



**Bureau of Business Research**

Grand Challenges

# Bureau of Business Research

- Economic and policy research
  - Identifies key economic features and challenges for Nebraska, Great Plains and national economy
  - Partners on projects with departments throughout the University





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Grand Challenges

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- Monthly survey of 500 Nebraska Businesses ([bbr.unl.edu](http://bbr.unl.edu))
- Labor availability and skill gap analysis (<https://www.dol.nebraska.gov/LAS>)
- Economic indicators
  - Nebraska Thriving Index ([ruralfutures.nebraska.edu/nethrivingindex/](http://ruralfutures.nebraska.edu/nethrivingindex/))
  - Omaha Barometer ([omahachamber.org/economic-development/regional-data/](http://omahachamber.org/economic-development/regional-data/))
- Contact: Eric Thompson, Director, [ethompson2@unl.edu](mailto:ethompson2@unl.edu)

## Grand Challenge - grow the upper middle class

- Create prosperity, demand for services and tax base
- The hole in Nebraska's economy – too few high wage, high skill jobs
  - Weak progression in education attainment
  - Limited activity in high-wage, high growth industries
- A key challenge for Nebraska and a common problem in places not named Denver, Minneapolis, Boston, San Francisco or Austin



# Grand Challenge – Weak Progression

Education Attainment	% of Adult Population	
	Nebraska	United States
High School or Higher	91.4%	88.3%
Bachelor’s or Higher	32.4%	32.6%
Graduate or Professional	11.1%	12.6%

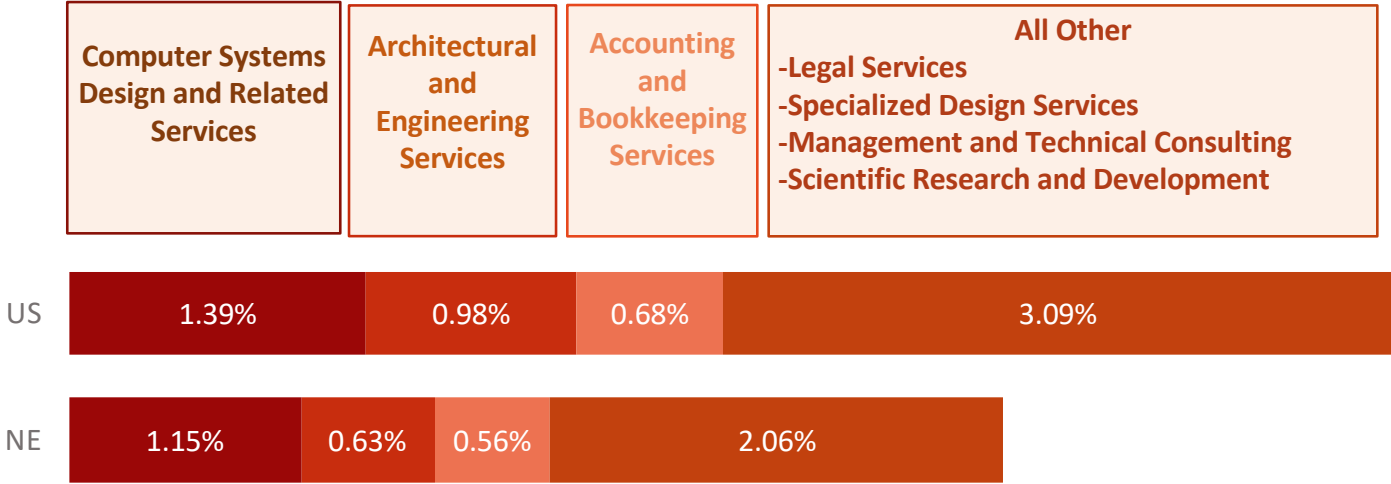
Source: American Community Survey (2018)

## High Growth, High Wage Industries

- Professional Scientific and Technical Services (PSTS) – information technology, engineering, consulting, accounting, advertising, legal, research
- Job Growth 2008-2017:
  - United States = 15.4%, Nebraska = 5.2%
- Average Weekly Wage 2017 (US)
  - PSTS= \$1,802, All Industries = \$1,093



# Production Amenities – city size



## A Different Policy Agenda

- Preparation prior to college
- Post-graduate degrees and certificates
- Growth of cities
- Consumer amenities
- Entrepreneurship
- Financial education
- Policy – more than just information technology