

Volusia forecast to be No. 6 in nation for hiring

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By CLAYTON PARK clayton.park@news-jrnl.com

Volusia County is forecast to have the nation's sixth-highest percentage of employers adding jobs in the next three months, according to a new national report.

A survey of area employers by staffing agency Manpower found that nearly one out of every three - 29 percent - said they expected to increase their payroll in the second quarter, while only 3 percent anticipated making job cuts.

That 26 percent net gain for Volusia, identified in the report as the Deltona-Daytona Beach-Ormond Beach area, was tied with Portland, Oregon, and Toledo, Ohio, for No. 6 in the nation.

Boise, Idaho, is forecast to have the nation's highest percentage of employers adding workers in the coming quarter with a 32 percent net gain, followed by Jacksonville at No. 2 (30 percent); Grand Rapids, Michigan, at No. 3 (29 percent); Milwaukee at No. 4 (28 percent); and Seattle at No. 5 (27 percent).

Volusia ranked No. 3 in the nation in Manpower's hiring forecast for the first quarter, even though the percentage of employers saying they expected to add jobs and the percentage who expected to make workforce reductions were identical to the findings for the second quarter.

"Survey results show employers are equally confident about hiring plans compared to Quarter 1 when the net employment outlook was (also) 26 percent," said Lisa Hancock, an Altamonte Springs-based executive vice president with Manpower, in a news release.

Hancock is a Volusia County resident who lives in DeBary. Manpower's Volusia office is in Holly Hill.

Robin King, president and CEO of CareerSource Flagler Volusia, said Manpower's latest hiring forecast for Volusia County is "fabulous," adding that the survey of area employers matches what her agency - the local regional workforce development board - has been seeing and hearing.

King said employers looking to add workers locally include World Class Distribution Inc., which is expected to open this summer and serve stores throughout the Southeastern United States for upscale grocer Trader Joe's.

The distribution center is scheduled to participate in job fairs on March 26 at Daytona State College for students and alumni, and on March 28 for the general public to fill positions at the center under construction on the east side of Interstate 95 in Daytona Beach.

Other companies looking to add jobs are Blue Coast Bakers on U.S. 1, just north of Ormond Beach; food service company US Foods, which has a distribution center in Port Orange; and sonobuoy-maker Sparton, which has a large plant in DeLeon Springs.

King said even more jobs may be created in Volusia County later this year.

"I don't know if by July we'll have as much as we will at the end of December," she said.

Manpower's latest hiring forecast for Volusia County is up from the second quarter last year when only 18 percent of those surveyed expected to add jobs.

Jayson Meyer, CEO of Synergy Billing LLC Daytona Beach, said his company has added 13 workers since the beginning of the year and has six open positions it is seeking to fill. "We're constantly hiring," he said of the company he founded in 2006 which now has 73 workers.

Synergy Billing specializes in providing billing services to nonprofit health centers that offer primary health services to the poor and underserved, Meyer said. The company's clients are spread throughout the country.

Meyer said his company has "maxed out" its nearly 10,000-square-foot offices at 1410 LPGA Blvd. and is looking to expand. "We're beginning to explore our options," he said.