More than Rocket Scientists Put a Man on the Moon
High-Wage, High-Demand Jobs with Two Years of Training or Less

How many workers did it take to put a man on the moon? Okay, I admit I don’t know. But I do know that the stupendous achievement involved many more folks than the scientists who envisioned and engineered the lunar module and the rockets that delivered that payload to the moon’s surface. From the construction workers who built the launch pads and blockhouse, to the accounting and procurement staff who ordered the materials and handled the payrolls, to the crew who maintained the elaborate electronics used to track the mission, this task involved a web of people and occupations that stretched far and wide—both geographically and in terms of the industries and occupations involved.

High-tech occupations, and those requiring bachelor’s or advanced degrees, are increasingly common in today’s workplace. But many occupations with less extensive training requirements, perhaps better suited to the new entrant or dislocated worker, also offer competitive salaries (see Figure 1). These occupations play key roles in keeping our economy ticking along and supporting the long-term visions of business and industry.

The Department of Workforce Development’s Research and Analysis group has identified occupations with a “high wage” (i.e. above the state median wage) and those that are “high demand” (i.e. non-replacement growth of at least 100 projected jobs over 10 years). Fifty of these occupations have been identified as the “Hoosier Hot 50,” based on indexing using a combination of wages and growth; however, that leaves about 180 other occupations for consideration. The list includes many common “shortage” occupations frequently in the news—e.g. welders and nurses—but many others of which we hear less.

Table 1 is a partial list of the 112 high-wage, high-demand jobs that generally require two years or less of full-time academic training or experience (although some may require an apprenticeship lasting up to four years). The complete list is available online at www.incontext.indiana.edu. Growth and replacement needs over a 10-year period for each occupation are summarized, along with annual wages (from the 2005 Occupational Employment Statistics survey) and typical experience/training required for the job.

Later this spring, the Research and Analysis group will make more information available on Hoosiers by the Numbers (www.hoosierdata.in.gov), allowing users to create customized lists of occupations based on wages, training/experience, occupational “family” or the industries using the largest proportion of workers in each occupation. Additional information

FIGURE 1: TOP 20 HIGHEST PAYING JOBS WITH TWO YEARS REQUIRED TRAINING OR LESS, BASED ON 2005 MEDIAN WAGES

Air Traffic Controllers
Transportation, Storage and Distribution Managers
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products
Dental Hygienists
Millwrights
First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Fire Fighting and Prevention Workers
First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Police and Detectives
Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers
First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers
Plumbers, Pipefitters and Steamfitters
Electricians
Commercial Pilots
Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers
First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers
Registered Nurses
Structural Iron and Steel Workers
Brickmasons and Blockmasons
Mechanical Engineering Technicians
Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technicians

Source: Department of Workforce Development

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on occupational projections and employment and wages by occupation is currently available on Hoosiers by the Numbers; meanwhile, more data on specific occupations (tasks, knowledge, skills and abilities required, training and education requirements, etc.) is available online at www.onetcenter.org.

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