

Cleveland No. 2 in nation in job growth

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Cleveland Mayor Tom Rowland, and other community officials, are ecstatic over the continuation of accolades the community is receiving for its economic accomplishments.

It was learned this week Cleveland is the No. 2 community in the nation in job growth for the past 12 months. A survey by 24/7 Wall Street lists the top 25 U.S. cities that added jobs from October 2015 through October 2016.

The survey compared employment levels in 387 metro areas from one year to the next. Cleveland is one of five Tennessee communities on the list of 25, and one of only two metro areas in the country with more than 7 percent job growth.

"This is a continuing example that people are interested in living, working and investing in our community," said Rowland this morning. "This is something we've known for some time, and it is just another of the many accolades we've received during the past year."

Rowland added that credit for this latest accomplishment by our community can be attributed to an outstanding partnership between "the city, Bradley County and a great Chamber of Commerce."

Cleveland/Bradley Chamber President Gary Farlow agreed it is great news for Cleveland and Bradley County. "The credit is due to our strong economic base," he said, emphasizing this has been in place for a time.

The national survey also shows strong economic growth in the Northwest. Four of the communities listed in the Top 10 for exceptional job growth are in Oregon, including the No. 1 community of Bend-Redmond, Ore.

The other three Oregon communities are Salem, Portland, and Albany. The No. 8 community on the chart is an East Tennessee community very similar in size to Cleveland, Morristown, in Hamblen County.

Driving employment growth in the Cleveland area were professional and business services. Employment in the industry grew by 20.3 percent between October 2015 and October 2016, more than in any other U.S. metro. Major employers in the area include the Whirlpool Corporation (both the manufacturing plant and customer service center), Amazon.com distribution center and Wacker Polysilicon North America.

The U.S. economy added nearly 2.5 million jobs in the last year, a growth of 1.7 percent. Employment is expanding even more rapidly in some parts of the country. Due to a variety of factors, job growth in a number of cities was more than double the national employment growth rate. Together, the 25 cities on the survey with the fastest job growth added more than half a million new jobs.

The survey's Top 10: No. 1 — Bend-Redmond, Ore.; No. 2 — Cleveland; No. 3 — Yuma, Ariz.; No. 4 — Prescott, Ariz.; No. 5 — Salem, Ore.; No. 6 — Bismarck, N.D.; No. 7 — Athens-Clarke County, Ga.; No. 8 — Morristown; No. 9 — Portland, Ore.; and No. 10 — Albany, Ore.

National employment growth is often attributed to thriving industries. In the past year, education and health services added the most jobs, while professional and business services was the second biggest contributor to employment growth nationwide. Meanwhile, manufacturing was the biggest drag on employment, followed by the information industry.

To identify the cities with the highest job growth, 24/7 Wall Street reviewed metropolitan statistics, such as unemployment rates, the size of the labor force, and employment levels from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This data was seasonally adjusted.

The firm said industry-specific growth rates for the same period are from the Current Employment Survey, a monthly BLS survey. Educational attainment and median household income came from the 2015 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau.

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