

New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Region

2024 Q1 QUARTERLY
WORKFORCE REPORT

Introduction

Welcome to the Quarter 1 2024 Workforce Report.

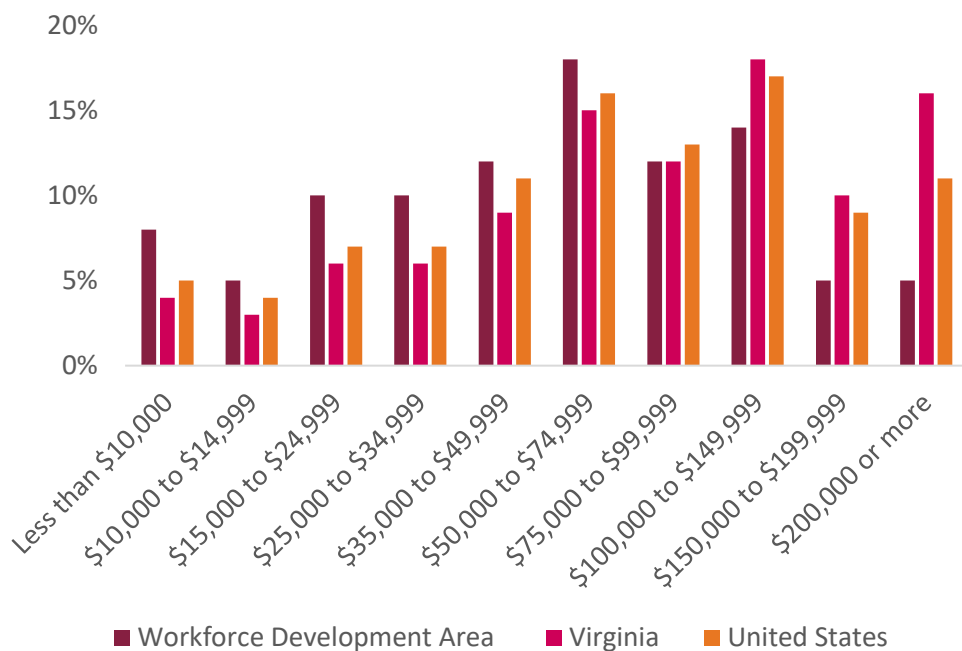
The New River Mount Rogers Workforce Quarterly Report is a collaborative effort between the Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement and the New River Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board (WDB). Its primary objective is to provide a comprehensive overview of the regional labor landscape, presenting in-depth analyses and data to offer valuable insights into the evolving workforce dynamics. The publication is dedicated to delivering timely and relevant information to its audience.

This latest edition builds upon the foundation established in the Quarter 1 2016 Workforce Report, focusing specifically on the manufacturing sector within the region. Through detailed examination of workforce demographics, unemployment trends, prevalent occupations, and salary benchmarks, the publication aims to provide informative perspectives to stakeholders, policymakers, and community members with an interest in understanding and contributing to the workforce ecosystem.



Demographics and Income

Households by Income Bracket



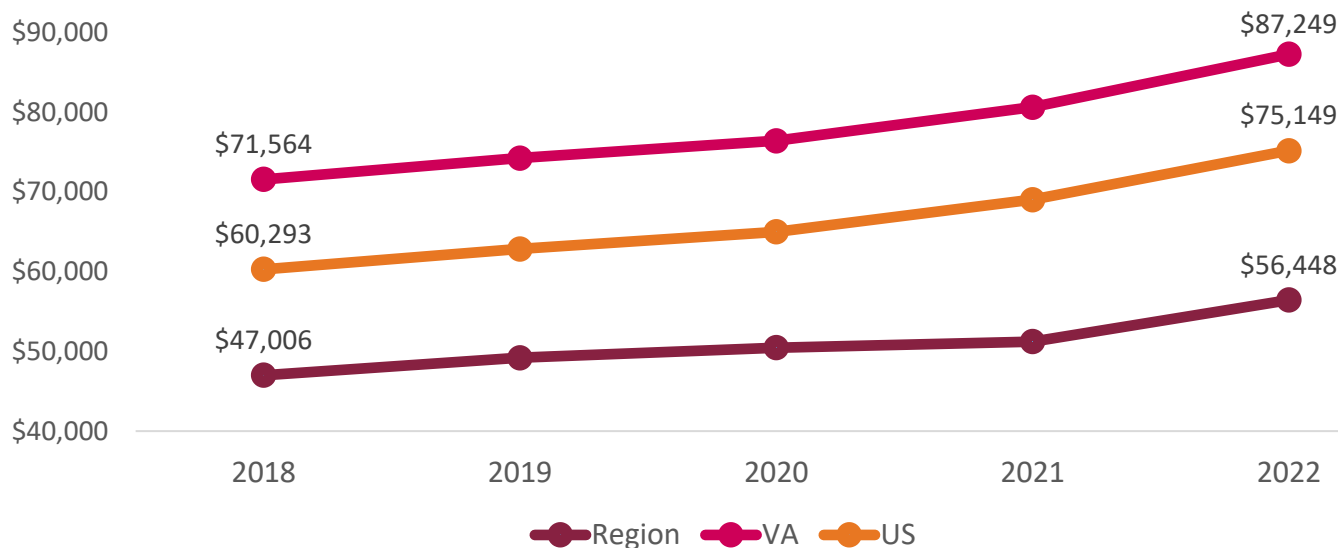
Median Household Income

Montgomery County, VA	\$60,666
Giles County, VA	\$57,911
Pulaski County, VA	\$55,446
Washington County, VA	\$54,737
Bland County, VA	\$54,556
Wythe County, VA	\$52,726
Floyd County, VA	\$51,612
Carroll County, VA	\$45,220
Radford City County, VA	\$44,360
Bristol City County, VA	\$43,879
Grayson County, VA	\$43,022
Smyth County, VA	\$42,588
Galax City County, VA	\$39,808

Region 2 exceeds state and national household income brackets less than \$74,999. Beyond, \$75,000 Region 2 meets or falls short of state and national household income, trends are profoundly different beyond \$150,000. The median household income at each geographic level have all seen gradual increases in income over a ten-year period. In 2022, the average median household income for Region 2 was \$56,448, \$30,801 less than the nation and \$18,701 less than the state of Virginia.

Of the 13-locality region, Montgomery county has the highest median household income at \$60,666. In contrast, the city of Galax has the lowest at \$39,808.

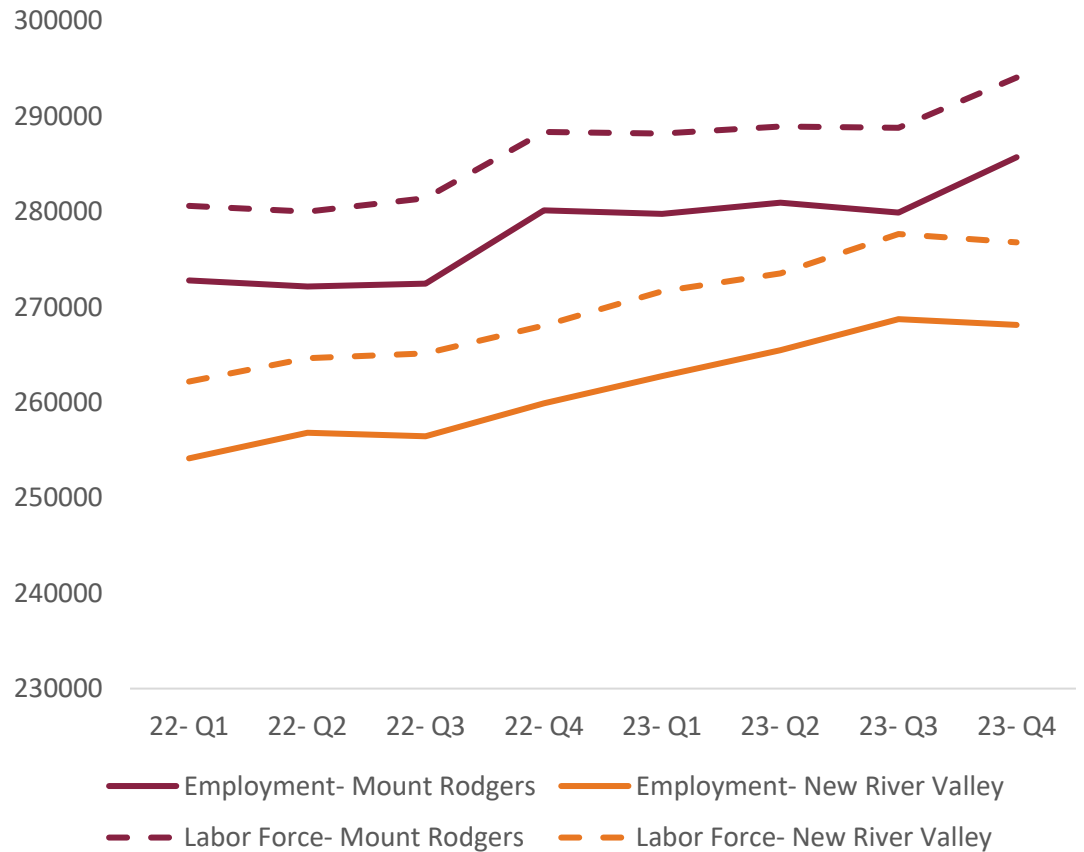
Change in Median Household Income (2018-2023)



Employment

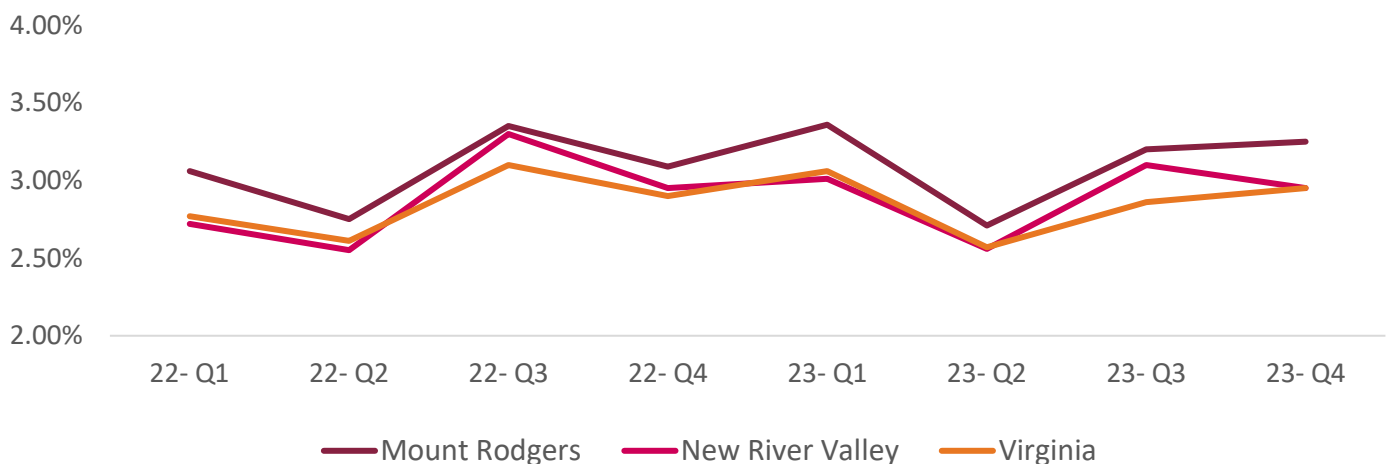
Employment & Labor Force

The graph on the right indicates the relatively equal growth rate between Mount Rodgers and the New River Valley. Both regions have seen growth in employment and the labor force since Q1 2022. The gap between those who are employed, and the number of people in the labor force has stayed relatively consistent over the last two years. The gap between employment and the labor force is also referred to as the unemployment rate.



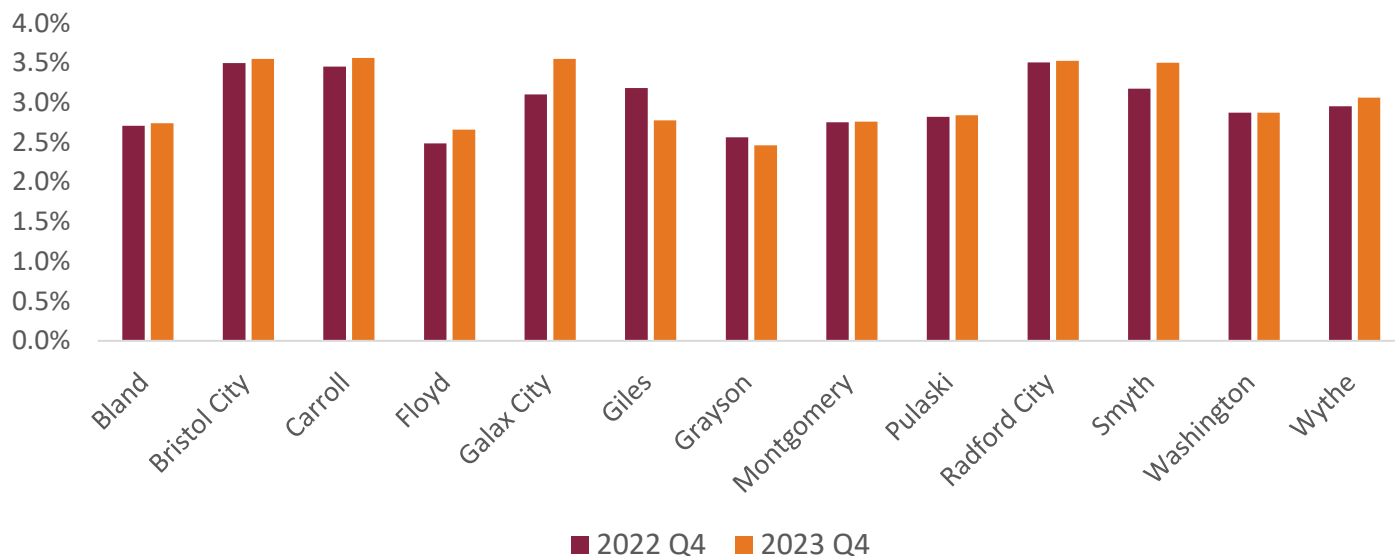
The graph below illustrates parallel trends across all three geographies, mirroring the graph above. Mount Rodgers exhibits consistent fluctuations, reaching its peak at 3.36% in Q1 of 23 and hitting its low at 2.71% in Q2 of 23. New River Valley generally maintains lower figures, fluctuating between 2.56% and 3.30%. Virginia as a whole demonstrates stability, with percentages ranging from 2.57% to 3.10%

Quarterly Change in Unemployment Rate (2022-2023)



Employment

Quarterly Unemployment Rate by County (2022-2023)



Overall, there are minor fluctuations in the percentages across the 2022-2023 time frame. For example, Bristol City increased from 0.0349 to 0.0355, and Galax City rose from 0.0310 to 0.0355. Conversely, some regions experienced decreases, such as Giles, which declined from 0.0318 to 0.0278.

Underemployment is an important indicator to consider. Underemployment in the context of this report refers to the educational attainment of the working-age population (25+) compared to the typical entry-level education required by jobs in the region. This metric can help indicate whether the population is under or over-skilled. As the table below shows, the New River Mount Rogers region has a highly educated working-age population. There are notable differences between the number of jobs requiring some college, associate's degrees, and graduate degrees or higher and the number of individuals possessing these qualifications - indicating individuals are over-skilled.

Regional Underemployment by Education



8%

of the Mount Rogers region population possesses a graduate degree or higher

18%

of the New River region population possesses a graduate degree or higher

Education Level	Jobs Requiring Ed. Level	Population at Ed. Level	Difference
No Formal Education Required	17%	10%	7%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	45%	33%	12%
Some College, Non-Degree Award	9%	20%	-12%
Associate's Degree	2%	10%	-8%
Bachelor's Degree	22%	15%	8%
Graduate Degrees and Higher	6%	12%	-6%

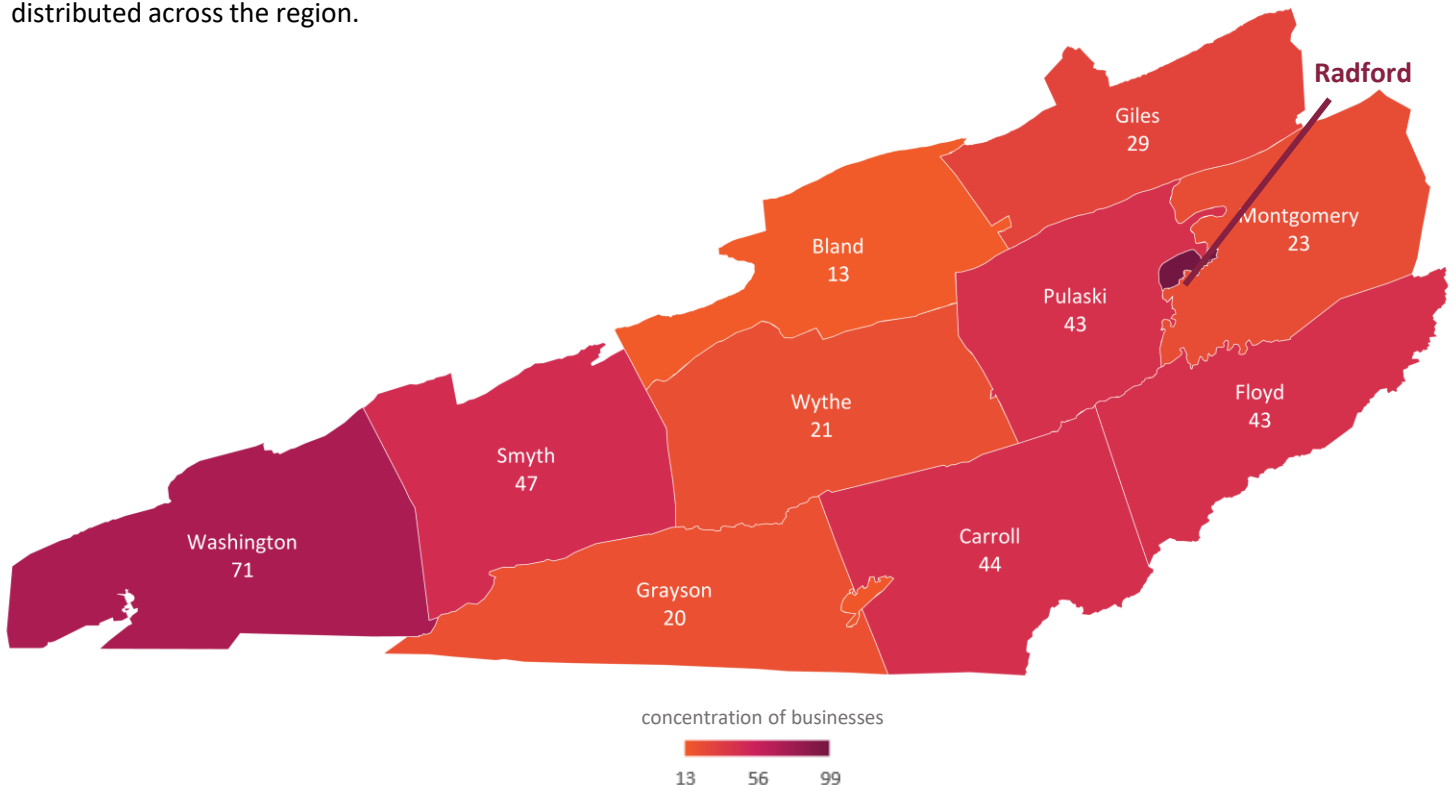
Employment Industry

Top 10 Industries by Employment

Description	2022 Jobs	2023 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job
Government	37,571	38,289	718	2%	\$66,433
Manufacturing	26,704	26,738	34	0%	\$76,219
Retail Trade	18,033	17,902	-130	-1%	\$38,095
Health Care and Social Assistance	16,559	16,874	315	2%	\$60,193
Accommodation and Food Services	13,326	13,882	556	4%	\$25,202
Admin. & Waste Management	7,177	7,181	4	0%	\$43,963
Other Services	6,601	6,527	-74	-1%	\$36,989
Construction	6,021	6,049	28	0%	\$61,909
Professional, Scientific, and Tech. Services	5,589	5,611	22	0%	\$100,246
Transportation and Warehousing	4,635	4,697	62	1%	\$61,195

Number of Manufacturing Firms in Each County

In 2023, Manufacturing ranked as the second-largest industry in the region in terms of employment. From 2022 to 2023, the industry experienced stagnant growth, with less than a 1% change in employment during that period. However, this stagnation doesn't diminish the industry's robust presence in the region. There are hundreds of manufacturing firms scattered throughout the area, with the highest concentration in Radford City, although the firms are fairly evenly distributed across the region.



Manufacturing

Occupations

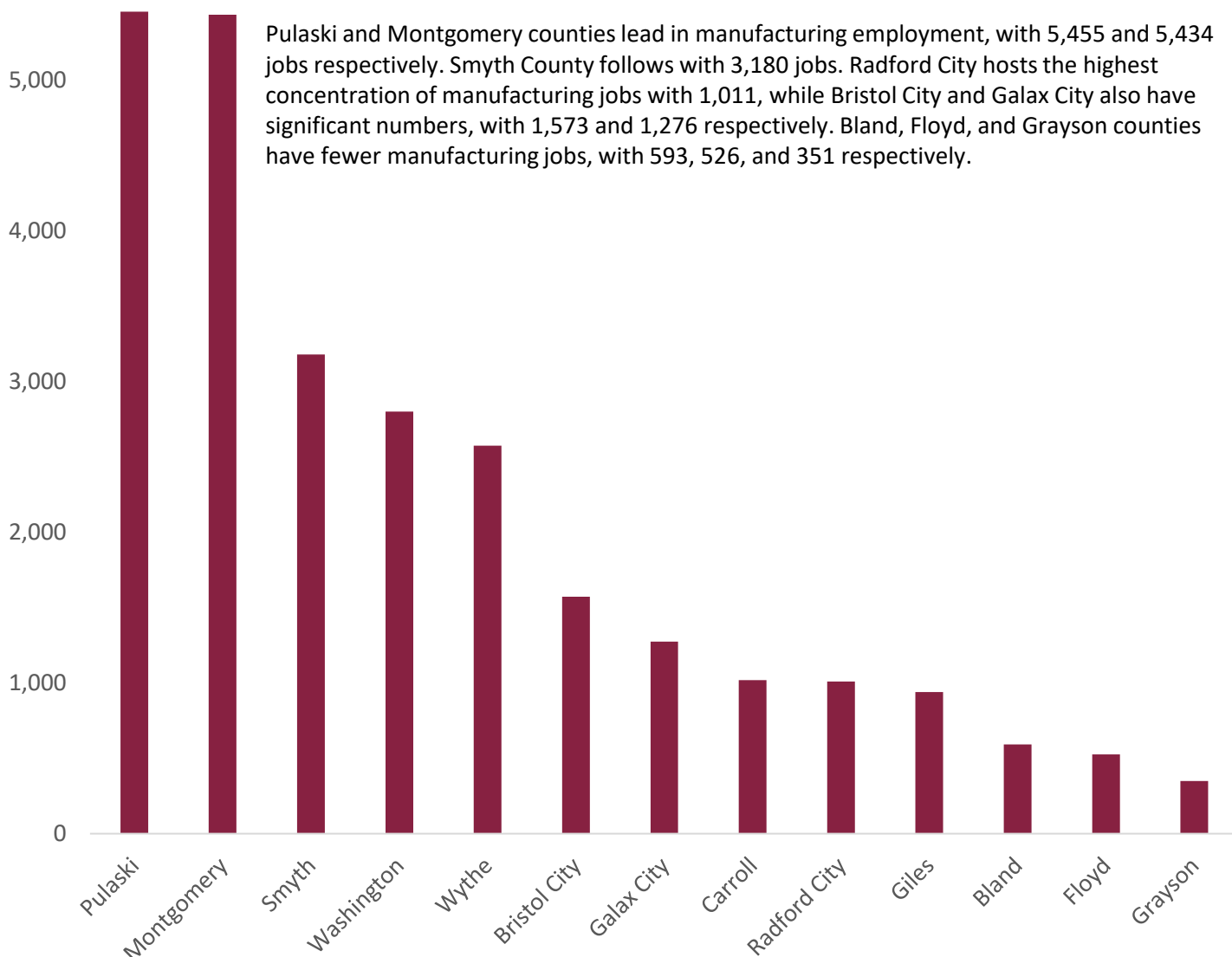
Fastest Growing Manufacturing Operations (2018-2023)

Occupation	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2018 - 2023 % Change
Engine and Other Machine Assemblers	41	134	226%
Chemical Processing Machine Setters, Operators, & Tenders	156	382	146%
Furnace, Kiln, Oven, Drier, & Kettle Operators and Tenders	40	73	82%
Extruding, Forming, Pressing, & Compacting Machine Setters, Operators, & Tenders	172	269	57%
Electrical, Electronics, & Electromechanical Assemblers	656	974	48%

The fastest growing manufacturing occupations are auto and chemical manufacturers. Both have seen more than double growth in employment over the last 5 years.

6,000

Manufacturing Employment by County



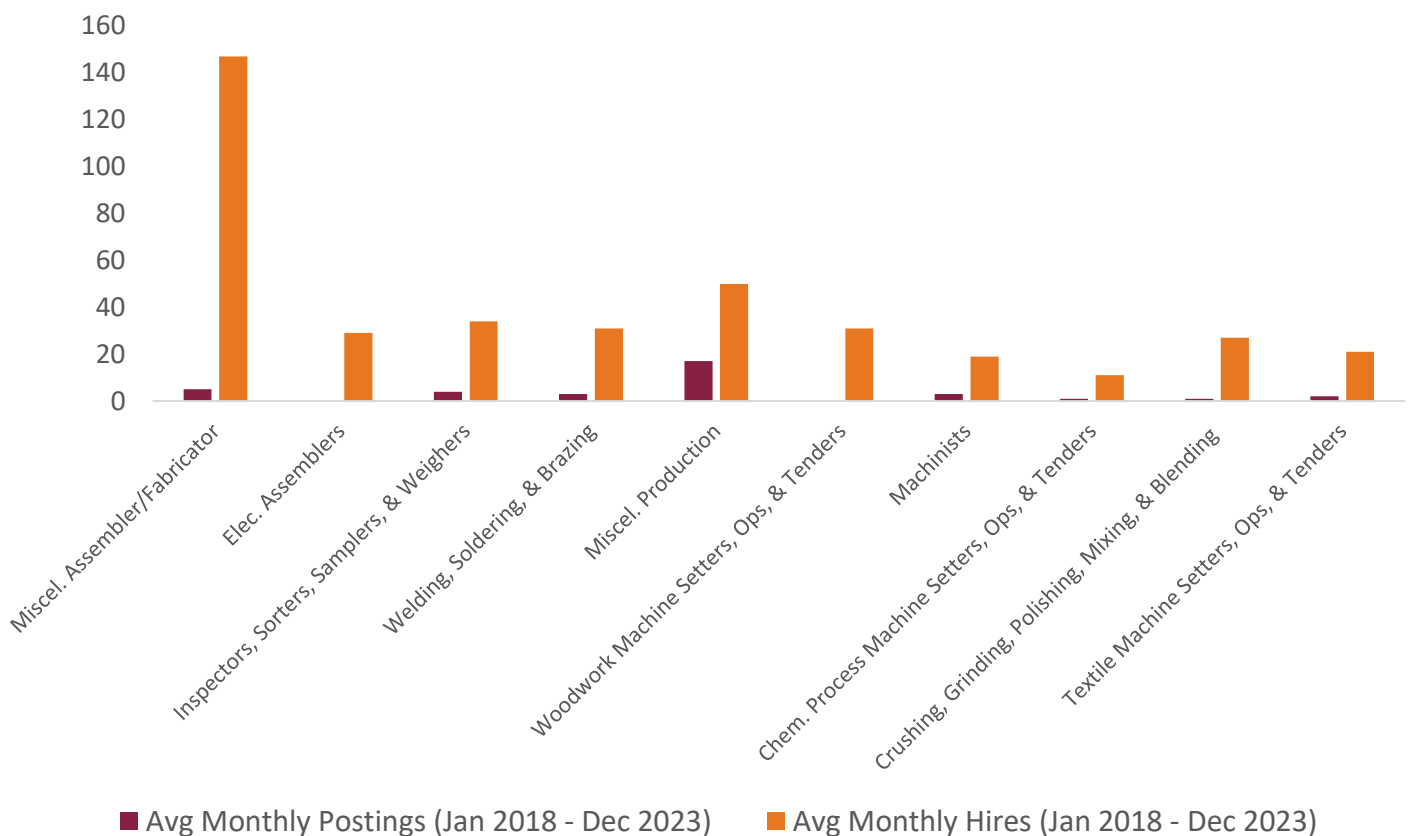
Manufacturing Industry Occupations

Top 10 Manufacturing Occupations by Employment (2023)

Occupation	Number of Jobs	Average Annual Earnings
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	3,924	\$43,309.86
Electrical, Electronics, and Electromechanical Assemblers	974	\$39,249.27
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	804	\$43,991.50
Welding, Soldering, and Brazing Workers	699	\$47,878.80
Miscellaneous Production Workers	680	\$37,359.85
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	487	\$30,667.11
Machinists	462	\$50,835.94
Chemical Processing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	382	\$50,909.29
Crushing, Grinding, Polishing, Mixing, and Blending Workers	380	\$38,215.46
Textile Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	376	\$36,698.57

Top 10 Manufacturing Occupations: Job Postings & Hires

Analyzing the average job postings against monthly hires reveals the extent to which industries actively recruit. It is evident that the manufacturing industry does not heavily depend on job postings to fill positions. This implies that there is either an abundance of qualified workers readily filling open positions, or employers are hiring individuals who are already employed elsewhere.



Manufacturing Local Resources

New River Community College

Career Studies Certificates In...

- Machine Operations
- Computerized Numerical Control
- Mechatronics Fundamentals
- Fundamentals of Welding
- Industrial Maintenance

Virginia Highlands Community College

- Applied Mechatronics Career Studies Certificates
- Welding Career Studies Certificates

Wytheville Community College

- Structural Steel Welding & Machine Tool Operations FastForward Career Certificates
- 26 Different Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) & National Coalition of Certification Center (NC3) certifications

Center for Manufacturing Excellence

Offers Training Programs For:

- Advanced Manufacturing Technician
- CNC Lathe Production Technician
- CNC Machining Center Production Technician
- Mechatronics and Industrial Automation Technician
- Quality Assurance Technician
- Leadership Development
- Lean Six Sigma Black Belt
- Lean Six Sigma Green Belt
- Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt

GENEDGE

GENEDGE is Virginia-Based and Offers Manufacturing Consultancy Services. You can learn more at genedge.org

CTE Programs

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, offered in grades 6-12, prepare students for careers in many program areas. The Trade and Industrial Education program provides students with experience in:

- Architecture
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Transportation
- Distribution
- Logistics

Please visit your local school website for more information on course availability.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs

The registered apprenticeship program helps to provide resources and certifications for businesses and individuals looking to start or join an apprenticeship program. Visit apprenticeship.gov to explore opportunities in the area.

Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing

Manufacturer-Led Membership Organization that Provides:

- Resources Support
- Opportunities for Manufacturers to Share Best Practices
- Trainings
- Job Announcement Platforms
- And More

For information on recruitment opportunities and programs to support Employed Worker Training, On-the-Job Training and other work-based learning opportunities contact the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board [Contact - New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board \(vcwnewrivermtrogers.com\)](https://www.vcwnewrivermtrogers.com)



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