Mississippi's Statewide 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.

PREPARED BY MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY'S NSPARC

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REQUEST

This report, commissioned by the Joint Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER), provides summary information on the in-state regions of employment for graduates from Mississippi's public universities and community colleges.

The following information is included for students that graduated from a Mississippi public university or community college between Academic Year (AY) 2018 through AY 2022 and found employment within one year in Mississippi:

- The number and percentage employed across select regions of the state. The following regions were included: (1) Mississippi's four Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs), and (2) the eight Ecosystems established by AccelerateMS.
- For students originating in a nonmetro Mississippi county prior to enrolling in postsecondary education, the number and percentage that found employment (1) in their originating nonmetro county, (2) another nonmetro county in the state, or (3) a metro county in the state.

METHODOLOGY

The data in this report were made available by the continued funding of Mississippi's Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) through the state legislature. The SLDS contains administrative records from more than 25 state agencies. Data from the following SLDS contributing agencies were used:

Mississippi Public University Data

Data on college graduates come from the administrative records of Mississippi's eight public universities. These data are collected by Mississippi's Institutions for Higher Learning (IHL) and include information on university enrollment, residency status, and graduation. These data are updated annually with student records from the previous academic year.

Mississippi Community College Data

Data on community college graduates come from the administrative records of Mississippi's 15 community colleges and the Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB), and include information on enrollment, county of residence, and

graduation. These data are updated annually with student records from the previous academic year.

Mississippi Employment and Wage Records

Data on employment status and county of employment are contributed to the SLDS by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES). These data were collected from Mississippi employers that participate in the state's Covered Employment system. These data are updated quarterly and include information on employer location.

INDICATORS

The following indicators were constructed for this analysis:

Number of Graduates

The number of students graduating from a Mississippi public postsecondary institution—i.e., one of Mississippi's eight public universities or 15 community colleges. Graduate counts are reported for each university and college; however, if a student graduated from more than one university or college in a given academic year, then the student was only counted once in the statewide total.

Number Employed

The number of graduates who did not re-enroll in a Mississippi public postsecondary institution, and who were employed with a Mississippi employer that participates in the state's Covered Employment system.

Percent Employed

The percentage of graduates who did not re-enroll in a Mississippi public postsecondary institution, and who were employed with a Mississippi employer that participates in the state's Covered Employment system. This is calculated by dividing *Number Employed* by the number of graduates who did not re-enroll.

GEOGRAPHY OF ANALYSIS

Results are calculated for each of the eight AccelerateMS Ecosystems. Figure 1 presents a map of these ecosystems, which consist of the following counties:

Ecosystem 1

Counties include Coahoma, Panola, Quitman, Tallahatchie, and Tunica.

Ecosystem 2

Counties include Alcorn, Benton, DeSoto, Itawamba, Lafayette, Lee, Marshall, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tate, Tippah, Tishomingo, and Union.

Ecosystem 3

Counties include Bolivar, Carroll, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Sharkey, Sunflower, and Washington.

Ecosystem 4

Counties include Attala, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Clay, Grenada, Lowndes, Monroe, Montgomery, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Webster, Winston, and Yalobusha.

Ecosystem 5

Counties include Claiborne, Hinds, Madison, Rankin, Simpson, Warren, and Yazoo.

Ecosystem 6

Counties include Clarke, Covington, Jasper, Jefferson Davis, Jones, Kemper, Lauderdale, Leake, Neshoba, Newton, Scott, Smith, and Wayne.

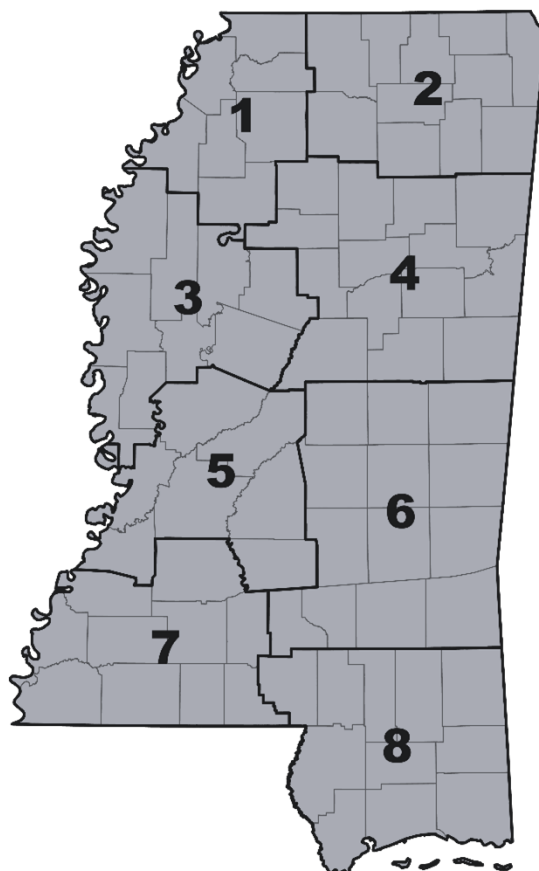
Ecosystem 7

Counties include Adams, Amite, Copiah, Franklin, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln, Pike, Walthall, and Wilkinson.

Ecosystem 8

Counties include Forrest, George, Greene, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Lamar, Marion, Pearl River, Perry, and Stone.

FIGURE 1: ACCELERATEMS ECOSYSTEMS



Results are also calculated for each of the four Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). Figure 2 presents a map of these areas, which include the following counties:

Delta

Counties include Tunica, Coahoma, Quitman, Panola, Bolivar, Tallahatchie, Leflore, Sunflower, Carroll, Washington, Humphreys, Holmes, Sharkey, and Issaquena.

Mississippi Partnership

Counties include DeSoto, Benton, Alcorn, Tishomingo, Tate, Marshall, Tippah, Prentiss, Itawamba, Union, Lee, Lafayette, Pontotoc, Yalobusha, Chickasaw, Calhoun, Monroe, Grenada, Webster, Clay, Montgomery, Choctaw, Oktibbeha, Lowndes, Attala, Winston, and Noxubee.

South Central Mississippi Works

Counties include Yazoo, Madison, Warren, Hinds, Rankin, Claiborne, Copiah, Simpson, Jefferson, Lincoln, Lawrence, Franklin, Adams, Wilkinson, Amite, Pike, and Walthall.

Twin Districts

Counties include Leake, Neshoba, Kemper, Scott, Newton, Lauderdale, Smith, Jasper, Clarke, Jefferson Davis, Covington, Jones, Wayne, Marion, Lamar, Forrest, Perry, Greene, Pearl River, Stone, George, Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson.

FIGURE 2: LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS (LWDAs)

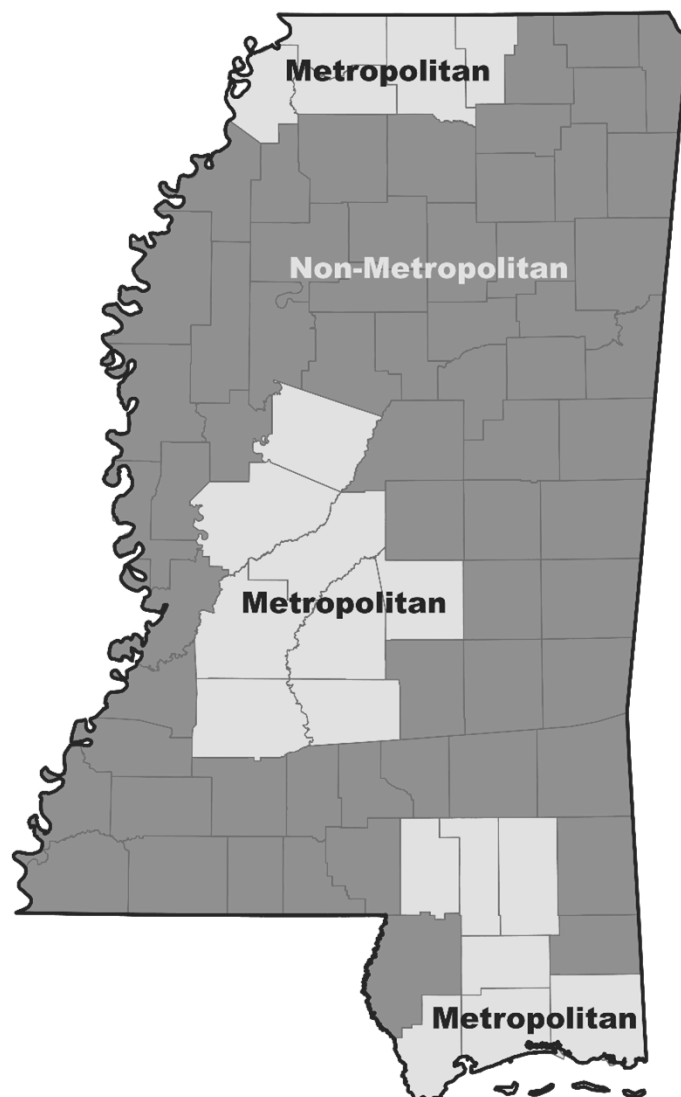


Finally, results are calculated for metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. These areas are defined using the following criteria:

Metropolitan statistical area delineation

Metropolitan areas are defined based on delineation files from the United States Census Bureau. Specifically, metropolitan areas contain at least one urbanized area of at least 50,000 people. In Mississippi, 20 counties fit this definition of a metropolitan area: Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Stone, Forrest, Lamar, Perry, Copiah, Hinds, Holmes, Madison, Rankin, Scott, Simpson, Yazoo, Benton, DeSoto, Marshall, Tate, and Tunica.

FIGURE 3: METROPOLITAN AND NON-METROPOLITAN AREAS IN MISSISSIPPI



RESULTS

Table 1 presents information on the number of postsecondary graduates, the number of graduates not enrolled, and the number of postsecondary graduates that are employed within 1 year of graduation.

This information is used as the foundation for calculating graduate employment rates across the regions considered in this analysis, as shown in Tables 2 and 3.

**TABLE 1: POSTSECONDARY GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT WITHIN 1 YEAR OF GRADUATION;
COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

	Graduates	Graduates Not Enrolled	Employed within One Year	Percent Employed
Community Colleges (Average)	16,367	9,612	7,317	76.1%
2018	16,867	9,708	7,318	75.4%
2019	16,692	9,575	7,342	76.7%
2020	16,552	9,870	7,434	75.3%
2021	16,224	9,526	7,336	77.0%
2022	15,499	9,381	7,156	76.3%
Universities (Average)	19,005	16,150	8,846	54.8%
2018	18,076	15,565	8,690	55.8%
2019	18,951	16,372	9,022	55.1%
2020	18,955	15,965	8,500	53.2%
2021	19,452	16,365	8,893	54.3%
2022	19,589	16,483	9,125	55.4%

Notes: Employment is measured for graduates of Mississippi public universities and community colleges who are not enrolled in other public community colleges or universities, and who were employed with Mississippi covered employers within one year of graduation. Percentages are calculated using the number of graduates employed within one year as the numerator, and the number of graduates not enrolled elsewhere as the denominator.

Source: Mississippi Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), 2025.

Table 2 presents a breakdown of in-state regional employment across the eight AccelerateMS Ecosystems.

TABLE 2: EMPLOYMENT OF POSTSECONDARY GRADUATES ACROSS ACCELERATEMS ECOSYSTEMS

Region of Employment	Universities		Community Colleges	
	Employed	Percent Employed	Employed	Percent Employed
Ecosystem 1	470	5.3%	387	5.3%
2018	467	5.4%	409	5.6%
2019	503	5.6%	407	5.5%
2020	464	5.5%	382	5.1%
2021	453	5.1%	360	4.9%
2022	464	5.1%	379	5.3%
Ecosystem 2	1,169	13.2%	786	10.7%
2018	1,066	12.3%	758	10.4%
2019	1,202	13.3%	816	11.1%
2020	1,158	13.6%	784	10.5%
2021	1,203	13.5%	802	10.9%
2022	1,217	13.3%	769	10.7%
Ecosystem 3	464	5.2%	271	3.7%
2018	484	5.6%	301	4.1%
2019	482	5.3%	311	4.2%
2020	451	5.3%	280	3.8%
2021	435	4.9%	236	3.2%
2022	466	5.1%	227	3.2%
Ecosystem 4	1,070	12.1%	521	7.1%
2018	1,036	11.9%	558	7.6%
2019	1,067	11.8%	518	7.1%
2020	1,054	12.4%	510	6.9%
2021	1,084	12.2%	504	6.9%
2022	1,109	12.2%	516	7.2%
Ecosystem 5	3,381	38.2%	2,882	39.4%
2018	3,352	38.6%	2,652	36.2%
2019	3,399	37.7%	2,764	37.6%
2020	3,191	37.5%	3,032	40.8%
2021	3,428	38.5%	2,999	40.9%
2022	3,536	38.8%	2,962	41.4%

Table 2 Continued on Next Page

Table 2 Continued

Ecosystem 6	584	6.6%	734	10.0%
2018	593	6.8%	833	11.4%
2019	567	6.3%	780	10.6%
2020	551	6.5%	722	9.7%
2021	587	6.6%	688	9.4%
2022	621	6.8%	646	9.0%
Ecosystem 7	236	2.7%	360	4.9%
2018	249	2.9%	393	5.4%
2019	227	2.5%	348	4.7%
2020	234	2.8%	364	4.9%
2021	248	2.8%	358	4.9%
2022	222	2.4%	335	4.7%
Ecosystem 8	1,472	16.6%	1,377	18.8%
2018	1,443	16.6%	1,414	19.3%
2019	1,575	17.5%	1,398	19.0%
2020	1,397	16.4%	1,360	18.3%
2021	1,455	16.4%	1,389	18.9%
2022	1,490	16.3%	1,322	18.5%
Total	8,846	100%	7,317	100%

Notes: Employment is measured for graduates of Mississippi public universities and community colleges who did not re-enroll, and were employed with Mississippi covered employers. Percentages are calculated using the total number of employed graduates as the denominator (see Table 1), and the number of graduates in the region as the numerator.

Source: Mississippi Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), 2025.

Table 3 presents a breakdown of in-state regional employment across Mississippi's four LWDAs.

TABLE 3: REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT OF POSTSECONDARY GRADUATES ACROSS LWDAs

Region of Employment	Universities		Community Colleges	
	Employed	Percent Employed	Employed	Percent Employed
Delta	631	7.1%	383	5.2%
2018	667	7.7%	435	5.9%
2019	670	7.4%	439	6.0%
2020	610	7.2%	381	5.1%
2021	602	6.8%	337	4.6%
2022	606	6.6%	321	4.5%
Mississippi Partnership	2,542	28.7%	1,583	21.6%
2018	2,386	27.5%	1,591	21.7%
2019	2,584	28.6%	1,613	22.0%
2020	2,517	29.6%	1,575	21.2%
2021	2,573	28.9%	1,565	21.3%
2022	2,650	29.0%	1,570	21.9%
South Central Mississippi Works	3,617	40.9%	3,241	44.3%
2018	3,601	41.4%	3,045	41.6%
2019	3,626	40.2%	3,112	42.4%
2020	3,425	40.3%	3,396	45.7%
2021	3,676	41.3%	3,357	45.8%
2022	3,758	41.2%	3,297	46.1%
Twin Districts	2,056	23.2%	2,110	28.8%
2018	2,036	23.4%	2,247	30.7%
2019	2,142	23.7%	2,178	29.7%
2020	1,948	22.9%	2,082	28.0%
2021	2,042	23.0%	2,077	28.3%
2022	2,111	23.1%	1,968	27.5%
Total	8,846	100%	7,317	100%

Notes: Employment is measured for graduates of Mississippi public universities and community colleges who did not re-enroll, and who were employed with Mississippi covered employers. Percentages are calculated using the total number of employed graduates as the denominator (see Table 1), and the number of graduates in the region as the numerator.

Source: Mississippi Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), 2025.

Table 4 presents information on the employment of graduates originating in a non-metropolitan Mississippi county prior to enrolling in postsecondary education. The table provides the number and percentage that found employment (1) in their originating non-metro county, (2) another non-metro county in the state, or (3) a metropolitan county in the state.

**TABLE 4: REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT OF POSTSECONDARY GRADUATES FROM MISSISSIPPI
NON-METRO REGIONS**

Region of Employment	Universities		Community Colleges	
	Employed	Percent Employed	Employed	Percent Employed
Metro Region	7,147	34.0%	6,725	35.3%
2018	1,435	34.2%	1,304	33.5%
2019	1,516	35.0%	1,277	33.3%
2020	1,299	32.7%	1,451	37.3%
2021	1,470	34.7%	1,398	36.7%
2022	1,427	33.6%	1,295	35.7%
Same Non-Metro County	6,844	32.6%	6,079	31.9%
2018	1,337	31.9%	1,284	33.0%
2019	1,369	31.6%	1,255	32.7%
2020	1,341	33.8%	1,203	30.9%
2021	1,377	32.5%	1,215	31.9%
2022	1,420	33.5%	1,122	31.0%
Different Non-Metro County	6,993	33.3%	6,252	32.8%
2018	1,424	33.9%	1,308	33.6%
2019	1,451	33.5%	1,304	34.0%
2020	1,330	33.5%	1,233	31.7%
2021	1,394	32.9%	1,199	31.5%
2022	1,394	32.9%	1,208	33.3%
Total Non-Metro Graduates	20,984	100%	19,056	100%

Notes: Employment is measured for graduates of Mississippi public universities and community colleges who did not re-enroll, who were employed with Mississippi covered employers, and who resided in a non-metro region prior to enrolling in postsecondary education. Non-metro regions are defined based on delineation files from the United States Census Bureau. Percents are calculated using the number of employed graduates who lived in a non-metro region prior to postsecondary enrollment as the denominator, and the number employed in each region as the numerator.

Source: Mississippi Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), 2025.



SLDS

**Statewide Longitudinal
Data System**

Prepared by Mississippi State University's NSPARC



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