

Economic Update: Devastating Unemployment

By Justin Mantle
Staff Writer

Those of you who have been keeping up with the economy these past few months may be tired of hearing all of the doom and gloom. Unfortunately, unless you are buying cheap stock, or have a very secure job, it really is doom and gloom. The growing state of Georgia has taken some recent and heavy hits in this tough economy that we have never faced before. The current unemployment rate of Georgia has reached a staggering 9.3%. This is the highest unemployment rate ever recorded by this statistic, which was first recorded in 1976. To put 9.3% unemployment into perspective, there were 189,000 jobs lost in just the month of February. Also, a good, average unemployment rate would fluctuate somewhere around 4% to ensure competition in the workforce. In a very short period of time, this tough economy has more than doubled this. This means many valuable workers are without jobs.

The small town of Franklin is not immune to the tough economy as we have seen many small businesses take

large hits, such as the closing of Jones' Sheet Metal and early retirement offered at local Plant Wansley. The major employer Franklin Aluminum has cut from three shifts, to only one. Not only have the businesses inside of Franklin had tough times, but also the cities surrounding the county. Many residents of

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the city of Atlanta saw an increase of 4.6% in its unemployment rate in just the month of February. The surrounding school systems are being forced to cut teachers jobs, some activities, and even are considering canceling some sports to help meet their new and cut budgets. Proudly, we can say that the Heard County School System does not have to worry about major financial problems. Although most of our teacher's jobs may be safe,

other professions will be hit hard.

The professions hardest hit with unemployment include manufacturing, construction, and transportation. If one of these careers was a future dream of a young high school student, I hate to bust your bubble, but you must find something new. I can promise you will not find openings in these areas, but you can plan around these problems. Start looking now for something more secure so

that you can be a step ahead of everyone else. When tough times come, it's the survival of the fittest, or in this case, the most experienced and educated. You have heard me preach time and time again, go seek higher education in a field that will actually have openings when all this ends. Be ready, because the workforce of yesterday will be nothing like the workforce of tomorrow. Prepare for the future and do not be caught by this change, but take

advantage of it. Be ready to take on the secure jobs with higher education and new abilities, not the ways of the old. One more eco-

nomics crisis tip, be very nice to your parents, because you will probably be stuck living with them for quite a while.



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