



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

Bureau of Business Research

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





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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