

Web Posted: 10/31/2009 12:00 CDT

San Antonio ranks third in job performance

By [William Pack](#) - Express-News

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' newest comparison of big-city job markets reaffirms San Antonio's status as one of the most recession-resistant metropolitan areas.

Counting just the 38 metropolitan areas with at least 750,000 nonfarm workers, San Antonio had the third-smallest falloff in employment from September 2008 to September 2009 at 1.1 percent.

Only Virginia Beach, Va., with a decline of 0.6 percent, and Austin, which lost 0.7 percent of its job count over the 12 months, ranked better.

On the other end, the Phoenix area took the biggest pounding, shedding 148,500 jobs, or 8 percent, of its market. Struggles in the automotive sector brought the Detroit area's job count down by 7.8 percent during that period, the second-steepest decline.

Jorge Gonzalez, Trinity University economics professor, and Terry Clower, director of the Center for Economic Development and Research at the University of North Texas, said San Antonio's performance is not surprising.

Economic diversity and the comparative strength of key sectors such as health care, the hospitality industry and the military have kept San Antonio from sinking like other cities, Gonzalez and Clower said.

“It's weathered the storm fairly well,” Clower said.

Gonzalez said the stable nature of San Antonio's economy is a plus as the city strives to expand its employer base. Recently, the city has attracted Nationwide, which will add 838 jobs at a regional corporate campus in Westover Hills; Toyota, which will add 850 jobs as it starts Tacoma production at the local plant; and Medtronic Diabetes, which will bring 1,400 jobs to the Overlook at the Rim.

If the skills of San Antonio's work force continue to improve, the area economy should see future job gains, Gonzalez said.

The San Antonio area had 855,000 jobs in September 2008 and 845,800 jobs this September, the labor bureau said.

In all, 359 metropolitan areas lost jobs over the 12 months ending in September and 10 reported growing job counts.

The McAllen-Edinburg area added the most jobs: 3,100, or 1.4 percent of its labor market. Other border areas in Texas performed well, too. Laredo only lost 100 jobs during the year, a 0.1 percent decline, and the Brownsville-Harlingen area shrank by 1,300 jobs, a 1 percent dropoff.

Houston, which had 2.5 million jobs as of September, saw its employment decline by 3 percent, or 76,700 jobs.

Dallas and Fort Worth together experienced a 2.2 percent jobs decline, the fifth-best showing among the largest metro areas. But a separate breakout showed most of those losses were in Dallas. Its job count shrank by more than 54,000, a

2.6 percent decline, while Fort Worth's fell by 10,400, a 1.2 percent falloff.

Find this article at:

<http://www.mysanantonio.com/business/67810647.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.