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USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS: SECOND QUARTER 2003

Median weekly earnings of the nation's 100.4 million full-time wage and salary workers were \$616 in the second quarter of 2003, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. This was 1.8 percent higher than a year earlier, compared with a gain of 2.2 percent in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) over the same period.

Data on usual earnings are collected as part of the Current Population Survey, a nationwide sample survey of households in which respondents are asked, among other things, how much each wage and salary worker usually earns. (See the Explanatory Note.) Highlights from the second-quarter data are:

—Women who usually worked full time had median earnings of \$547 per week, or 79.0 percent of the \$692 median for men. The female-to-male earnings ratios were higher among blacks (90.6 percent) and Hispanics (87.5 percent) than among whites (78.8 percent) or Asians (79.8 percent). (See table 1.)

—Median earnings for black men working at full-time jobs were \$540 per week, 75.8 percent of the median for white men (\$712). The difference was much less among women, as black women's median earnings (\$489) were 87.2 percent of those for their white counterparts (\$561). Overall, median earnings of Hispanics who worked full time (\$430) were lower than those of blacks (\$509), whites (\$631), and Asians (\$678). (See table 1.)

—Among men, the highest median weekly earnings were for those age 45 to 54 (\$854). Among women, the age groups with the highest earnings were 45 to 54 years (\$603) and 55 to 64 years (\$606). (See table 2.)

—Among the major occupational groups, persons employed full time in managerial, professional, and related occupations had the highest median weekly earnings—\$1,048 for men and \$753 for women. Men and women in service jobs earned the least. (See table 3.)

—Full-time workers age 25 and over without a high school diploma had median weekly earnings of \$394, compared with \$547 for high school graduates (no college) and \$969 for college graduates holding at least a bachelor's degree. Among college graduates with advanced degrees (professional or master's degree and above), the highest-earning 10 percent of male workers made \$2,698 or more per week, compared with \$1,794 or more for their female counterparts. (See table 4.)

Explanatory Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides the basic information on the labor force, employment, and unemployment. The survey is conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau from a scientifically selected national sample of about 60,000 households, with coverage in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The earnings data are collected from one-quarter of the CPS monthly sample and are limited to wages and salaries. The data, therefore, exclude self-employment income.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

Reliability

Statistics based on the CPS are subject to both sampling and nonsampling error. When a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed, there is a chance that the sample estimates may differ from the "true" population values they represent. The exact difference, or *sampling error*, varies depending on the particular sample selected, and this variability is measured by the standard error of the estimate. There is about a 90-percent chance, or level of confidence, that an estimate based on a sample will differ by no more than 1.6 standard errors from the "true" population value because of sampling error. BLS analyses are generally conducted at the 90-percent level of confidence.

The CPS data also are affected by *nonsampling error*. Nonsampling error can occur for many reasons, including the failure to sample a segment of the population, inability to obtain information for all respondents in the sample, inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information, and errors made in the collection or processing of the data.

For a full discussion of the reliability of data from the CPS and information on estimating standard errors, see the "Explanatory Notes and Estimates of Error" section of *Employment and Earnings*.

Definitions

The principal definitions used in connection with the earnings series are described briefly below.

Usual weekly earnings. Data represent earnings before taxes and other deductions and include any overtime pay, commissions, or tips usually received (at the main job in the case of multiple jobholders.) Prior to 1994, respondents were asked how much they usually earned per week. Since January 1994, respondents have been asked to identify the easiest way for them to report earnings (hourly, weekly, biweekly, twice monthly, monthly, annually, other) and how much they usually earn in the reported time period. Earnings reported on a basis other than weekly are converted to a weekly equivalent. The term "usual" is as perceived by the respondent. If the respondent asks for a definition of usual,

interviewers are instructed to define the term as more than half the weeks worked during the past 4 or 5 months.

Medians (and other quantiles) of weekly earnings. The median (or upper limit of the second quartile) is the amount which divides a given earnings distribution into two equal groups, one having earnings above the median and the other having earnings below the median. Ten percent of a given distribution have earnings below the upper limit of the first decile (90 percent have higher earnings); 25 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the first quartile (75 percent have higher earnings); 75 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the third quartile (25 percent have higher earnings); and 90 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the ninth decile (10 percent have higher earnings).

The estimating procedure places each reported or calculated weekly earnings value into \$50-wide intervals which are centered around multiples of \$50. The actual value is estimated through the linear interpolation of the interval in which the quantile boundary lies.

Over-the-year changes in the medians (and other quantile boundaries) for specific groups may not necessarily be consistent with the movements estimated for the overall quantile boundary. The most common reasons for this possible anomaly are: (1) There could be a change in the relative weights of the subgroups. For example, the medians of both 16-to-24 year olds and those 25 years and over may rise; but if the lower-earning 16-to-24 group accounts for a greatly increased share of the total, the overall median could actually fall. (2) There could be a large change in the shape of the distribution of reported earnings, particularly near a quantile boundary. This could be caused by survey observations that are clustered at rounded values, e.g., \$250, \$300, \$400. An estimate lying in a \$50-wide centered interval containing such a cluster or "spike" tends to change more slowly than one in other intervals.

Wage and salary workers. Workers who receive wages, salaries, commissions, tips, payment in kind, or piece rates. The group includes employees in both the private and public sectors but, for the purposes of the earnings series, excludes all self-employed persons, regardless of whether or not their businesses are incorporated.

Full-time workers. Workers who usually work 35 hours or more per week at their sole or principal job.

Part-time workers. Workers who usually work fewer than 35 hours per week at their sole or principal job.

Constant dollars. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) is used to convert current dollars to constant (1982) dollars.

Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. This refers to persons who identified themselves in the enumeration process as being Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race.

Table 1. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

Characteristic	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings			
	II 2002	II 2003	In current dollars		In constant (1982) dollars	
			II 2002	II 2003	II 2002	II 2003
SEX AND AGE						
Total, 16 years and over	100,482	100,442	\$605	\$616	\$325	\$323
Men, 16 years and over	56,730	56,111	677	692	364	363
16 to 24 years	6,403	6,206	398	391	214	205
25 years and over	50,327	49,905	732	743	393	390
Women, 16 years and over	43,752	44,332	520	547	279	287
16 to 24 years	4,955	4,835	355	366	191	192
25 years and over	38,797	39,497	559	582	300	306
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX						
White ¹	82,529	82,145	622	631	334	331
Men	47,794	47,028	703	712	377	374
Women	34,735	35,117	534	561	287	295
Black or African American ¹	12,172	11,879	500	509	269	267
Men	5,819	5,471	532	540	285	284
Women	6,353	6,408	469	489	252	257
Asian ¹	4,657	4,242	648	678	348	356
Men	2,501	2,414	756	759	406	399
Women	2,155	1,828	552	606	296	318
Hispanic or Latino	13,202	13,624	420	430	226	226
Men	8,341	8,597	450	456	242	239
Women	4,861	5,027	391	399	210	210

¹ Beginning in 2003, persons who selected this race group only; persons who selected more than one race group are not included. Prior to 2003, persons who reported more than one race group were included in the group they identified as the main race.

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African

American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Beginning in January 2003, data reflect revised population controls used in the household survey.

Table 2. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by age, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex, second quarter 2003 averages, not seasonally adjusted

Age, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total		Men		Women	
	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings
TOTAL						
16 years and over	100,442	\$616	56,111	\$692	44,332	\$547
16 to 24 years	11,041	380	6,206	391	4,835	366
16 to 19 years	1,724	307	980	317	744	292
20 to 24 years	9,317	396	5,225	406	4,091	384
25 years and over	89,401	659	49,905	743	39,497	582
25 to 54 years	76,297	656	42,841	735	33,457	581
25 to 34 years	24,810	588	14,267	616	10,543	542
35 to 44 years	27,101	687	15,376	775	11,726	589
45 to 54 years	24,386	726	13,198	854	11,188	603
55 years and over	13,104	685	7,064	798	6,040	591
55 to 64 years	11,300	710	6,072	833	5,228	606
65 years and over	1,804	537	992	622	812	427
White¹						
16 years and over	82,145	631	47,028	712	35,117	561
16 to 24 years	9,125	383	5,244	394	3,881	368
25 years and over	73,020	679	41,784	766	31,236	591
25 to 54 years	61,844	676	35,695	759	26,149	590
55 years and over	11,176	698	6,089	821	5,087	597
Black or African American¹						
16 years and over	11,879	509	5,471	540	6,408	489
16 to 24 years	1,249	363	593	368	656	354
25 years and over	10,630	534	4,879	584	5,752	507
25 to 54 years	9,397	527	4,309	580	5,087	503
55 years and over	1,234	582	569	602	664	553
Asian¹						
16 years and over	4,242	678	2,414	759	1,828	606
16 to 24 years	324	404	191	391	133	435
25 years and over	3,918	725	2,223	804	1,695	622
25 to 54 years	3,421	727	1,924	796	1,497	638
55 years and over	497	672	299	848	198	521
Hispanic or Latino						
16 years and over	13,624	430	8,597	456	5,027	399
16 to 24 years	2,152	341	1,367	350	785	328
25 years and over	11,472	464	7,230	488	4,242	417
25 to 54 years	10,519	458	6,643	482	3,875	416
55 years and over	953	514	587	567	367	447

¹ Beginning in 2003, persons who selected this race group only; persons who selected more than one race group are not included. Prior to 2003, persons who reported more than one race group were included in the group they identified as the main race.

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African

American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Beginning in January 2003, data reflect revised population controls used in the household survey.

Table 3. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by occupation and sex, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

Occupation and sex	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings	
	II 2002	II 2003	II 2002	II 2003
TOTAL				
Managerial, professional, and related occupations	35,573	35,730	\$853	\$877
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	14,868	14,798	912	956
Professional and related occupations	20,705	20,932	816	837
Service occupations	13,008	13,184	397	398
Sales and office occupations	24,965	25,396	521	545
Sales and related occupations	9,886	9,986	582	598
Office and administrative support occupations	15,080	15,410	510	522
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	10,775	10,891	592	611
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	851	736	346	357
Construction and extraction occupations	6,063	5,889	590	598
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	3,861	4,265	655	668
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	16,161	15,241	510	510
Production occupations	9,359	8,600	502	504
Transportation and material moving occupations	6,802	6,641	520	517
Men				
Managerial, professional, and related occupations	18,103	17,666	1,001	1,048
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	8,456	8,124	1,077	1,140
Professional and related occupations	9,648	9,542	952	988
Service occupations	6,582	6,568	450	451
Sales and office occupations	9,367	9,619	661	662
Sales and related occupations	5,501	5,676	740	733
Office and administrative support occupations	3,867	3,943	594	583
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	10,239	10,433	599	616
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	661	552	366	379
Construction and extraction occupations	5,901	5,770	591	600
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	3,677	4,111	659	669
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	12,437	11,825	562	562
Production occupations	6,503	6,041	572	573
Transportation and material moving occupations	5,935	5,784	548	547
Women				
Managerial, professional, and related occupations	17,469	18,065	729	753
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	6,412	6,674	746	786
Professional and related occupations	11,057	11,391	717	734
Service occupations	6,425	6,616	357	365
Sales and office occupations	15,598	15,777	482	502
Sales and related occupations	4,385	4,310	420	455
Office and administrative support occupations	11,213	11,468	495	512
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	535	458	413	454
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	189	185	282	327
Construction and extraction occupations	162	119	518	535
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	184	154	529	656
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	3,724	3,416	395	399
Production occupations	2,857	2,560	388	399
Transportation and material moving occupations	868	857	420	396

NOTE: Occupations reflect the introduction of the 2002 Census occupational classification system derived from the 2000 Standard Occupational Classification system into the Current Population Survey.

Beginning in January 2003, data reflect revised population controls used in the household survey.

Table 4. Quartiles and selected deciles of usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, second quarter 2003 averages, not seasonally adjusted

Characteristic	Number of workers (in thousands)	Upper limit of:				
		First decile	First quartile	Second quartile (median)	Third quartile	Ninth decile
SEX, RACE, AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY						
Total, 16 years and over	100,442	\$301	\$411	\$616	\$940	\$1,413
Men	56,111	321	452	692	1,057	1,582
Women	44,332	284	378	547	803	1,151
White ¹	82,145	304	419	631	964	1,447
Men	47,028	325	467	712	1,096	1,622
Women	35,117	286	384	561	814	1,163
Black or African American ¹	11,879	283	369	509	759	1,043
Men	5,471	298	395	540	785	1,055
Women	6,408	273	345	489	732	1,037
Asian ¹	4,242	313	434	678	1,096	1,610
Men	2,414	334	472	759	1,223	1,829
Women	1,828	297	402	606	949	1,310
Hispanic or Latino	13,624	255	315	430	644	930
Men	8,597	273	330	456	676	972
Women	5,027	237	297	399	601	862
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
Total, 25 years and over	89,401	318	445	659	988	1,463
Less than a high school diploma	8,788	246	301	394	547	753
High school graduates, no college	27,157	303	399	547	768	1,029
Some college or associate degree	24,256	338	457	638	894	1,219
Bachelor's degree and higher	29,201	483	671	969	1,431	2,023
Bachelor's degree only	19,253	461	630	902	1,329	1,884
Advanced degree	9,948	573	776	1,137	1,646	2,308
Men, 25 years and over	49,905	356	495	743	1,128	1,656
Less than a high school diploma	5,880	271	326	437	604	837
High school graduates, no college	15,122	344	449	621	880	1,166
Some college or associate degree	12,658	391	524	740	999	1,384
Bachelor's degree and higher	16,244	517	753	1,134	1,635	2,310
Bachelor's degree only	10,705	496	712	1,045	1,486	2,090
Advanced degree	5,539	597	878	1,346	1,912	2,698
Women, 25 years and over	39,497	295	399	582	840	1,196
Less than a high school diploma	2,908	223	274	322	416	566
High school graduates, no college	12,034	280	355	474	626	834
Some college or associate degree	11,598	308	404	555	755	1,004
Bachelor's degree and higher	12,957	454	610	841	1,166	1,617
Bachelor's degree only	8,548	427	581	774	1,079	1,512
Advanced degree	4,409	525	718	968	1,318	1,794

¹ Beginning in 2003, persons who selected this race group only; persons who selected more than one race group are not included. Prior to 2003, persons who reported more than one race group were included in the group they identified as the main race.

NOTE: Ten percent of all full-time wage and salary workers earn less than the upper limit of the first decile; 25 percent earn less than the upper limit of the first quartile; 50 percent earn less than the upper limit of the second quartile, or median; 75 percent earn less than the upper limit of the

third quartile; and 90 percent earn less than the upper limit of the ninth decile. Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Beginning in January 2003, data reflect revised population controls used in the household survey.

Table 5. Median usual weekly earnings of part-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

Characteristic	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings	
	II 2002	II 2003	II 2002	II 2003
SEX AND AGE				
Total, 16 years and over	21,356	21,721	\$189	\$193
Men, 16 years and over	6,797	6,975	181	188
16 to 24 years	3,508	3,490	149	148
25 years and over	3,288	3,484	227	241
Women, 16 years and over	14,559	14,746	193	196
16 to 24 years	4,438	4,430	138	143
25 years and over	10,121	10,316	228	228
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX				
White ¹	18,395	18,388	190	195
Men	5,665	5,729	177	186
Women	12,729	12,659	196	199
Black or African American ¹	1,932	2,068	188	185
Men	703	768	205	194
Women	1,229	1,300	178	180
Asian ¹	817	724	193	206
Men	337	242	203	206
Women	481	482	186	205
Hispanic or Latino	2,363	2,512	182	185
Men	818	996	192	209
Women	1,544	1,516	178	170

¹ Beginning in 2003, persons who selected this race group only; persons who selected more than one race group are not included. Prior to 2003, persons who reported more than one race group were included in the group they identified as the main race.

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African

American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Beginning in January 2003, data reflect revised population controls used in the household survey.