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USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS: SECOND QUARTER 2005

Median weekly earnings of the nation's 103.3 million full-time wage and salary workers were \$643 in the second quarter of 2005, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. This was 0.6 percent higher than a year earlier, compared with a gain of 3.0 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 \$580 per week, or 81.3 percent of the \$713 median for men. The female-to-male earnings ratios were higher among Hispanics or Latinos (89.7 percent) and blacks (86.2 percent) than among Asians (82.0 percent) or whites (80.6 percent). (See table 1.)

—Median earnings for black men working at full-time jobs were \$565 per week, 77.2 percent of the median for white men (\$732). The difference was less among women, as black women's median earnings (\$487) were 82.5 percent of those for their white counterparts (\$590). Overall, median earnings of Hispanics or Latinos who worked full time (\$473) were lower than those of blacks (\$518), whites (\$663), and Asians (\$743). (See table 1.)

—Among men, those age 45 to 54 and age 55 to 64 had the highest median weekly earnings, \$848 and \$841, respectively. Among women, earnings also were highest for 45- to 54-year-olds and 55- to 64-year-olds, \$636 and \$624, respectively. (See table 2.)

—Among the major occupational groups, persons employed full time in managerial, professional, and related occupations had the highest median weekly earnings—\$1,089 for men and \$805 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 \$412, compared with \$584 for high school graduates (no college) and \$996 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 \$2,888 or more per week, compared with \$1,914 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 2004	II 2005	In current dollars		In constant (1982) dollars	
			II 2004	II 2005	II 2004	II 2005
SEX AND AGE						
Total, 16 years and over	101,300	103,332	\$639	\$643	\$326	\$319
Men, 16 years and over	57,034	58,242	714	713	364	354
16 to 24 years	6,272	6,511	397	407	203	202
25 years and over	50,763	51,730	763	762	389	378
Women, 16 years and over	44,266	45,090	572	580	292	288
16 to 24 years	4,691	4,708	370	374	189	186
25 years and over	39,575	40,382	601	608	307	301
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX						
White	82,756	83,903	655	663	334	329
Men	47,688	48,487	729	732	372	363
Women	35,067	35,416	583	590	298	293
Black or African American	12,014	12,293	536	518	274	257
Men	5,669	5,882	598	565	305	280
Women	6,344	6,411	504	487	257	241
Asian	4,328	4,697	720	743	368	369
Men	2,404	2,580	807	810	412	402
Women	1,924	2,118	653	664	333	329
Hispanic or Latino	14,324	14,817	451	473	230	235
Men	9,163	9,575	477	487	244	242
Women	5,160	5,242	414	437	211	217

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 2005, 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 2005 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	103,332	\$643	58,242	\$713	45,090	\$580
16 to 24 years	11,219	393	6,511	407	4,708	374
16 to 19 years	1,718	311	995	319	723	300
20 to 24 years	9,501	408	5,516	421	3,985	389
25 years and over	92,113	688	51,730	762	40,382	608
25 to 54 years	77,459	685	43,812	756	33,647	608
25 to 34 years	24,861	604	14,471	628	10,390	574
35 to 44 years	27,101	728	15,537	804	11,564	620
45 to 54 years	25,497	743	13,803	848	11,694	636
55 years and over	14,654	707	7,919	806	6,735	605
55 to 64 years	12,761	732	6,904	841	5,857	624
65 years and over	1,893	534	1,015	593	878	499
White						
16 years and over	83,903	663	48,487	732	35,416	590
16 to 24 years	9,124	403	5,398	418	3,726	383
25 years and over	74,779	710	43,089	785	31,690	619
25 to 54 years	62,515	706	36,320	776	26,195	619
55 years and over	12,264	729	6,769	849	5,495	615
Black or African American						
16 years and over	12,293	518	5,882	565	6,411	487
16 to 24 years	1,406	327	744	331	662	323
25 years and over	10,887	565	5,138	602	5,749	511
25 to 54 years	9,458	564	4,468	599	4,990	512
55 years and over	1,429	575	670	621	759	498
Asian						
16 years and over	4,697	743	2,580	810	2,118	664
16 to 24 years	274	437	161	459	113	384
25 years and over	4,423	765	2,418	841	2,005	677
25 to 54 years	3,742	779	2,086	856	1,656	687
55 years and over	681	687	332	742	349	627
Hispanic or Latino						
16 years and over	14,817	473	9,575	487	5,242	437
16 to 24 years	2,261	360	1,555	361	706	359
25 years and over	12,556	496	8,020	511	4,536	459
25 to 54 years	11,402	494	7,333	509	4,069	456
55 years and over	1,154	522	687	543	467	492

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 2005, 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 2004	II 2005	II 2004	II 2005
TOTAL				
Managerial, professional, and related occupations	36,217	36,148	\$912	\$926
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	14,828	14,664	952	979
Professional and related occupations	21,389	21,484	882	894
Service occupations	13,847	14,217	409	406
Sales and office occupations	24,846	25,379	557	577
Sales and related occupations	9,899	10,460	616	624
Office and administrative support occupations	14,947	14,918	525	550
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	11,157	12,337	618	616
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	768	735	367	374
Construction and extraction occupations	6,090	7,061	595	595
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	4,299	4,542	707	692
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	15,233	15,250	523	546
Production occupations	8,496	8,373	520	552
Transportation and material moving occupations	6,737	6,878	528	536
Men				
Managerial, professional, and related occupations	17,976	17,936	1,073	1,089
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	8,183	8,131	1,134	1,144
Professional and related occupations	9,793	9,805	1,046	1,054
Service occupations	7,012	6,937	474	473
Sales and office occupations	9,435	9,623	664	684
Sales and related occupations	5,601	5,806	753	744
Office and administrative support occupations	3,835	3,817	585	608
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	10,669	11,793	623	621
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	632	575	382	402
Construction and extraction occupations	5,963	6,873	596	599
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	4,073	4,344	711	693
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	11,942	11,952	577	593
Production occupations	6,072	6,026	590	607
Transportation and material moving occupations	5,871	5,926	561	580
Women				
Managerial, professional, and related occupations	18,241	18,211	782	805
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	6,645	6,533	810	838
Professional and related occupations	11,596	11,679	768	785
Service occupations	6,835	7,281	369	371
Sales and office occupations	15,411	15,755	509	523
Sales and related occupations	4,298	4,655	465	495
Office and administrative support occupations	11,112	11,101	516	531
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	488	545	476	438
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	136	160	330	333
Construction and extraction occupations	127	188	509	406
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	225	197	588	659
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	3,291	3,298	405	409
Production occupations	2,424	2,347	407	417
Transportation and material moving occupations	867	951	402	391

NOTE: Beginning in January 2005, 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 2005 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	103,332	\$307	\$424	\$643	\$981	\$1,490
Men	58,242	328	475	713	1,094	1,662
Women	45,090	290	389	580	854	1,243
White	83,903	314	441	663	1,009	1,535
Men	48,487	337	487	732	1,130	1,731
Women	35,416	294	400	590	867	1,272
Black or African American	12,293	285	358	518	762	1,063
Men	5,882	297	389	565	799	1,139
Women	6,411	277	334	487	726	1,015
Asian	4,697	318	484	743	1,141	1,742
Men	2,580	332	518	810	1,245	1,885
Women	2,118	304	435	664	972	1,434
Hispanic or Latino	14,817	272	329	473	686	1,024
Men	9,575	282	345	487	719	1,083
Women	5,242	247	311	437	630	932
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
Total, 25 years and over	92,113	327	468	688	1,028	1,550
Less than a high school diploma	9,091	252	310	412	583	808
High school graduates, no college ¹	27,859	309	408	584	811	1,105
Some college or associate degree	25,100	344	481	661	938	1,284
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	30,062	492	691	996	1,510	2,103
Bachelor's degree only	19,728	460	636	920	1,366	1,913
Advanced degree	10,335	612	830	1,174	1,758	2,448
Men, 25 years and over	51,730	365	512	762	1,153	1,749
Less than a high school diploma	6,153	280	339	456	621	886
High school graduates, no college ¹	16,331	349	478	654	908	1,210
Some college or associate degree	12,969	395	548	754	1,063	1,451
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	16,277	539	771	1,150	1,754	2,411
Bachelor's degree only	10,527	498	719	1,050	1,603	2,204
Advanced degree	5,750	653	925	1,358	1,944	2,888
Women, 25 years and over	40,382	302	411	608	890	1,291
Less than a high school diploma	2,938	218	274	343	450	606
High school graduates, no college ¹	11,527	286	358	491	667	883
Some college or associate degree	12,131	312	420	583	797	1,074
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	13,785	461	627	873	1,242	1,730
Bachelor's degree only	9,201	428	588	800	1,131	1,561
Advanced degree	4,585	575	753	1,013	1,437	1,914

¹ Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent.

² Includes persons with bachelor's, master's, professional, and doctoral degrees.

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 2005, 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 2004	II 2005	II 2004	II 2005
SEX AND AGE				
Total, 16 years and over	21,817	21,891	\$195	\$204
Men, 16 years and over	6,860	6,962	178	194
16 to 24 years	3,558	3,339	150	152
25 years and over	3,302	3,623	226	245
Women, 16 years and over	14,957	14,929	203	209
16 to 24 years	4,573	4,633	145	151
25 years and over	10,384	10,296	237	245
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX				
White	18,489	18,479	197	205
Men	5,702	5,839	178	192
Women	12,787	12,640	205	211
Black or African American	1,953	2,120	192	201
Men	663	697	183	206
Women	1,290	1,423	197	197
Asian	781	792	193	197
Men	291	256	183	189
Women	490	536	197	201
Hispanic or Latino	2,420	2,506	194	201
Men	848	868	189	209
Women	1,571	1,637	197	196

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 2005, data reflect revised population controls used in the household survey.