

Urban/Regional Economics

UMD Bureau of Business and Economic Research

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US and Northeast Minnesota's Fastest-Growing Occupations: 1996-2006

Chris McIntosh
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Forecasting is a common method to try to predict the future. Although it is possible to do an economic forecast for a variety of subjects, employment and occupational forecasts seem to be the most common. These forecasts allow for analyzing growth/decline over the given time period.

The first table shows the United States (average) top 15 fastest growing occupations. It is easy to see that the trends predict computer and health care occupations to grow rapidly. The computer industry holds the top three spots nationwide while the health industry has the highest count with seven occupations ranked in the top 15. Northeast Minnesota is shown for comparison. Considering the same occupations, the percentage change is lower in the Northeast for a majority of the U.S. top 15. The Northeast does, however, pull up the average for: home health aides, desktop-publishing specialists, occupational-therapy assistants, as well as aides and human-services workers.

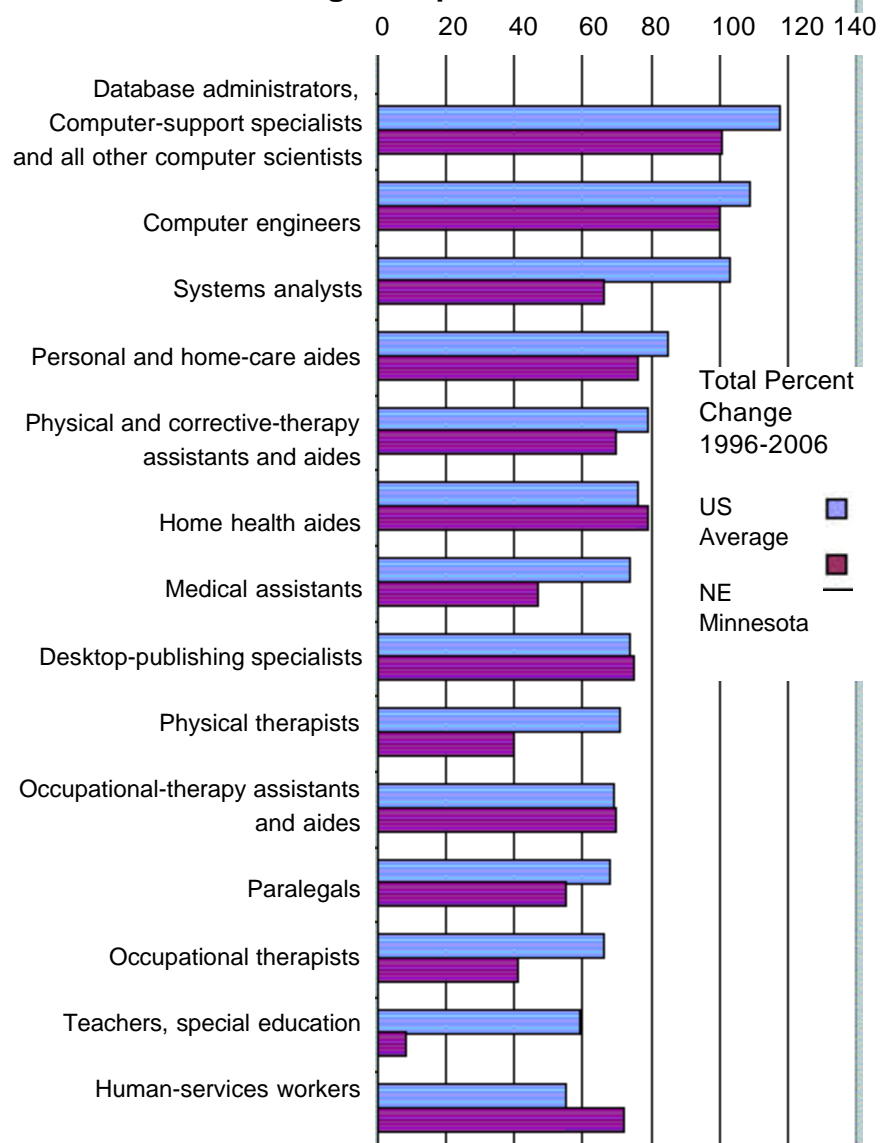
The graph illustrates the data from table one. This helps to show the differences visually. The largest difference between the U.S. and Northeast is in teachers (special education), which stands out in the graph. Notice that data-processing equipment repairer is not represented in the graph. This is due to the fact that the Northeast information was not available.

Rank	Occupation	US Average	Northeast Minnesota
1	Database administrators, Computer-support specialists and all other computer scientists	118	101
2	Computer engineers	109	100
3	Systems analysts	103	66
4	Personal and home-care aides	85	76
5	Physical and corrective-therapy assistants and aides	79	70
6	Home health aides	76	79
7	Medical assistants	74	47
8	Desktop-publishing specialists	74	75
9	Physical therapists	71	40
10	Occupational-therapy assistants and aides	69	70
11	Paralegals	68	55
12	Occupational therapists	66	41
13	Teachers, special education	59	8
14	Human-services workers	55	72
15	Data-processing equipment repairers	52	n/a

Rank	Occupation	Northeast Minnesota
1	Database administrators, Computer-support specialists and all other computer scientists	101
2	Computer engineers	100
3	Aircraft engine specialists	99
4	Aircraft pilots and flights engineers	95
5	Numerical control machine tool operators	86
6	Home health aides	79
7	Personal and home-care aides	76
8	Desktop-publishing specialists	75
9	Precision Assemblers	73
10	Screen printing machine setters	72
11	Human-services workers	72
12	Physical and corrective-therapy assistants and aides	70
13	Occupational therapy assistants and aides	70
14	Systems analysts	66
15	Photographic processing machine operators	62

Table two shows the Northeast's top 15. The top two are identical to the U.S. table. A total of nine occupations are shared between the two areas' top 15s. The other six are unique to the Northeast's list and are: aircraft engine specialists, aircraft pilots and flights engineers, numerical control machine tool operators, precision assemblers, screen printing machine setters, and photographic processing machine operators. This demonstrates that the Northeast could have a strong demand for aircraft occupations along with computer and health workers over the next several years.

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Sources:

National data from U.S. Department of Labor, reported in *The Wall Street Journal*, November 29, 1999.

Northeast Minnesota data from Minnesota Department of Economic Security, <http://www.mnworkforcecenter.org/lmi/proj/neocc.htm>

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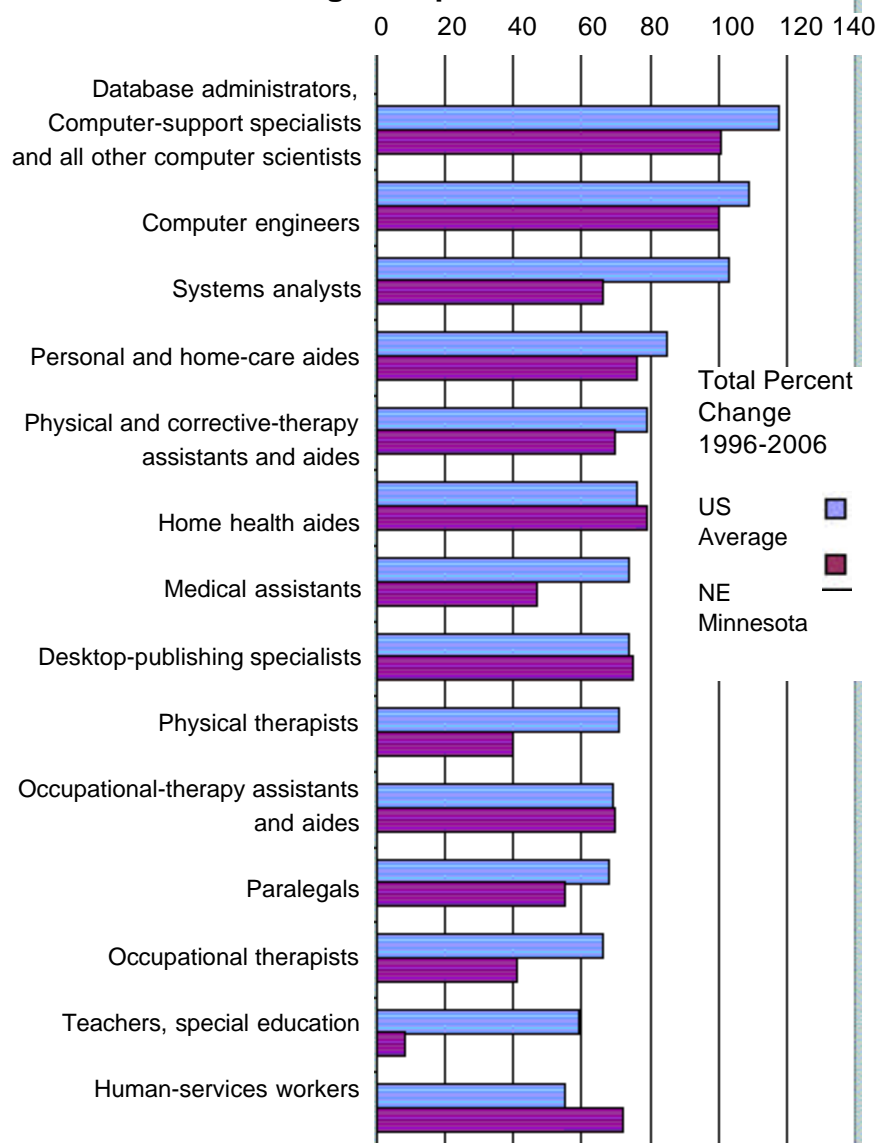
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