



JONESBORO UNLIMITED

Economic Advancement Report
4th Quarter 2018

**Working The Plan:
How Jonesboro Stays
Competitive**

**"Now You Know"
New Video Highlights
Jonesboro**

**Field Trip:
Taking Teachers
To School**



ARKANSAS
INC

COMPETITIVE COMMUNITIES

Arkansas Economic
Development Commission
recognizes

City of Jonesboro
as a
Competitive Community

December 2018

WORKING THE PLAN

916 Jobs Added In 2018

Jonesboro Unlimited is pleased to announce the addition of 916 new full-time jobs in 2018.

The job numbers come from Jonesboro Unlimited's Annual Inventory of New and Expanded Industries and represent results from nearly 70 local companies in five targeted industries: healthcare, manufacturing, logistics, professional services, and agriculture. Healthcare and manufacturing represented the largest share of the 916 new jobs with 375 jobs added in healthcare and 323 new jobs added in manufacturing.

"These numbers are an impressive reminder of how strong Jonesboro's economy continues to be," said Mark Young, President of Jonesboro Unlimited, "adding over 900 jobs shows that Jonesboro continues to be a city where companies want to invest and grow."

In the first two years of Jonesboro Unlimited's five-year strategic plan, 2,184 direct, new, jobs have been created. With that total, Jonesboro Unlimited stands at over 87% of the goal of 2,500 new jobs by 2021.

Chris Barber, the Chairman of Jonesboro Unlimited, said the new numbers are very encouraging. "This is fantastic news for our city. We knew 2,500 direct, new, jobs, was an ambitious goal. We are pleased to see that we are ahead of the pace to reach the mark we set in 2017."

The efforts are being noticed beyond the city limits. Jonesboro was officially recognized as a Competitive Community by the Arkansas Economic Development Commission at the Annual Meeting.

The program is designed to identify ways a community can be more competitive with regard to their economic development organizational structure, their economic development funding, their workforce, and their product readiness.

As part of the initiative, Jonesboro and other communities that meet the standards of the initiative will be featured throughout AEDC marketing efforts. Competitive Communities in Arkansas must undergo a re-evaluation every two years to maintain their designation.



JONESBORO: NOW YOU KNOW

New Video Promotes The City

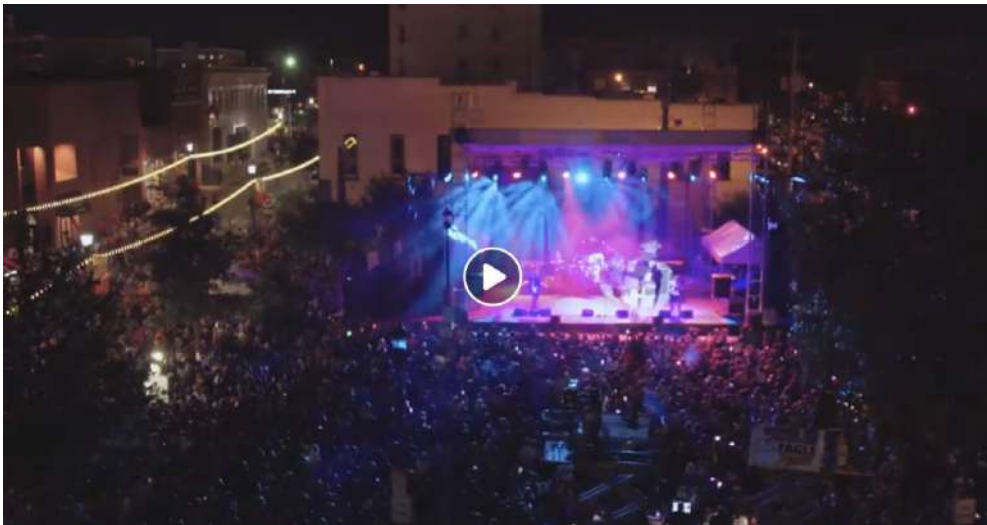
It was a project nearly one year in the making.

Early in the spring of 2018, Jonesboro Unlimited started working on a project to tell the world what our city has to offer. The two-and-a-half-minute-long video, entitled Jonesboro: Now You Know, is designed to create community pride and be a recruiting tool for Jonesboro employers to help bring in highly skilled workers.

"We know we have a special community here in Jonesboro. We feel this video highlights the heart and soul of our community. When someone asks the question 'what's Jonesboro like?' we want our local employers and business to show them this. That's our goal," said Mark Young.

The video was premiered at the Jonesboro Unlimited Annual Meeting on February 7. It was simultaneously launched on YouTube, Facebook and LinkedIn the same day. Within three days of the launch, the video had racked up over 30,000 views and 600 shares across the three platforms.

The video was produced entirely in Jonesboro. It was written by Jonesboro Unlimited's Director of Communications, Craig Rickert, and produced by Workhorse Creative Productions of Jonesboro. The original music for the video was composed and arranged by Dr. Tim Crist of the Arkansas State University Department of Music. It can be found on [YouTube](#), [the Jonesboro Unlimited Facebook page](#), LinkedIn, and at [Jonesborounlimited.com](#).



COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Retail and Business Development

Building permits in the City of Jonesboro set a record in 2018, nearly doubling in value from 2017. According to figures from the City of Jonesboro, roughly \$288M in commercial and residential permits were issued in 2018.



The total was fueled by large-scale commercial projects like the \$130M expansion of St. Bernards and the new Embassy Suites Hotel and Red Wolf Convention Center being built on the A-State campus.

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church celebrated the opening of their new church on January 13. The new church is located on Highland Drive.

The last 22,000 SF of the former K-Mart location on Caraway Road will soon be filled. Haag-Brown says a Ross Dress for Less store will fill that spot in the Highland Square Shopping Center. Haag-Brown says construction is underway.



Construction has begun at Jonesboro's newest movie theater. The new Malco VIP 12-screen theater will be located in Greensborough Village in the Hilltop area of Jonesboro. The City of Jonesboro lists the project cost at \$6.8M. Gary Harpole with Halsey Thrasher & Harpole says Malco has purchased additional land at the site with plans for expansion.



KAIT-TV is under new ownership. Jonesboro's ABC/NBC and CW station is now owned by Gray Television.



Gray completed its acquisition of Raycom Media on January 2, 2019. With the addition of KAIT and the other Raycom stations, Gray Television now has stations in 91 United States markets. Raycom had owned KAIT since 2006.

First National Bank officially opened First National Financial Park in early January. The 60,000 SF facility took over a year to build. Allison McDaniel of First National Bank says the building features five stories, an underground parking facility and a 30-foot wide video board as well as an outdoor terrace and walking trail.



[First National Bank](#)

A new medical facility is coming to the Reserve at Hill Park. Haag-Brown says the 10,000SF facility will be across the street from Ritter Communications. According to Haag-Brown, construction on the new office should begin sometime this summer. When finished, it will be the third medical facility located in Hill Park.



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Like
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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Teachers Go On A Field Trip

The idea behind it is simple. Get local teachers out of the classroom for a couple of days and give them a true, behind the curtain tour of four Jonesboro manufacturing facilities and expose them to the different types of careers in manufacturing. In turn, they will take that information back to their students, planting a seed in those fertile minds that a career in manufacturing should be on their list of standard responses to “what do you want to be when you grow up?”



Twenty-two teachers from several Jonesboro-area school districts took part in the three-day event, touring and talking to employees from all levels at Nestle, Hytrol, Nice-Pak, and Frito-Lay.

“It gave me a whole new perspective and appreciation of manufacturing and a different attitude to have when my students begin asking questions,” one teacher commented after spending two days at Nestle.

“That’s exactly the impact we were looking for,” said Shelle Randall, Director of Workforce Development and Existing Industry for Jonesboro Unlimited. “Workforce development isn’t something that should start when students are preparing for college or deciding on a major.”

By supporting the program, manufacturers like Hytrol, Nestle, Nice-Pak, and Frito-Lay are, in a way, helping themselves. By going directly to the teachers and shining a light on the opportunities that await their current and future students in the manufacturing world, those same manufacturers are getting a head start on engaging the next generation of American manufacturing professionals.

Now that’s “workforce development.”

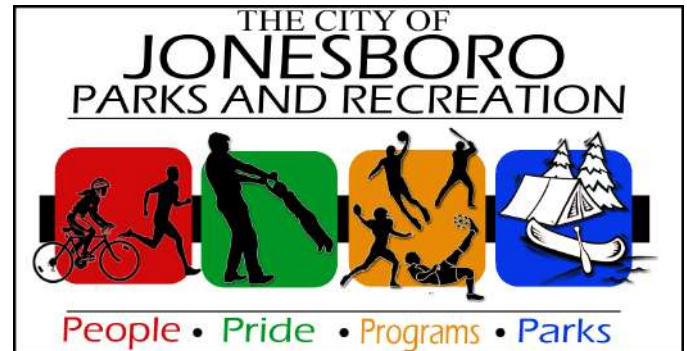


QUALITY OF LIFE

Third Phase of Biking and Walking Trail Under Construction

Phase 3 of the Craighead Forest Trail is now under construction. According to Jonesboro's Director of Parks and Recreation, Danny Kapales, the latest phase of Jonesboro's interconnectivity plan calls for the trail to connect Craighead Forest Park to Harrisburg Road.

Kapales says the trail will exit the park on Lincoln Road, which is at the northeast corner of the park. It will run down Lincoln, past Pine Hill Cemetery where it will connect with Craighead Forest Road. At that point the trail will head east and connect with Harrisburg Road.



Going to the Dogs

Some four-legged Jonesboro residents are wagging their tails over the new dog park. The city's first dog park officially opened on November 21st. The park is located between the Earl Bell Center and the International Studies Magnet School on Cobb Street where the old swimming pool used to be.

It features separate areas for larger and smaller dogs. The park was built without spending any taxpayer dollars. The \$37,000 price tag was paid for through donations and memorial bricks that were sold.



Bring On Baseball and Softball Season!

Joe Mack Campbell Park and the Southside Softball Complex will have new additions for the upcoming season. The new concession stand and restroom facilities are now finished. Danny Kapales says the cost for the improvements at Joe Mack Campbell cost \$580,000 while the new facilities at Southside cost \$735,000.

This is the second year of improvements at the baseball and softball complexes. Last year, artificial turf was added to 10 fields at Joe Mack Campbell Park and new lighting was installed at the fields and parking areas at Southside. The parking lots were also repaved.



HEALTHCARE

Crawford Offers Fellowship To NYITCOM Student

Beginning in 2020, one deserving NYITCOM student will be given a opportunity to be part of a new fellowship program between NYITCOM at A-State and Congressman Rick Crawford's office.

Each year, a third-year NYITCOM student will be chosen for The First District Congressional Fellowship Program. As part of this program, that student will identify one area of research and work in partnership with Congressman Crawford's office to get data on how certain streams of federal grantfunding can be best used to help people in the Mississippi delta region.

That student will later join Crawford's office in Washington D.C. to take part in drafting potential legislation to help ensure that federal funding gets to those who need it most.

"I am excited for these students to spend time in my Arkansas and Washington offices, working alongside our staff with the common goal to better serve the people of the First District and everyone across Rural America through this collaboration and insight with the NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine."

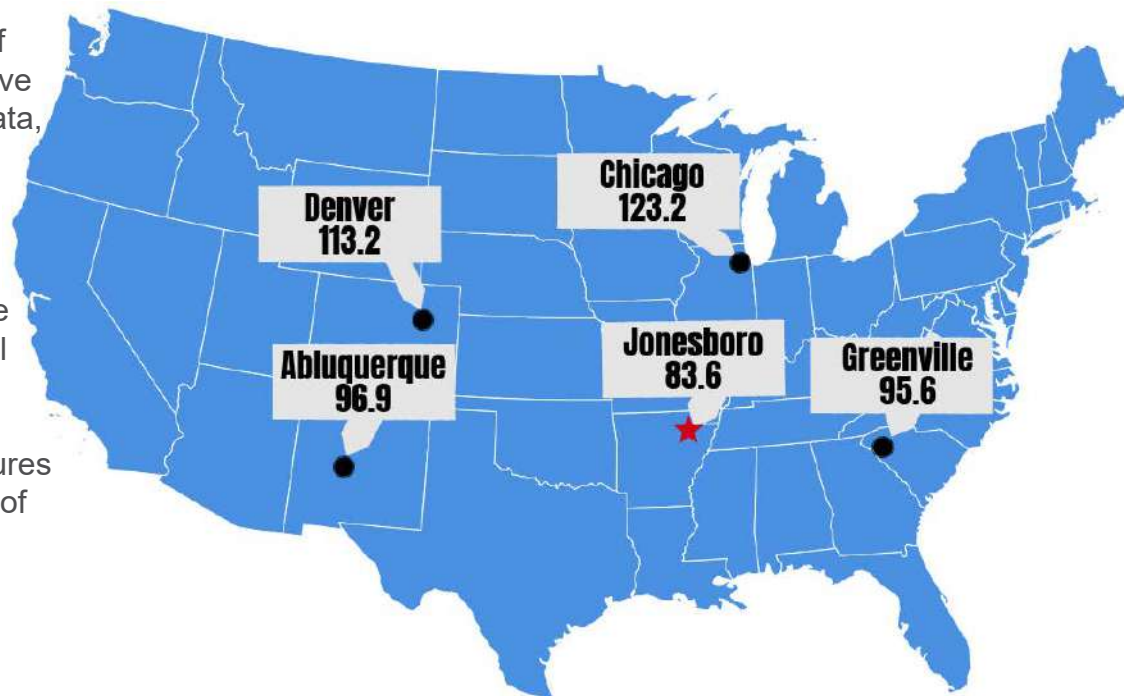
Dr. Shane Speights, D.O. and Dean of NYITCOM at A-State said "This is an amazing opportunity for our medical students to be on the front lines of health policy and learn firsthand how to best advocate for patients."



Jonesboro: Where Your Dollars Go Farther

The final Cost of Living Index of 2018 shows just how inexpensive it is to live in Jonesboro. The data, compiled by the Council for Community and Economic Research, reports the cost of living in Jonesboro is nearly 16.5% lower than the rest of the country at 83.6% of the national average.

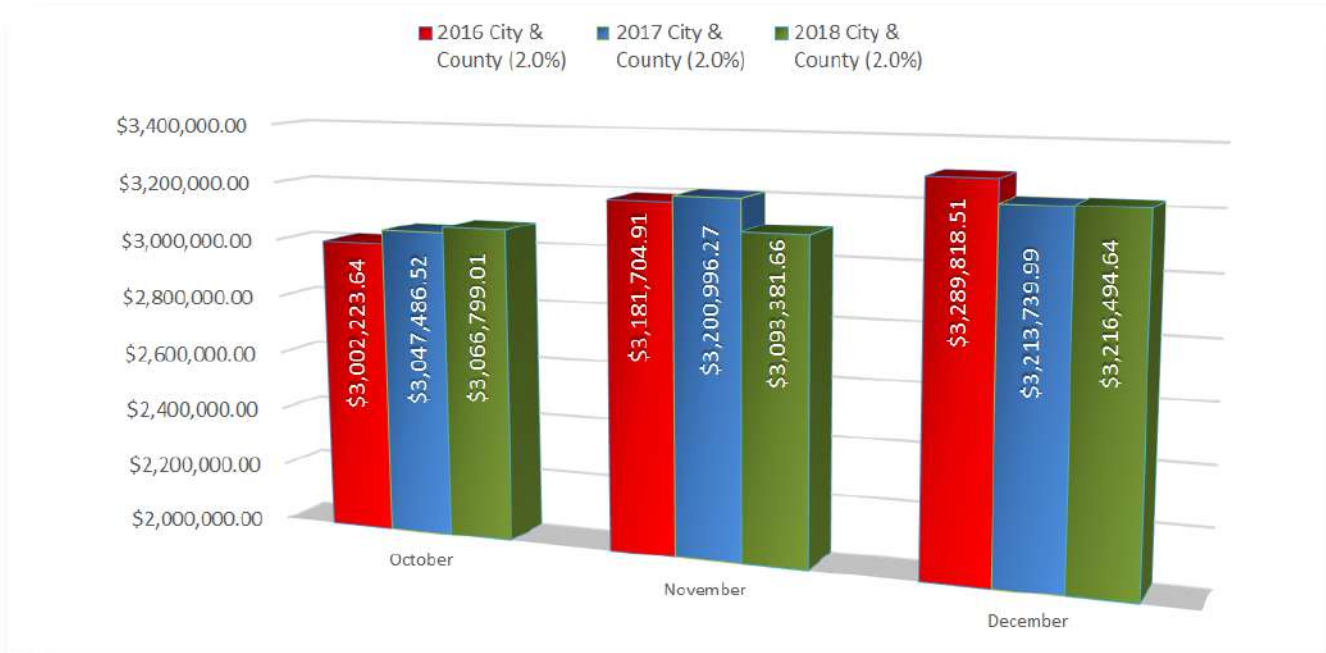
The Cost of Living Index measures regional differences in the cost of consumer goods and services, excluding taxes and non-consumer expenditures



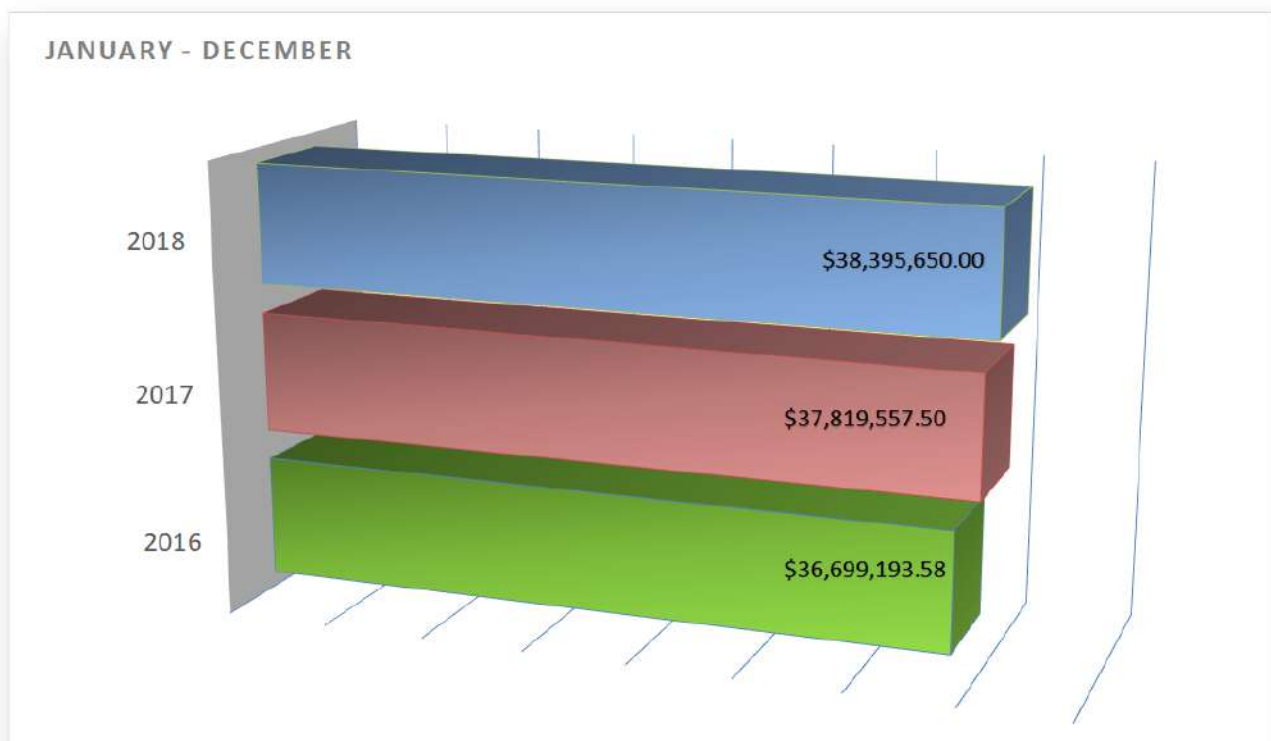


SALES TAX REVENUE

City and County Sales Tax Collections
October - December 2016 - 2018



January - December 2016 - 2018



. Source: City of Jonesboro and Craighead County.

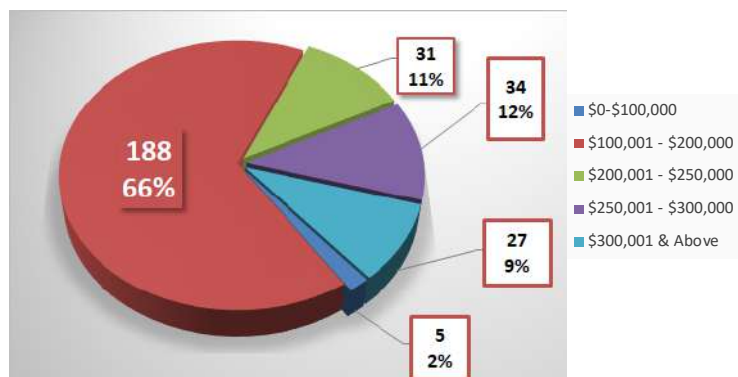
JONESBORO UNLIMITED HOUSING

4th Quarter 2018

New Homes Sold

January - December 2017

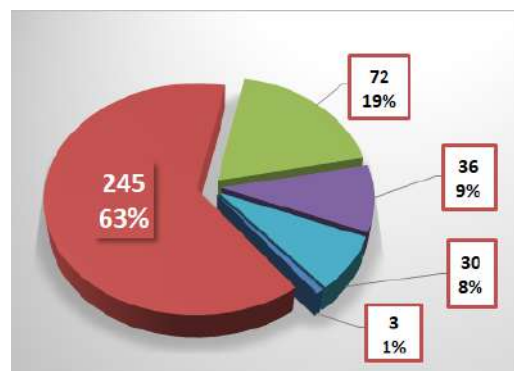
TOTAL: 285



New Homes Sold

January - December 2018

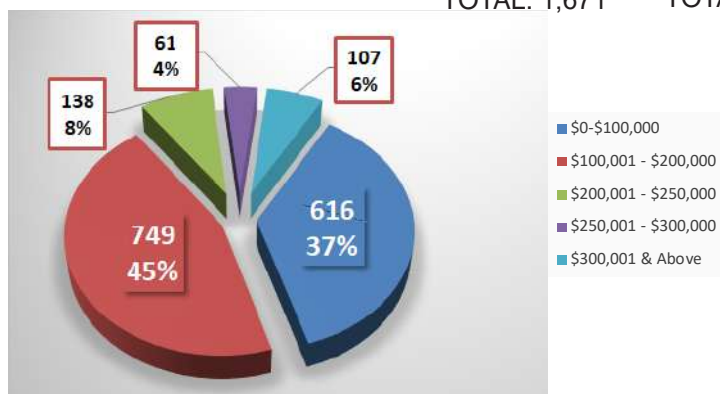
TOTAL: 386



Existing Homes Sold

January - December 2017

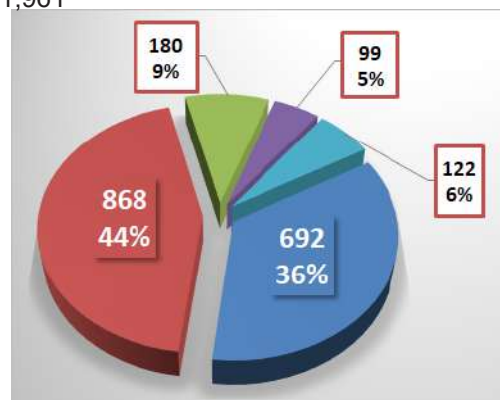
TOTAL: 1,671



Existing Homes Sold

January - December 2018

TOTAL: 1,961



Source: Jonesboro Board of Realtors, January 2019. Includes all MLS listings, which are primarily Jonesboro but also includes surrounding areas.

Total Homes Sold		
January - December		
	2017	2018
\$0 - \$100,000	621	695
\$100,001 - \$200,000	937	1,113
\$200,001 - \$250,000	169	252
\$250,001 - \$300,000	95	135
\$300,001 & Above	134	152
Total	1,956	2,347



Source: Jonesboro Board of Realtors, January 2019. Includes all MLS listings, which are primarily Jonesboro but also includes surrounding areas.



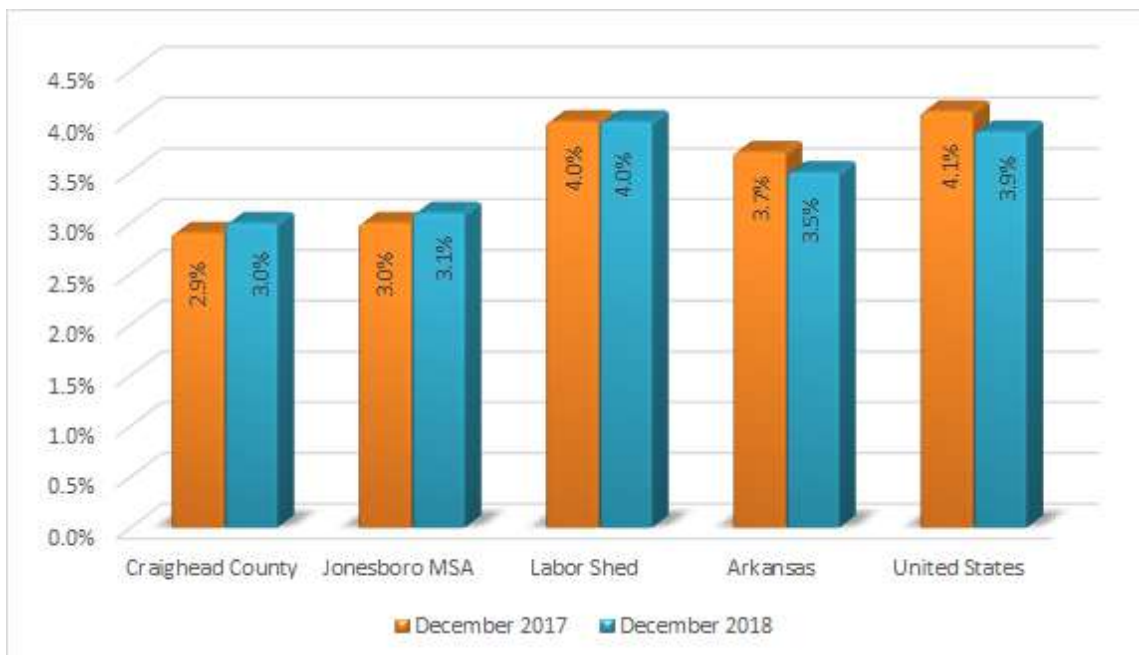
WORKFORCE

Jonesboro Labor Market Area - December 2018

County	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	From Dec 2017
Clay	5,809	5,520	289	5.0%	↑
Craighead	54,129	52,526	1,603	3.0%	↑
Crittenden	21,890	21,021	869	4.0%	↓
Cross	7,373	7,024	349	4.7%	↑
Greene	19,456	18,763	693	3.5%	↔
Jackson	5,810	5,413	397	6.8%	↑
Lawrence	6,937	6,654	283	4.1%	↑
Mississippi	17,458	16,584	874	5.0%	↓
Poinsett	10,354	9,988	366	3.5%	↓
Randolph	7,206	6,921	285	4.0%	↓
Sharp	5,729	5,450	279	4.9%	↑
Dunklin, MO*	11,663	11,038	625	5.4%	↓
TOTAL	173,814	166,902	6,912	4.0%	↑

Source: "Arkansas Labor Market," Department of Workforce Services, December 2018 "Local Area Unemployment Statistics," *Missouri Economic Research & Information Center, December 2018; Data provided February 1, 2019.

Unemployment Rate



Source: "Arkansas Labor Market," Department of Workforce Services, September 2018 "Local Area Unemployment Statistics," Missouri Economic Research & Information Center, May 2018; Data provided November 6, 2018.