

ANALYSIS

Real estate's slice of O.C. jobs highest since '07

Should we thank local real estate bosses? Or reach for the antacids?

Orange County bosses in real estate-related fields employed almost 1-in-5 workers in August, the highest share of local jobs in nearly 10 years. Yes, back when local property would prove to be badly overheated.

Let's acknowledge that property-related employment can be extremely volatile work, as these industries habitually have sharp peaks and valleys. Has anyone forgotten the broad pain of last decade's busted housing bubble?

But don't forget when real estate is hot, those jobs and related spending pad the checkbooks of folks in and out of the industry. So do we celebrate ... or worry about the possibility of a brewing bubble?

State jobs data, parsed by



Jonathan Lansner
Columnist

my trusty spreadsheet, shows 256,700 people working last month in property-related fields in Orange County — construction, real estate transactions, lending, building supply, design and building services. That's almost as large as

the flock toiling at local warehouses, trucking firms and utilities — and it's bigger than all local government workers or jobs in the leisure and hospitality industry.

It adds up like this: Real estate work represented 19.5 percent of all Orange County jobs in August vs. 18.8 percent a year ago, and it is the highest slice of the job market since October 2007. Note: Since 2000, real estate's been responsible for 18 percent of all local jobs.

And it could be a glum economy if it wasn't for real estate.

Real estate bosses have been a local hiring standout, adding 2,200 jobs last month vs. a combined drop of 3,600 at all other workplaces. In the past year, real estate employment grew 7,500 jobs — 3 percent — while other Orange County jobs fell by 6,600 — a 0.5 percent dip.

Construction work is driving the real estate surge with 105,000 employed last month, up 6,100 — or 6.2 percent — in a year and the third consecutive month above 100,000. The last time this number of construction workers was employed in Orange County was a 30-month streak between 2005 and 2007.

Executives in the building trades say job growth would be higher but there aren't enough skilled construction workers to hire. With Orange County construction workers in high demand, weekly wages in the first quarter rose 9.5 percent higher

vs. a year ago.

Other real estate niches are hiring, too.

Local lenders employed 43,100 last month, up 500 in a year. Architectural and engineering services' 25,900 jobs are up 500 in a year, and these planners are usually working on future construction projects.

Building services added 300 to 32,800 jobs, while sales and leasing employment grew by 200. Only building supplies lost jobs, down 100 in a year to 10,600.

One should note that state jobs data doesn't capture many self-employed workers, a hearty part of the real estate world. But industry data suggest that transaction counts — selling and leasing of residential and commercial property — remain strong, an indication real estate's self-employed are doing well, too.

Real estate cannot sustain it-

self for very long. Countywide job growth in all industries is essential to future building, buying, selling and maintaining property.

Local real estate bosses wouldn't have added 67,700 jobs since the recession's low point if other Orange County bosses didn't hire 153,500 at the same time. But real estate's 31 percent share of the jobs' revival shows the property game's clout in this recovery.

Don't simply worry that real estate bosses are overdoing growth plans once again. Remember, there is near universal agreement that Orange County has a shortage of residential properties and our transportation infrastructure needs serious work.

Let's also ponder why the rest of Orange County's employers are currently skittish about boosting payrolls.

STATUS UPDATE



Samantha Gowen has the latest on movers and shakers in Orange County

Send items about business expansion, milestones and promotions to sgowen@scng.com

Irvine-based software company Xelleration has merged with Albuquerque-based Speridian Technologies, bringing together two information technology companies.

Terms were not disclosed.

Each company has client relations with big names in the software industry, including Microsoft and Oracle.

Founded in 2001, Xelleration, with 60 employees in Orange County and 90 worldwide, builds applications and workflow automation solutions. The company's products include a "broad range of services leveraging the entire stack of Microsoft technologies," according to Xelleration.

The companies said there would be no executive changes but there would be consolidations in processes and integration of the teams.

No downsizing is expected, a representative said Friday. Each company will retain its name and headquarters.

Speridian, with 1,100 employees, is an Oracle partner.

New ventures

Irvine-based Juice It Up!, a raw juice bar and smoothie chain, has signed a franchise deal to open two more locations in the Inland Empire. Marine Corps veteran Ken Hardy and his wife, Kristina, used Juice It Up's Vet-Fran Platinum Program, which discounts initial franchise fees 60 percent. Operating under MaLa Enterprises, the couple will open the brand's fourth Fontana location in late 2017.

Ace High Casino Rentals has opened in Garden Grove. The company, founded in



COURTESY OF JUICE IT UP

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EDUCATION



COURTESY OF CUI

The number of registered nurses is expected to grow to 3.2 million in 2024 from 2.7 million in 2014, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Concordia University Irvine expands its nursing program as demand grows

By **Samantha Gowen**

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As demand for registered nurses grows in California and across the United States, at least one university in Orange County is expanding its nursing program.

Concordia University Irvine is growing its Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing, adding 24 student spaces to its fall and summer cohorts. The school got approval this summer from the Board of Registered Nursing. This is the second expansion for the nursing school; the first expanded cohort of 64 students — up from 40 students — began classes Aug. 21.

The accelerated program is designed for people who already hold a bachelor's degree.

The program allows students to earn another bachelor's degree of Science in Nursing, or BSN, in 11 to 18 months. Students in the CUI program are required to complete 765 hours in clinical settings and can complete the courses in as few as 15 months.

A survey in the fall of 2016 showed 89 percent of California hospitals reported at least moderate demand for registered nurses, according to UC San Francisco, a 48 percentage point increase compared with the fall of 2013.

The RN workforce is expected to grow to 3.2 million in 2024 from 2.7 million in 2014, an increase of 439,300 or 16 percent, according to data compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The bureau also projects a need for 649,100 replacement nurses, bringing the total job openings

for nurses to 1.09 million by 2024.

The nursing program expansion at Concordia also comes with the addition of staff and classroom space at the Park Place campus in Irvine.

The school is adding full-time and adjunct clinical faculty, two new classrooms, another clinical skills and simulation lab and more conference rooms and office space.

"The ability to enroll more qualified applicants allows Concordia University Irvine to replenish the pool of exceptional nurses who are retiring and leaving the profession," said Concordia University Irvine Assistant Dean and Director of the Nursing Program Cheryl Smythe-Padgham.

A total of 127 units are required for the BSN degree.

as a temporary judge for the Orange County Superior Court. He also is an adjunct professor of Law at Pacific West College of Law.

Hogiadi "Hogi" Kurniawan has joined the board of directors of Orange County Child Abuse Prevention Center. Kurniawan is a senior audit manager for Haskell & White LLP in Irvine. Before Haskell

& White, Kurniawan worked for a Big Four firm serving public and private companies.

Milestones

Dr. Cynthia Keifer has been awarded Trident University International's Teaching Excellence Award for Winter 2017. Keifer joined Trident in 2015 and is a professor in Trident's Glenn R. Jones College of Business in Cypress.

M.C. Sungaila, a partner at Haynes and Boone Costa Mesa office, has been recognized by the Orange County Women Lawyers Association as attorney of the year. In a statement, the firm said the award recognized Sungaila's lifelong dedication to representing and securing important rights for women and girls both nationally and internationally.

Franchise owner Judy Brady in Newport Beach has earned the Assisting Hands Home Care 2017 franchisee of the year. Brady also was awarded the Best Customer Service Award and Caregiver of the Year Award for the Southwest Region by Assisting Hands Home Care's national office.

John Barry and Associates Management Engineers Inc. is celebrating 63 years in Newport Beach. Founded in 1954 by John Barry, JBA specializes in industrial engineering, office and industrial facility planning, and move coordination.

ica. This is the brand's sixth location in Orange County, joining stores in Santa Ana, Costa Mesa, Orange, Westminster and Seal Beach. For more information, call 949-203-1700. To view a service menu, go to ubreakifix.com.

On board

Dan Jacobson has been appointed to the California Board of Accountancy by the speaker of the California Assembly. Jacobson has practiced civil litigation law in California since 1988. He has served on the Board of Governors of the California Insurance Guarantee Association and



Jacobson

Status Update is compiled by contributing writer *Karen Levin* and edited by *Business Editor Samantha Gowen*. Submit items to sgowen@scng.com. High-resolution images also can be submitted. Allow at least one week for publication. Items are edited for length and clarity.

DILBERT: By Scott Adams

