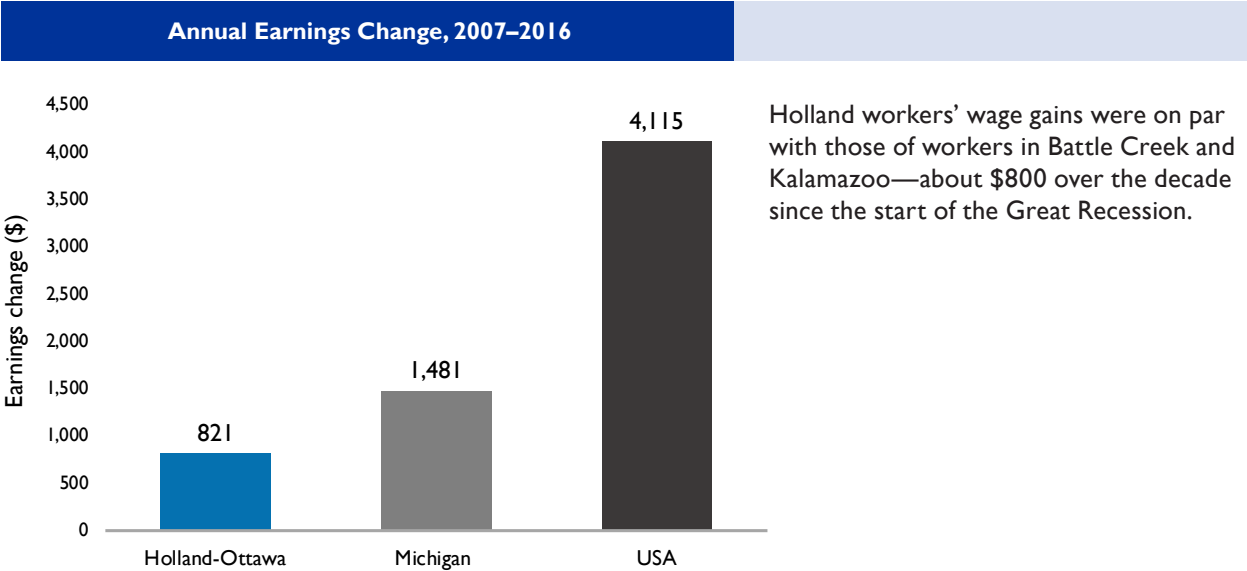


HOLLAND—OTTAWA COUNTY

The Holland—Ottawa County MSA, in terms of occupations and wages, has performed fairly well in the decade since the Great Recession struck. It is troubling, however, that, as of 2016, key industries such as construction and production were still in the red, as shown in the figure just below, meaning jobs in those industries have not recovered to where they were at the beginning of the recession in 2007.

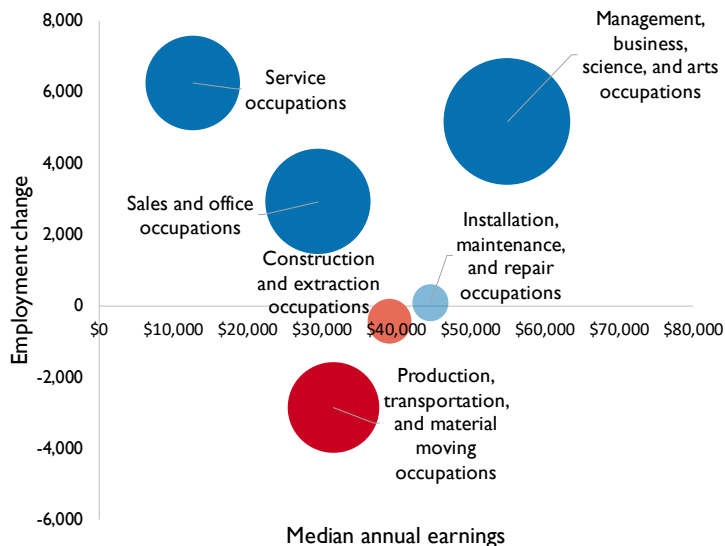


Architecture and engineering jobs were the largest-growing occupation (figure above), but food preparation occupations were the second-largest, which seems an odd contrast: the first category represents a shift toward the knowledge economy, while the second comprises lower-skilled occupations. Production occupations declined during this period, and that is also odd, considering that manufacturing reflects 30 percent of Ottawa County's employment.



SOURCE: U.S. Census American Community Survey.

Employment Change and Median Annual Earnings, 2007–2016



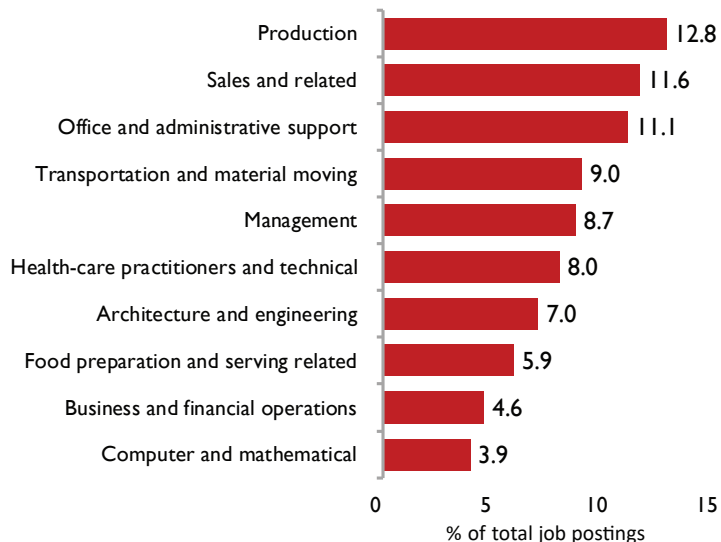
Flat wages may explain why there seems to be little connection between occupational growth and median wages among Ottawa County industries.

Wages increased modestly in the area compared to the state of Michigan and the nation as a whole. These data are not adjusted for inflation, which suggests that wages may be declining in real terms as other costs increase.

Flat wages may explain the bubble figure (above), which seems to show little connection between occupational growth and median wages for those occupations. High- and low-wage occupations grew, while mid-wage jobs declined in the area from 2007 to 2016.

According to Labor Insight, a job-market data program from Burning Glass Technologies, job postings in 2017 were largest for production occupations (figure below). These occupations declined from 2007 to 2016, which suggests that the job posting data either reflect replacement for workers leaving those occupations or employers catching up after years of decline.

Job Postings for 2017 (%)



Production jobs led the way in 2017 in share of job postings, despite—or perhaps because of—having lost the most employment share of any industry (see top figure, p. 12).

SOURCE: Burning Glass Technologies.