Introduction

Workforce Solutions regularly provides a list of careers currently in high demand along with careers that will be in demand in the future throughout the Houston-Galveston area. Below is the latest update describing some of the best-paying, high-skill, high-growth jobs available in our area, and what you must do to qualify for those jobs.

Looking at a variety of data, we’re able to provide median hourly wage information, average annual job openings and the employment growth percentage for each occupation as a percentage.

There are indicators of which occupations are supported by Workforce Solutions’ scholarships. The symbols alongside each occupation confirm which are supported by Career Training (★) or Career Advancement Training ($). For more information on occupations supported by scholarship contact a Workforce Solutions counselor at 1-888-469-JOBS (5627).

Education and Other

TEACHERS ($)

SUBSET: CAREER/TECHNICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS (★/$), MIDDLE SCHOOL (★/$), SECONDARY SCHOOL (★/$)

This region’s economic strength depends on its growing population and thriving industries. Because of this, we will need more special education, bilingual education, 6–12 science and math, and career and technical education teachers through 2020.

Annual Salary: $52,000/Year
Employment Growth: 31.6%
Minimum Education: Bachelor’s degree
Annual Average Job Openings: 5,025

SCHOOL COUNSELORS ($)  

Counselors help students by encouraging academics and providing career and personal/social development guidance to help maximize academic achievements.

Annual Salary: $55,000/Year
Employment Growth: 24.8%
Minimum Education: Master’s degree
Annual Average Job Openings: 240

ACCOUNTANTS & AUDITORS (★/$)

Accountants and auditors ensure that a company is run efficiently, its public records are kept accurately, and its taxes are paid properly and timely.

Annual Salary: $70,000/Year
Employment Growth: 24.1%
Minimum Education: Bachelor’s degree
Annual Average Job Openings: 1,660

PARALEGALS & LEGAL ASSISTANTS ($)  

Paralegals assist lawyers by researching legal precedent, investigating facts or preparing legal documents.

Annual Salary: $54,000/Year
Employment Growth: 30.8%
Minimum Education: Associate’s degree
Annual Average Job Openings: 260

For more detail on career options with high wages and strong job growth in the region, visit www.wrksolutions.com/careerexploration
HIGH-SKILL, HIGH-GROWTH JOBS
IN THE GULF COAST REGION

Energy

GEOSCIENTISTS (★/$)
Geoscientists study the composition, structure and other physical aspects of the earth for the purpose of oil and gas exploration. Most geoscientists pursue advanced degrees.

Annual Salary: Between $50,000 – $100,000+
Employment Growth: 31.7%
Minimum Education: Bachelor’s degree
Annual Average Job Openings: 310

CHEMICAL PLANT OPERATORS (★/$)
Chemical plant operators analyze data to monitor the manufacturing process of various products and serve as troubleshooters.

Median Wage: $33.00
Employment Growth: 14.5%
Minimum Education: Long-term on-the-job training
Annual Average Job Openings: 180

GEOLOGICAL TECHNICIANS (★/$)
Whether in an office or out in the field, geological technicians help scientists find potential sources of oil and gas through the collection and examination of geological data.

Median Wage: $30.15
Employment Growth: 29.0%
Minimum Education: Associate’s degree
Annual Average Job Openings: 180

SERVICE UNIT OPERATORS, OIL, GAS AND MINING (★/$)
The rig operator’s responsibilities include moving heavy equipment, monitoring pressure and density plus many other specialized tasks.

Median Wage: $20.10
Employment Growth: 28.7%
Minimum Education: Moderate-term, on-the-job training
Annual Average Job Openings: 590

PETROLEUM PUMP SYSTEM OPERATORS (★/$)
Petroleum pump system operators, refinery operators and gaugers control the operation of petroleum refining or processing units. This task is performed by operating stream or electric-driven pumps to circulate crude, semi processed and finished petroleum products, water and chemical solution through processing, storage and shipping departments.

Median Wage: $31.72
Employment Growth: 17.0%
Minimum Education: Long-term on-the-job training
Annual Average Job Openings: 350

FUN FACTS!

GEOSCIENTISTS
Geoscientists in Texas make more money than in any other state and in Houston they make the second-highest amount of money of any big city in the nation, just after another Texas city, Tyler!

Source: BLS, Occupational Employment Statistics (wages refer to mean wages in 2013).
http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes192042.htm

Career Training helps individuals train towards a new occupation. Occupations supported by Career Training dollars are denoted by “★”. Career Advancement Training helps individuals build on existing skills within an occupation. Occupations supported by Career Advancement Training dollars are denoted by “$.”

Workforce Solutions
Energy (continued)

**ENGINEERS ($)**

SUBSET: ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERS (★$/), PETROLEUM ENGINEERS (★$/), MINING AND GEOLOGICAL ENGINEERS (★$/)

All engineers—chemical, civil, electrical, mechanical, petroleum, process and others—handle the design, development, testing or supervision of various projects.

- **Annual Salary:** Between $50,000 – $100,000+
- **Employment Growth:** 30.7%
- **Minimum Education:** Bachelor’s degree
- **Annual Average Job Openings:** 2,915

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**INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY MECHANICS (★$/)**

Industrial machinery mechanics maintain plants and factories by detecting breakdown conditions, making machinery adjustments and repairing faulty equipment.

- **Median Wage:** $23.15
- **Employment Growth:** 44.1%
- **Minimum Education:** Long-term on-the-job training
- **Annual Average Job Openings:** 825

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**ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING TECHNICIANS – INSTRUMENT AND ELECTRICAL (I&E) TECHNICIANS ONLY (★$/)**

Electrical and electronic engineering technicians install, maintain and repair electrical equipment needed in manufacturing plants, pipeline systems and other high-tech operations.

- **Annual Salary:** $64,000/Year
- **Employment Growth:** 19.1%
- **Minimum Education:** Bachelor’s degree
- **Annual Average Job Openings:** 165

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**MACHINISTS (★$/)**

Machinists are highly-skilled manufacturing workers with extensive knowledge of many precision machine tools which they use to produce metal or plastic parts.

- **Median Wage:** $19.88
- **Employment Growth:** 37.7%
- **Minimum Education:** Long-term on-the-job training
- **Annual Average Job Openings:** 780

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**FUN FACTS!**

**PETROLEUM ENGINEERS**

Of the roughly 140 non-managerial occupations requiring only a bachelor’s degree, petroleum engineers have the second-highest entry-level wages at $95,000 a year. Experienced petroleum engineers can expect to earn as much as $108,000 a year!

High-Skill, High-Growth Jobs in the Gulf Coast Region

Health Services

Registered Nurses—RN ($/€)
Becoming a registered nurse for most hospital systems in the Gulf Coast region requires earning at least a BSN and passing a national licensing exam.

- Median Wage: $36.27
- Employment Growth: 31.0%
- Minimum Education: Associate’s degree
- Annual Average Job Openings: 2,230

Licensed Vocational Nurses—LVN ($/€)
Licensed vocational nurses account for one in every four nursing occupations in the Gulf Coast region and are on the career pathway to more advanced health care occupations.

- Median Wage: $21.69
- Employment Growth: 28.5%
- Minimum Education: Postsecondary vocational training
- Annual Average Job Openings: 800

Medical Records Technicians ($)
Medical records technicians work in various health care environments and use complex proprietary database systems to manage, interpret and report data to maintain accurate records.

- Median Wage: $17.97
- Employment Growth: 30.7%
- Minimum Education: Associate’s degree
- Annual Average Job Openings: 225

Medical Laboratory Technicians ($/€)
Medical and clinical laboratory technologists conduct complex laboratory testing for early diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease.

- Annual Salary: $58,000/Year
- Employment Growth: 25.7%
- Minimum Education: Associate’s degree
- Annual Average Job Openings: 170

Radiologic Technologists ($/€)
Radiologic technologists perform imaging tests to assist in diagnosing patients and are most easily associated with x-rays.

- Median Wage: $25.71
- Employment Growth: 32.0%
- Minimum Education: Associate’s degree
- Annual Average Job Openings: 150

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HIGH-SKILL, HIGH-GROWTH JOBS IN THE GULF COAST REGION

Health Services (continued)

PHYSICAL THERAPIST (★/$)
Physical therapists help people adapt to the loss of bodily functions due to injuries or ailments.

Annual Salary: $86,000/Year
Employment Growth: 32.7%
Minimum Education: Bachelor’s degree and license
Annual Average Job Openings: 160

SPEECH THERAPISTS (★/$)
Speech therapists, also known as speech-language pathologists, diagnose and treat those with speech and language difficulties resulting from various medical problems.

Annual Salary: $66,000/Year
Employment Growth: 29.9%
Minimum Education: Master’s degree
Annual Average Job Openings: 125

RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS (★/$)
Respiratory therapists generally work in hospitals and nursing homes with patients who are experiencing cardiologic or pulmonary dysfunction.

Median Wage: $27.02
Employment Growth: 30.3%
Minimum Education: Associate’s degree
Annual Average Job Openings: 120

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS (★/$)
Occupational therapists work with individuals who suffer from a disability. They utilize treatments that develop, recover or maintain clients’ activities of daily living.

Median Wage: $36.40
Employment Growth: 23.0%
Minimum Education: Master’s degree
Annual Average Job Openings: 80

DOCTORS/DENTISTS ($)
There are two types of doctors or physicians: the doctor of medicine (MD) and the doctor of osteopathic medicine (DO). Most doctors are MDs who treat all types of diseases and injuries. Dentists help individuals in many ways by diagnosing and treating diseases, repairing smiles, relieving pain and giving teeth to those without.

Median Wage: $74.83
Employment Growth: 26.3%
Minimum Education: Doctoral or Professional degree
Annual Average Job Openings: 705

FUN FACTS!

SPEECH THERAPISTS
What do Nicole Kidman, Samuel L. Jackson, Bruce Willis, Barbara Walters, and Emily Blunt have in common? They all overcame speech impediments with the help of speech therapists!

Source(s): www.stutteringhelp.org/ and www.speechbuddy.com
### COMPUTER SYSTEMS ANALYSTS (★/$)
Computer systems analysts aim to automate or improve existing technological systems, and review computer systems capabilities to best meet the needs of an organization.

- **Annual Salary:** $91,000/Year
- **Employment Growth:** 33.6%
- **Minimum Education:** Bachelor's degree
- **Annual Average Job Openings:** 530

#### APPLICATIONS SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS (★/$)
Applications software developers design, build, customize, test and maintain general computer applications software or specialized utility programs … such as those “apps” on your phone.

- **Annual Salary:** $95,000/Year
- **Employment Growth:** 26.6%
- **Minimum Education:** Bachelor's degree
- **Annual Average Job Openings:** 380

### SYSTEMS SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS (★/$)
Apps developers work on computer programs with a specific function (or application) and systems developers work on programs that might integrate numerous applications into a larger system.

- **Annual Salary:** $96,000/Year
- **Employment Growth:** 27.6%
- **Minimum Education:** Bachelor’s degree
- **Annual Average Job Openings:** 315

### COMPUTER SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATORS (★/$)
System administrators focus on how computers work within larger networks such as local area networks (LAN) and wide area networks (WAN). They are sometimes known as network administrators.

- **Annual Salary:** $89,000/Year
- **Employment Growth:** 23.3%
- **Minimum Education:** Bachelor’s degree
- **Annual Average Job Openings:** 325

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**FUN FACTS!**

**COMPUTER SYSTEMS ANALYST**
A computer systems analyst is one of those rare occupations that combines TWO careers in one! As a computer systems analyst, you’ll leverage your knowledge of information technology and business processes to create better systems that improve the productivity and profitability of the entire organization!

### ADVANCED WELDERS (★★/$)
Advanced welders with specialty skills are in short supply across various industries. Individuals with some postsecondary training and work experience achieve the highest success in this field.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median Wage</td>
<td>$18.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Growth</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Education</td>
<td>Postsecondary vocational training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Average Job Openings</td>
<td>870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ELECTRICIANS (★★/$)
Electricians install and replace wiring, and must be licensed by the state. Those who earn a master electrician’s license have the highest earning potential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median Wage</td>
<td>$22.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Growth</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Education</td>
<td>Long-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Average Job Openings</td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PLUMBERS (★★/$)
Plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters are needed everywhere to install, maintain and repair gas and water pipe systems. Getting a dual certification as a welder-pipefitter maximizes career opportunities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median Wage</td>
<td>$24.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Growth</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Education</td>
<td>Long-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Average Job Openings</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HVAC MECHANICS (★★/$)
HVAC mechanics and installers apply high-tech tools to diagnose and fix a wide variety of heating and cooling appliances and equipment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median Wage</td>
<td>$19.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Growth</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Education</td>
<td>Postsecondary vocational training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Average Job Openings</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MOBILE HEAVY EQUIPMENT MECHANICS, EXCEPT ENGINES ($)
Diagnose, adjust, repair or overhaul mobile mechanical, hydraulic and pneumatic equipment, such as cranes, bulldozers, graders and conveyors.

<table>
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<th>Value</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median Wage</td>
<td>$22.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Growth</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Education</td>
<td>Postsecondary vocational training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Average Job Openings</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### COST ESTIMATORS ($)
Cost estimators work for architectural or construction firms. Cost estimators compile and analyze costs for manufacturing and construction projects across various industries, including energy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Salary</td>
<td>$65,000/Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Growth</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Education</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Average Job Openings</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below are the jobs that Gulf Coast residents most often state as their career goals. Compare the wages and available openings each year for these jobs with those of the other jobs in this magazine. You might find that you can pursue your skills, interests, values, and passion through another pathway that might make more money and have more job openings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROFESSION</th>
<th>MEDIAN WAGE</th>
<th>EMPLOYMENT GROWTH</th>
<th>MINIMUM EDUCATION</th>
<th>ANNUAL AVERAGE JOB OPENINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actors</td>
<td>$10.63</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>Some college, no degree</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancers</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>High school diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musicians and Singers</td>
<td>$21.43</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>High school diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion Designers</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>High school diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographers</td>
<td>$16.48</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>High school diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Designers</td>
<td>$19.34</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architects, Except Landscape &amp; Naval</td>
<td>$35.72</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmetologists*</td>
<td>$11.34</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>Post-secondary non-degree award</td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chefs and Head Cooks</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>High school diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletes and Sports Competitors</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>High school diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
<td>$20.53</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>High school diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatricians</td>
<td>$84.08</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>Doctoral or professional degree</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Health Aides</td>
<td>$8.78</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Workers</td>
<td>$19.29</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologists**</td>
<td>$26.74</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>Doctoral or professional degree</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinarians</td>
<td>$46.18</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>Doctoral or professional degree</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoologists and Wildlife Biologists</td>
<td>$29.57</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special Education</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers</td>
<td>$70.81</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>Doctoral or professional degree</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Certificates awarded in the region per year: 1,453
** Degrees awarded in the region per year: 1,585

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