

The October Review

The impact of globalization in several of its manifestations—mainly economic, political, and cultural—continues to receive a great deal of attention. The interconnectedness of the world's economies, a recurring theme in the journalism, research, and policymaking communities, underlies, to some extent, the subjects of the three articles in this month's *Review*.

Carol Rowan and Sonya Wahi-Miller find that prices paid for imports into the United States rose in 2006 for the fifth consecutive year, influenced once again by increasing energy prices. Geopolitical instability and supply concerns drove energy prices higher for the first 8 months of the year, before they receded. Import prices for industrial metals and for iron and steel remained high in 2006, due in part to strong international demand. The weakening of the U.S. dollar in relation to the Euro and other European currencies had an impact on import prices for capital and consumer goods. Prices of U.S. exports had their largest rise in nearly two decades, led by increases in corn and soybean prices.

The Midwest region of the United States has long been a center for an industry with a global reach, both productively and symbolically: the manufacture of automobiles. Benjamin Collins, Thomas McDonald, and Jay A. Mousa point out that employment in the complementary auto parts manufacturing sector is roughly 3 times larger than the auto manufacturing sector. After showing strong-to-modest job gains in the 1990s, the auto parts manufacturing industry has suffered steep declines in both em-

ployment and wages. The increased penetration into auto parts production from countries such as Canada, Japan, and China are contributors to the domestic decline.

The influence of U.S. culture around the world has long been a subject of heated debate. Films, television shows, and music produced domestically routinely reach global audiences. The disproportionate concentration of the U.S. creative arts industries in New York City and Los Angeles is the subject of the article by Michael L. Dolfman, Richard J. Holden, and Solidelle Fortier Wasser, who argue that the clustering of resources for those industries in those two locations magnifies their influence.

Profile of health educators

Health educators promote wellness and healthy lifestyles. Covering a wide range of topics, these workers teach individuals and communities about behaviors that encourage healthy living and prevent diseases and other problems.

Health educators held 57,900 jobs in the United States in May 2006. Median annual wages of health educators were \$41,330. The highest earning 10 percent made more than \$72,500, and the lowest earning 10 percent made less than \$24,750.

The specific duties of health educators vary by work setting, but whether they work in a hospital, school, business, or other setting, all health educators use similar skills and tools. In general, health educators begin by assessing their audience and planning a program that suits its needs. Then, they implement the program and evaluate its success.

For more information about this occupation, see "Health educators: Working for wellness," by Colleen Teixeira, *Occupational Outlook Quarterly*, summer 2007.

Comparing metropolitan area pay by occupation

Average pay in the San Francisco metropolitan area in 2006 was 19 percent above the national average, and was the highest among the metropolitan areas studied by the National Compensation Survey (NCS). In contrast, pay was lowest in the Brownsville, Texas, metropolitan area, with a pay relative of 78, meaning that Brownsville workers earned an average of 78 cents for every dollar earned by workers nationwide.

Using data from the NCS, pay relatives—a means of assessing pay differences—are available for each of the 9 major occupational groups within 78 metropolitan areas, as well as averaged across all occupations for each area. Area-to-area comparisons have been calculated for all 78 areas and are available at www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/payrel.htm.

Find out more in "Occupational Pay Comparisons Among Metropolitan Areas, 2006," USDL news release 07-1455.

Coming soon in MLR

Next month, the *Monthly Labor Review* will be devoted to presenting BLS employment and economic projections over the 2006–16 period. The issue will include articles on projections of economic growth, the labor force, occupational employment, and industry output and employment. □