

Unemployment lowest since 2008

School's in session and agriculture job losses smaller than usual

By JONDI GUMZ

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SANTA CRUZ — A report delayed by the federal government shutdown brought welcome news Friday for Santa Cruz County. September unemployment dropped to 7.3 percent, the lowest this year, then inched up to 7.5 percent in October, the lowest for that

month since the 2008 economic crash and below the state rate of 8.3 percent.

A year ago, local unemployment stood at 9 percent.

Whether those jobs are full time or part time is impossible to say.

The U.S. Census monthly survey of households and business establishments revealed a shift since 2009 among those ages 25-54 in

the work force: From 11 percent to 13 percent part time, with a corresponding decrease from 88.5 percent to 87 percent full time.

The statistics from California Employment Development Department are based on a survey asking people if they worked at all. It does not ask about part time and full time.

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JOBS

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State labor analyst Jorge Villalobos said that data is not collected on the local level but he noted an August report shows 21.2 percent of employed Californians usually work part time and 78.8 percent full time, with 8 percent working part time because they could not find full-time work and 8.7 percent not in the labor force but want a job.

Newer data have yet to be posted.

In Santa Cruz County, jobless rates ranged from 16.4 percent in Watsonville, which has 3,800 people out of work, to 6.2 percent in the city of Santa Cruz, with 2,100 out of work, to 2.9 percent in Aptos, with 200 people out of work.

Typically October is a strong month for jobs in Santa Cruz County because schools are back in session.

This year was no different.

The job count was 103,600, up 2,200 since September in the government sector which includes UC Santa Cruz, Cabrillo College and K-12 public schools.

That month-to-month increase is on par with the 10-year average.

Leisure and hospitality shed 300 jobs, typical for this time of year, and manufac-

turing reduced 200 jobs, not so typical, bringing nonfarm job growth to 1,700.

Farms shed 900 jobs. Typically the loss is 1,400 jobs for this time of year.

Compared to a year ago, there are 1,000 more jobs, largely due to gains in manufacturing and retail.

The state reported 38,400 county residents commuted to jobs outside the county, down from 38,900 in September.

BY THE NUMBERS

JOBS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Industry	Jobs Oct. 13	Change from September	Change from a year ago
Government	21,900	Up 2,200	Up 1,100
Private education, health	14,200	Up 100	Down 100
Trade, transportation, utilities	17,300	0	Up 300
Information	800	0	0
Financial activities	3,300	0	0
Professional and business	10,200	0	0
Mining, logging, construction	3,100	0	0
Other services	3,700	0	Down 200
Leisure and hospitality	11,600	Down 300	Down 300
Manufacturing	6,000	Down 200	Up 300
Total Nonfarm	92,100	Up 1,700	Up 1,100
Total Farm	11,500	Down 900	Down 100
Total	103,600	Up 800	Up 1,000

Source: California Employment Development Department

said, noting Goodwill has touched 2,294 employers this year.

Goodwill screens job candidates and will subsidize half the training wage for the first six months, about \$5,000.

Companies hiring included Fox Racing Shox, National Custom Packing, Watsonville Chevrolet, Santa Cruz Subaru, Sears Automotive, DMV Clinic, Horsnyder Pharmacy and Medical, Threshold Enterprises, First American Title, Farmers Insurance and Ulta Beauty.

More than a dozen salons recruited grads from Goodwill's Shoreline School of Cosmetology.

The number of Santa Cruz County job seekers tapping into Goodwill's Shoreline Workforce Development Services is basically unchanged from a year ago, but the numbers are up 94 percent at the career center in Salinas because of plant closures there.

Goodwill Industries, which assists job-seekers at its career center at 350 Encinal St. in Santa Cruz, has placed 891 people so far this year, up 12.9 percent from a year ago, according to Senior Vice President John Collins.

Wages for nonretail jobs ranged from \$11.11 to \$20 per hour, with a median of \$12.27.

"We act as that bridge between job seekers and employers," Collins

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