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Austin unemployment rate drops; region adds jobs

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The Austin metro area added 4,900 jobs in April, helping bring the unemployment rate down from 6.2 percent in March to 5.8 percent last month.

Austin had roughly 781,400 jobs in April, up from 776,500 in the prior month. That's also a 3,400-job increase from April 2008. The sector posting the biggest month-over-month gain was leisure and hospitality, which added 3,000 positions.

Texas' unemployment rate remained unchanged in April at 6.7 percent and continued to trend well below the national rate of 8.9 percent. **The U.S. rate was 8.5 percent in March.**

Texas' seasonally-adjusted nonagricultural employment fell by 39,500 jobs in April. Texas has recorded a net loss of 173,900 jobs in the past 12 months, compared with job losses of 5.2 million in the United States during the same period.

"While the Texas unemployment rate remains substantially lower than the national rate, it is of real concern that Texans who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own are having a difficult time finding employment," said Texas Workforce Commission Chairman Tom Pauken. "Continued unemployment claims remain much higher than a year ago."

The largest over-the-month drop occurred in professional and business services with a loss of 20,100 jobs in April, followed by trade, transportation and utilities with a loss of 15,400 jobs.

Leisure and hospitality posted the largest industry gain in April with an additional 10,600 jobs. Education and health services added 4,500 jobs, representing an annual job growth rate of 4.5 percent.

Courtesy of JB Goodwin