

Top Jobs for Millennials in Minnesota

Millennials account for 36 percent of the labor force in Minnesota, eclipsing both baby boomers and Generation X.

Minnesota's labor force is undergoing a major shift. As baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) continue to leave the workforce, millennials (born between 1981 and 1999)¹ seek to fill the void they are leaving behind.

For millennials in college or for those looking for a new career path, the question becomes what occupations offer the best opportunity for good pay,

stability, growth and opportunity. What are the best jobs for millennials? In this article we compile a list of the best jobs for millennials in Minnesota based on wages, projected growth, millennial share of employment and total number of jobs statewide. Further, we break down the best jobs for millennials by educational requirement and area of study or interest.

It's a Millennial's World

The millennial generation is large. As of 2015, millennials accounted for about 25 percent of Minnesota's population and nearly 36 percent of the state's labor force. In fact, millennials now comprise the largest segment of Minnesota's labor force, while Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980) and baby boomer workers comprise approximately 33 and 30 percent of the labor force, respectively.²

Fortunately, working-age millennials (ages 25 to 36) are increasingly finding work opportunities statewide, with unemployment rates on par with the average unemployment rate across all working-age groups.³

Despite popularly held stereotypes, millennials are proving themselves to be dedicated employees. Across every industry, the working-age millennial turnover rate is never more than three percentage points higher than the turnover rates for all employees.⁴



Moreover, turnover rates for younger workers have actually decreased over the past two decades.

Millennials work throughout Minnesota's industry sectors. Sectors employing the most millennials include accommodation and food services; retail trade; arts, entertainment and recreation; administrative and support services; and health care and social assistance.⁵

Many occupations within these sectors are projected to experience significant growth in the coming years, with some occupations, such as statisticians, home health aides, physician's assistants and biomedical engineers, anticipated to grow by more than 20 percent through 2024.⁶ These are promising trends for millennials, especially those who are just entering the workforce and are interested in pursuing STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) or health care occupations. With baby boomers retiring at an increasing pace, career pathways also open up for older millennials looking to advance their skill sets, take on more leadership and earn higher wages.

At one end of the spectrum, industries like retail trade and

accommodation and food services attract millennials looking for immediate work with little to no education required. This is perfect for employers desperate for workers in a tight labor market and can be a springboard for millennials to gain job experience.

At the other end of the spectrum, industries like professional, scientific and technical services; finance and insurance; and management push millennials to seek bachelor's and advanced degrees.

Manufacturing and construction are often overlooked by millennials, despite their significant presence in the state economy. For example, manufacturing accounts for 13.6 percent of total state jobs compared with 10.5 percent nationally.⁷

Wages within manufacturing and construction are more than 16 percent higher than wages for the total of all industries.⁸ These occupations do not typically require postsecondary education, with apprenticeships and on-the-job training commonplace. Whether it's an electrician, carpenter, welder or CNC operator, construction and manufacturing occupations are in-demand and offer excellent opportunities for millennials.

Methodology

Along with tools provided by DEED, we used data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau to compile the list of top jobs for millennials in Minnesota. To make the list, each occupation had to have at least 5,000 employees statewide and show projected growth between 2014 and 2024. The average annual wage of the occupation had to be higher than the average annual wage across all occupations in Minnesota (\$50,243). Finally, the occupation had to have a millennial share that was higher than the average millennial share across all occupations in Minnesota (23 percent). The occupations were then scored based on their rank for each category.

While other factors like job satisfaction and flexibility are important, no standard measures of these job qualities exist.

Using the new Career and Education Explorer tool⁹ developed by DEED, each occupation was matched to the most common area of study. In some cases, two areas of study were assigned to an occupation. The most common educational requirement was also assigned to each occupation.

Top Jobs for Millennials

Table 1 lists the top 25 jobs for millennials based on the data sets outlined above. STEM-related occupations dominate the top 25 list, including the top four occupations on the list, with application software developers

at the top. All of the STEM-related occupations that appear on the list most commonly require a bachelor's degree and almost always have average annual wages over \$70,000.

While health care was only represented twice on the list,

it is important to mention. As outlined earlier, health care is a great opportunity for millennials with the time and money to attend college and professional schools. Registered nurses, which appears as the sixth-best job for millennials, accounts for about 13 percent of the total

Table 1. Top 25 Jobs for Millennials

Occupation	Employees	Average Annual Wage	Millennial Share	Growth
Software Developers, Applications	12,950	\$93,033	32%	10%
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	12,090	\$68,496	32%	13%
Computer Systems Analysts	15,130	\$89,908	26%	18%
Software Developers, Systems Software	9,780	\$107,005	32%	4%
Accountants and Auditors	26,550	\$70,965	26%	7%
Registered Nurses	59,640	\$72,892	24%	12%
Marketing Managers	7,590	\$136,727	26%	7%
Financial Analysts	6,020	\$87,720	35%	5%
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	8,330	\$83,628	29%	4%
General and Operations Managers	38,820	\$105,329	23%	4%
Loan Officers	7,370	\$76,695	27%	6%
Construction Trades Workers	77,760	\$54,254	25%	8%
Plumbers, Pipefitters and Steamfitters	8,630	\$66,646	25%	8%
Mechanical Engineers	6,330	\$82,328	30%	3%
Electricians	11,240	\$59,340	24%	11%
Pharmacists	5,450	\$123,123	31%	1%
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	8,790	\$59,895	28%	3%
Industrial Engineers	8,250	\$87,902	27%	1%
Primary, Secondary and Special Education School Teachers	78,530	\$59,297	25%	2%
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	9,810	\$57,928	24%	7%
Claims Adjusters, Examiners and Investigators	5,480	\$63,344	28%	1%
Child, Family and School Social Workers	6,550	\$57,892	26%	2%
Training and Development Specialists	5,660	\$62,236	25%	5%
Plant and System Operators	6,190	\$57,307	25%	1%
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	5,070	\$54,394	24%	6%

Source: DEED Career and Education Explorer tool, Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau.

jobs on the top 25 list. Many health care-related jobs were left off this list because of their relatively small size. Expanding the list to include jobs with over 1,000 employees statewide pushes the number of health care occupations on this list up to 10 of the top 25.

How much education do you need?

Table 2 provides the top jobs for millennials based on five educational requirements, which represent those most frequently required for the job. While average wages generally increase

with educational requirement, there are great opportunities for people at all different levels of educational attainment. Most of the top jobs requiring high school or vocational training were construction or trades-related. All of the top jobs for those with an associate degree or above were in health care or STEM-related occupations.

What do you want to study?

The College Board identifies eight major areas of study: arts and humanities, business, health and medicine, multi-

interdisciplinary studies, public and social services, STEM, social sciences, and trades and personal services. There were no jobs that met the top jobs requirements in the arts and humanities area of study, and the multi-interdisciplinary area of study was not included in the list.

Of the other categories, the list includes the top three jobs for each area of study. In most instances the jobs on this list are not limited to the area of study outlined; however, the area of study outlined is the most logical or most common route of study for the occupation (see Table 3).

Table 2: Top 3 Jobs for Millennials by Minimum Educational Requirement

Occupation	Most Common Educational Requirement	Employees	Average Annual Wage	Millennial Share	Growth
Brickmasons and Blockmasons	High School or Less	1,340	\$66,292	31%	16%
Roofers	High School or Less	2,180	\$56,313	33%	9%
Electricians	Vocational Training	11,240	\$59,340	24%	11%
Plumbers, Pipefitters and Steamfitters	Vocational Training	8,630	\$66,646	25%	8%
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	Vocational Training	2,790	\$54,246	28%	7%
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	Associate Degree	1,400	\$76,219	28%	19%
Registered Nurses	Associate Degree	59,640	\$72,892	24%	12%
Dental Hygienists	Associate Degree	4,620	\$71,582	27%	12%
Software Developers, Applications	Bachelor's Degree	12,950	\$93,033	32%	10%
Computer Systems Analysts	Bachelor's Degree	15,130	\$89,908	26%	18%
Biomedical Engineers	Bachelor's Degree	1,100	\$99,485	38%	23%
Physician Assistants	Graduate or Professional Degree	2,010	\$107,599	39%	25%
Nurse Practitioners	Graduate or Professional Degree	3,290	\$105,231	25%	26%
Nurse Anesthetists	Graduate or Professional Degree	1,540	\$177,074	26%	14%

Source: DEED Career and Education Explorer tool, Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau.

Conclusion

Good opportunities exist across Minnesota for millennials at all educational levels and in most areas of interest. This article presents a set of occupations based on large size, employment growth and above-average wages and share of millennials within

the occupation. These lists are meant to provide a starting place for millennials who are thinking about their careers and educational opportunities.

The Career and Education Explorer tool can be used by millennials and anyone else

to further explore these and other career opportunities in Minnesota. This article is meant to highlight occupations that provide great opportunities for millennials, especially as this generation becomes more prominent in the Minnesota labor market. **T**

Table 3: Top 3 Jobs for Millennials by Area of Study

Occupation	Area of Study	Employees	Average Annual Wage	Millennial Share	Growth
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	Business	12,090	\$68,496	32%	13%
Marketing Managers	Business	7,590	\$136,727	26%	7%
General and Operations Managers	Business	38,820	\$105,329	23%	4%
Pharmacists	Health and Medicine	5,450	\$123,123	31%	1%
Registered Nurses	Health and Medicine	59,640	\$72,892	24%	12%
Dental Hygienists	Health and Medicine	4,620*	\$71,582	27%	12%
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	Public and Social Services	8,790	\$59,895	28%	3%
Child, Family and School Social Workers	Public and Social Services	6,550	\$57,892	26%	2%
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	Public and Social Services	5,070	\$54,394	24%	6%
Financial Analysts	Social Sciences	6,020	\$87,720	35%	5%
Loan Officers	Social Sciences	7,370	\$76,695	27%	6%
Elementary and Middle School Teachers	Social Sciences	27,370	\$60,322	24%	2%
Software Developers, Applications	STEM	12,950	\$93,033	32%	10%
Software Developers, Systems Software	STEM	9,780	\$107,005	32%	4%
Computer Systems Analysts	STEM	15,130	\$89,908	26%	18%
Electricians	Trades and Personal Services	11,240	\$59,340	24%	11%
Plumbers, Pipefitters and Steamfitters	Trades and Personal Services	8,630	\$66,646	25%	8%
Construction Trades Workers	Trades and Personal Services	77,760	\$54,254	25%	8%

Source: DEED Career and Education Explorer tool, Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau.

¹Definitions of generational groups may vary across the literature.

²2015 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau, <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>.

³Ibid.

⁴Quarterly Workforce Indicators, U.S. Census Bureau, <https://qwiexplorer.ces.census.gov/static/explore.html#x=0&q=0>.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Employment Projections, DEED, mn.gov/deed/eo.

⁷Quarterly Workforce Indicators, U.S. Census Bureau, <https://qwiexplorer.ces.census.gov/static/explore.html#x=0&q=0>.

⁸Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, DEED, mn.gov/deed/qcew.

⁹<https://apps.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/cpt/>.