

If you have watched the national news or CNBC lately many of the politicians, business leaders and media pundits are looking at the unemployment rate to get a pulse on the economy. In May 2009 the statewide unemployment rate for Illinois was 10.1%. Although, the county by county unemployment rates are not yet published for May, the April unemployment rates are available. Clinton County's unemployment rate for April was 6.2%, well below the national and statewide averages, and the lowest amongst all of Clinton County's adjacent counties.

So why can Clinton County have a 6.2% unemployment rate when all the other counties in the nation, on average, are much higher? In my opinion there are two reasons. First, Clinton County has a high quality labor force. The people are hardworking, honest and are great assets for any organization that chooses to have a business in Clinton County. This makes Breese and the surrounding towns a great place for entrepreneurs to locate. Second, the businesses in Clinton County recognize the importance of a quality work force and work at length to make sure they retain them. For most businesses payroll is their biggest expense, so it is important to have the right people on the bus.

In closing, good paying jobs with good benefits would not be possible without the support the businesses receive in this area from the community. Our unemployment rate is a great illustration of the interdependence that businesses have with their communities and is another example that hard work and honesty still pay off.

Brandon J. Wade

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