

# 2008 Oklahoma Occupational Employment & Wages Chart Book



Oklahoma Employment Security Commission  
Economic Research and Analysis  
<http://oesc.ok.gov>  
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# About this publication

## Methodology:

This chart book's presentation of figures is intended to demonstrate a variety of applications of occupational and wage data. The charts are organized into two categories: The first with a focus on detailed occupations, the second highlighting labor patterns of specific industries.

Some examples of useful applications of occupational and wage data:

Detailed occupational data can be used by job seekers or employers to show wages for workers in certain occupations and to assess wage variation within, and across, occupations. Wage variation within an occupation can result from several factors, including industry, geographic location, or a worker's particular experience or qualifications. Useful data for job seekers include information on the industries that have the highest employment or the highest average wages for an occupation. Occupational employment by industry may be useful in assessing the impact of shifts in technology and other macroeconomic trends on the types of jobs available.

## Employment:

Occupational employment is the estimate of total wage and salary employment in an occupation across the industries surveyed.

Current employment refers to the estimated annual employment by occupation for all industries based on 2008 data. Total employment includes covered and non-covered employment, agricultural employment and self-employed and unpaid family workers. Covered employment data are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program from Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC). Non-covered employment data are average annual data from the BLS Current Employment Statistics (CES) program from OESC. Agricultural employment data is from the American Community Survey (ACS). Employment for self-employed and unpaid family workers is produced from the projection matrix system based on the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey and the BLS Current Population Survey (CPS).

Employment estimates have been rounded to the nearest 10. Occupational category totals may not calculate exactly as a result of rounding and suppression of data for occupations employing less than 50 people in 2008.

Total base-year employment for an occupation is the sum of employment across all industries and class-of-worker categories—the combination of wage and salary, self-employed, and unpaid family workers. Occupational employment within each industry, divided by total wage and salary employment in each industry, yields the occupational distribution ratios used to project occupational employment. These ratios, referred to as staffing patterns, show occupational utilization by industry.

## Wages:

The data source for the wage information used in this publication is 2009 Oklahoma Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, available on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website ([http://stats.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_ok.htm](http://stats.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_ok.htm)). Occupational employment and wage estimates are calculated with data collected from employers in all industry sectors in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas in Oklahoma.

## Additional Resources::

If you have any questions concerning the data in this publication or any other Labor Market Information related questions, feel free to contact us by phone at (405)557-7172 or by e-mail at [lmi1@oesc.state.ok.us](mailto:lmi1@oesc.state.ok.us).

Oklahoma Employment Security Commission Website:

<http://www.oesc.state.ok.us>

Economic Research and Analysis' Website:

<http://www.oesc.state.ok.us/lmi>



# Occupation Focus

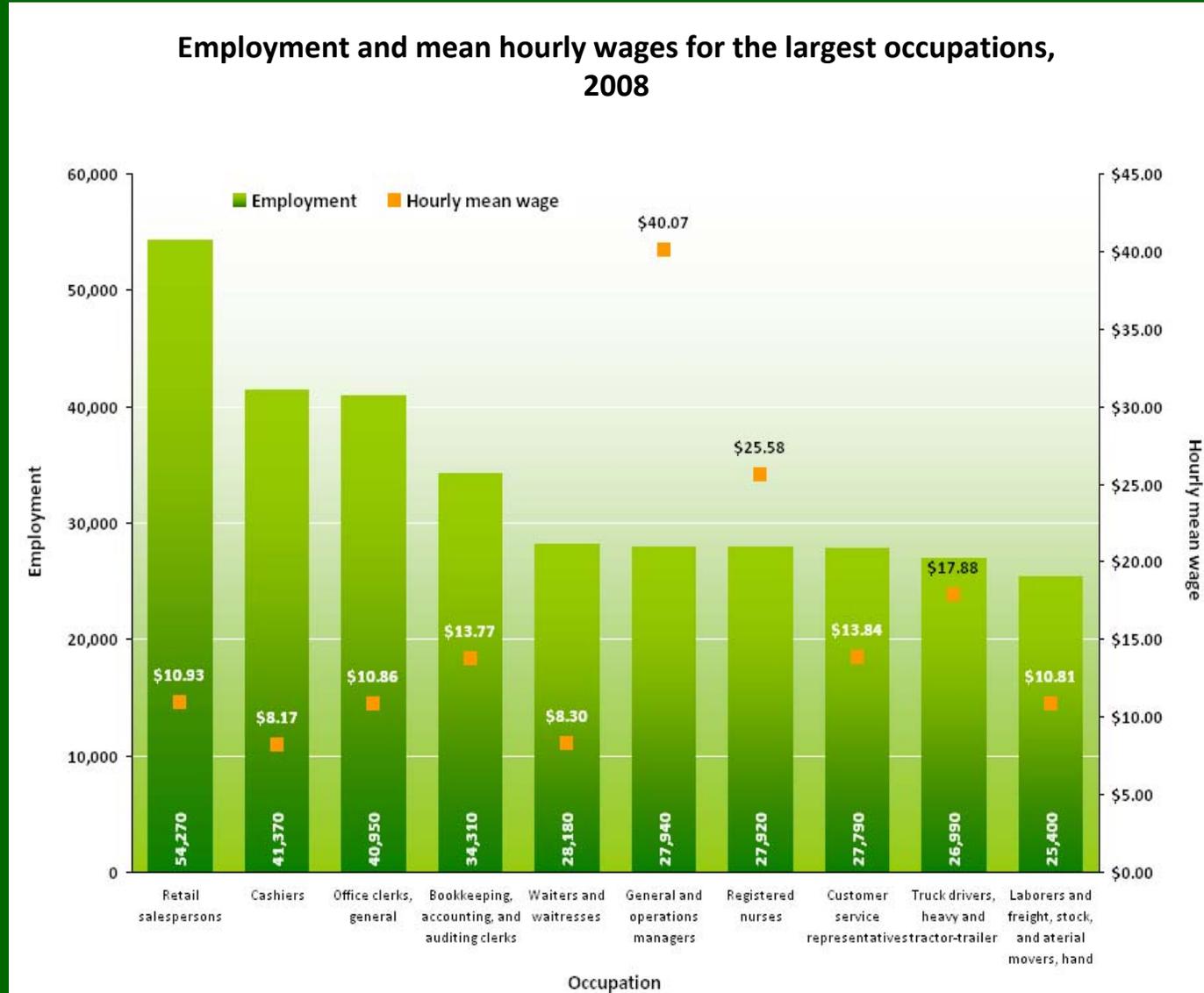


**OCCUPATION  
FOCUS**

The 10 largest occupations made up over 19 percent of total employment.  
Retail salespersons and cashiers made up about 5.5 percent of total employment.

**CHART 1**

- The third largest occupation was general office clerks.
- Seven of the 10 largest occupations paid below the Oklahoma mean hourly wage of \$17.22. The exceptions were general and operations managers, registered nurses, and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers..



The 10 smallest occupations combined made up less than 1 percent of total employment.

## CHART 2

- More than half of the smallest occupations earned a wage greater than the mean hourly Oklahoma wage of \$17.22.
- Many of the smallest occupations tended to be concentrated in a single industry.

Employment and mean hourly wages of the smallest occupations, 2008

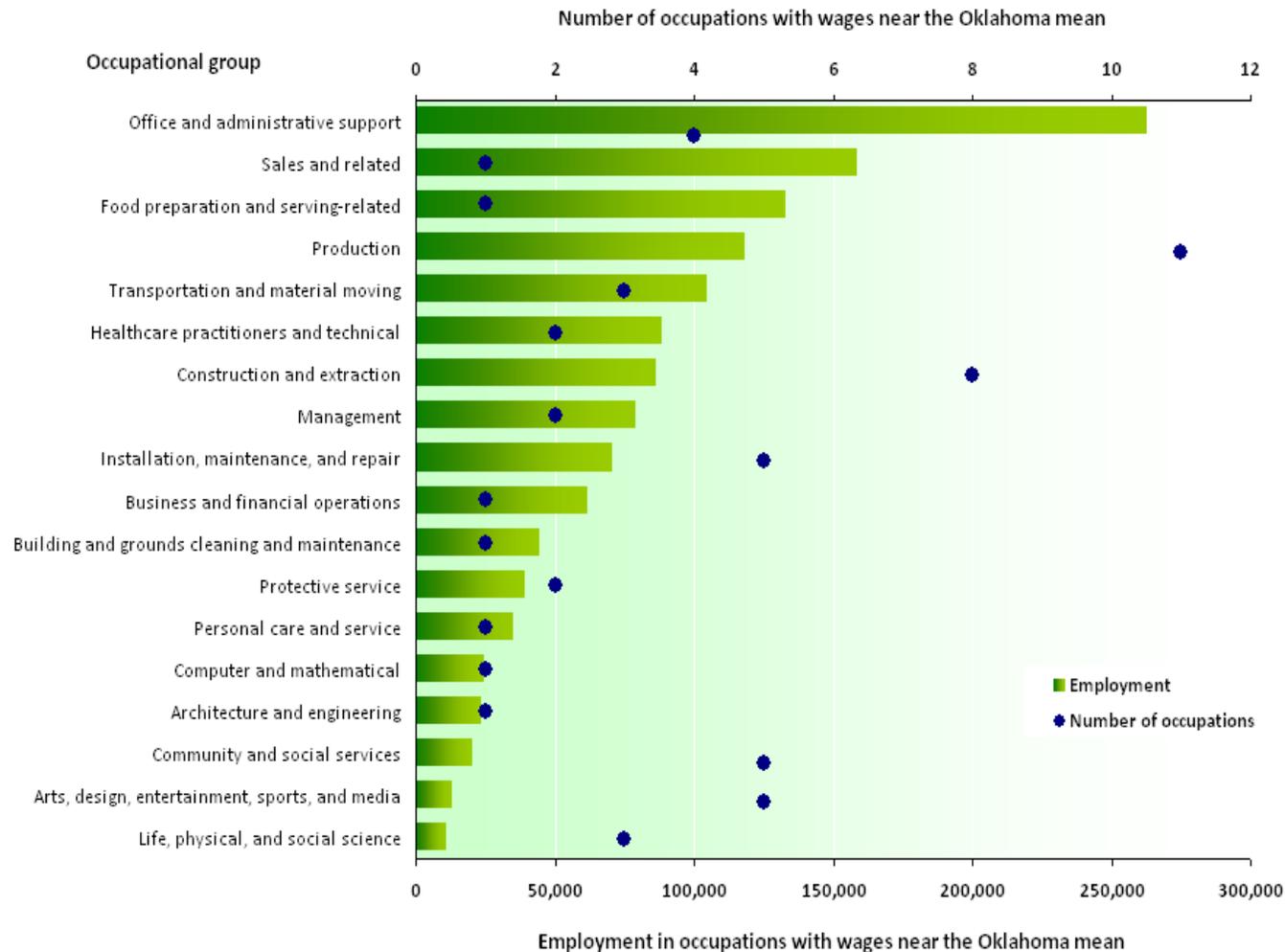


Occupations with wages within 5 percent of the Oklahoma mean accounted for 7.1 percent of total employment in May 2008.

**CHART 3**

- Most occupations with median wages near the middle of the earnings distribution were production; construction and extraction; installation, maintenance, and repair; community and social services or arts, design, entertainment, sports and media occupations.
- Eleven production occupations, with total employment of 21,390, had hourly mean wages within 5 percent of the Oklahoma hourly mean wage of \$17.22 per hour. While four office and administrative support occupations had a total employment of 16,960 with hourly mean wages within 5 percent of the state mean.

**Number of occupations with wages near the Oklahoma mean and employment in these occupations by occupational group, 2008**



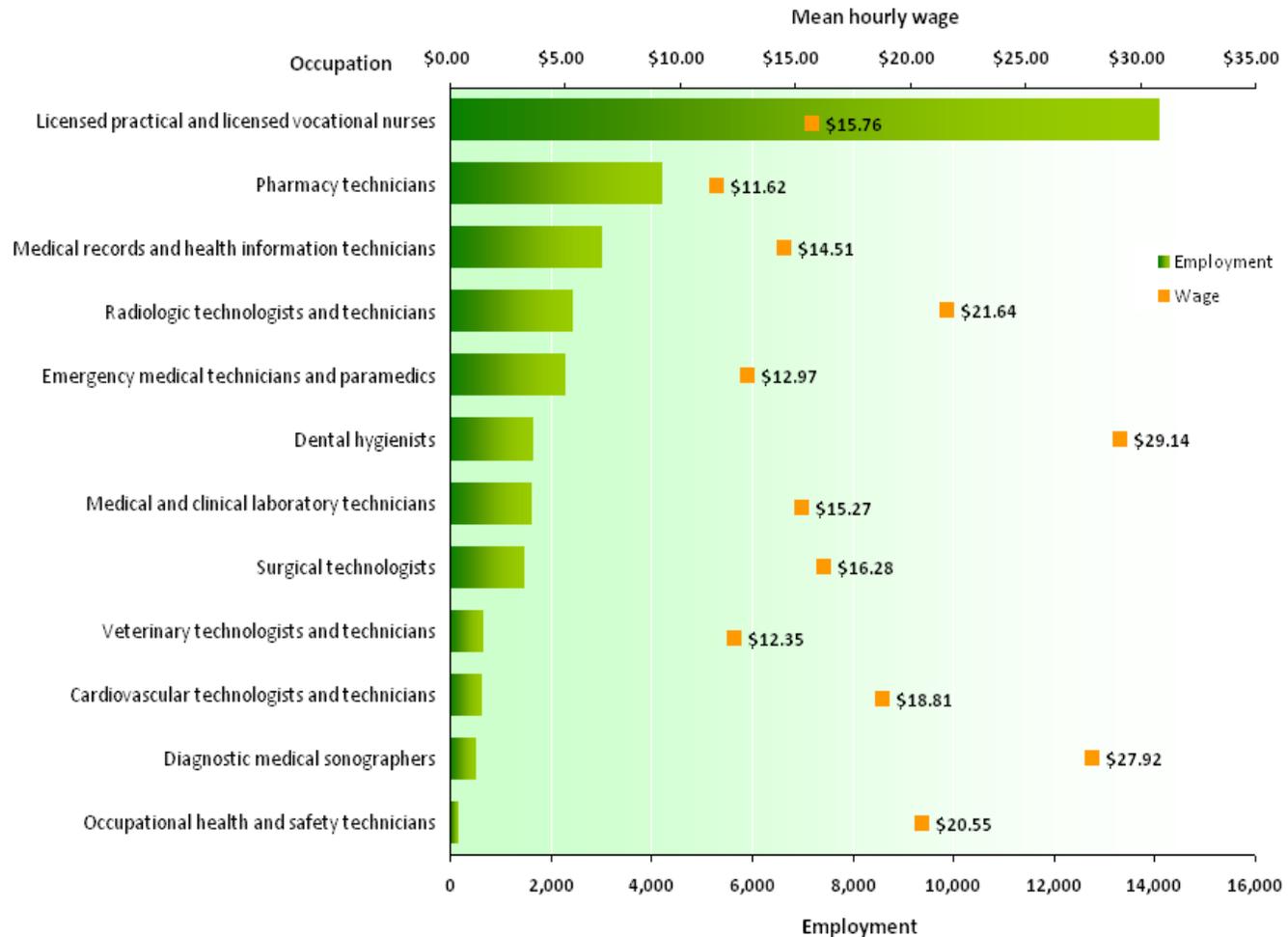
**OCCUPATION  
FOCUS**

Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses were among the largest health technologist and technician occupations.

**CHART 4**

- Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses and pharmacy technicians were among the largest health technologist and technician occupations.
- Dental hygienists and diagnostic medical sonographers were among the highest paying technical health occupations, with hourly mean wages of \$29.14 and \$27.92, respectively.
- Associate degrees or postsecondary vocational awards were the most significant sources of education or training for most of these occupations.

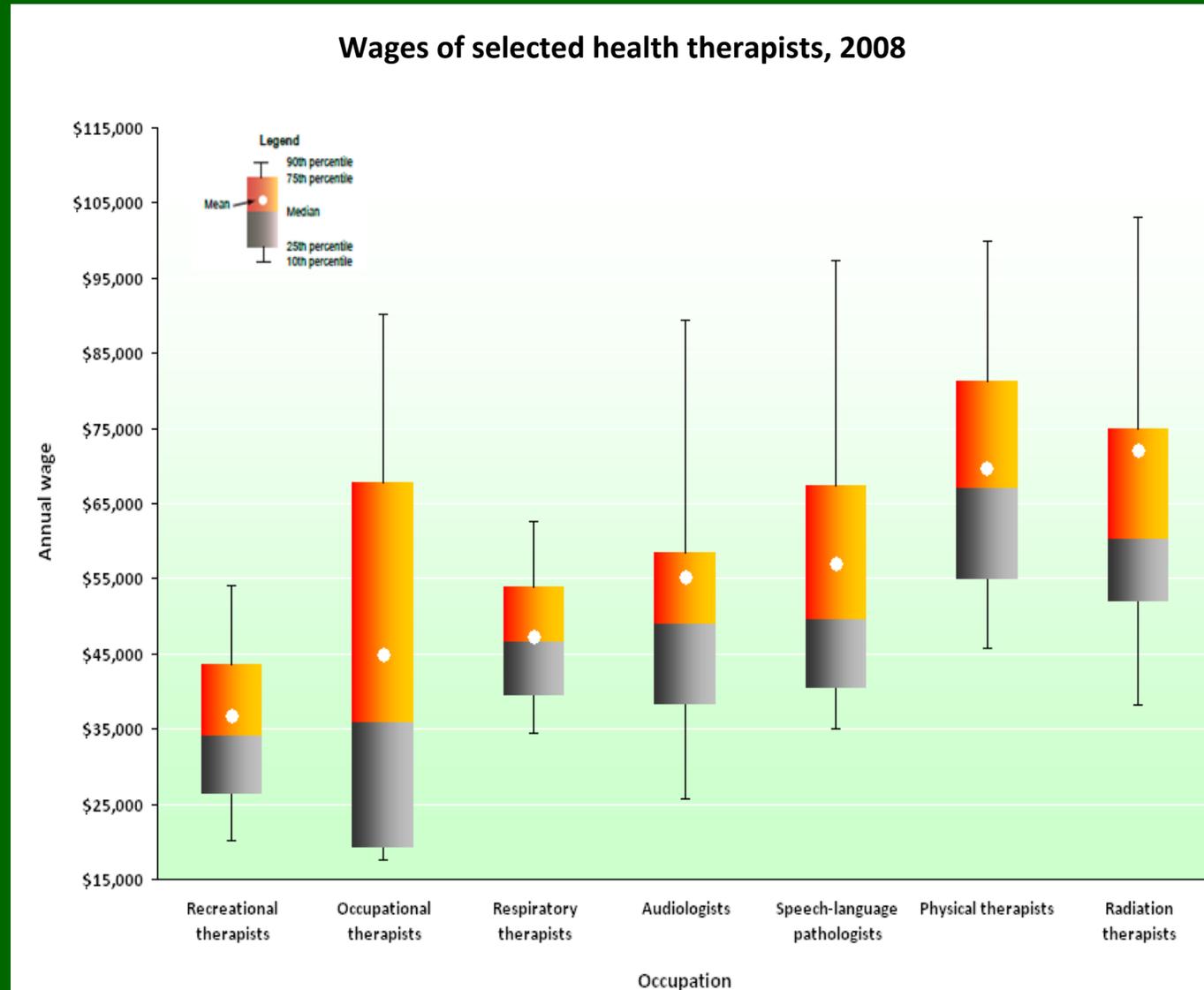
**Employment and mean hourly wages for the largest health technologist and technician occupations, 2008**



The wage range of most health therapists was very wide.

## CHART 5

- Health care and social assistance is the industry with the fastest projected employment growth from 2008 to 2018.
- Of the therapists listed, occupational therapists had the widest range between the 10th and 90th percentile wages, with 10 percent earning \$17,560 or less per year and 10 percent earning \$90,110 or more. Respiratory therapists had the narrowest wage range.
- A master's degree was the most common level of education for people entering careers as physical therapists, occupational therapists, or speech-language pathologists.

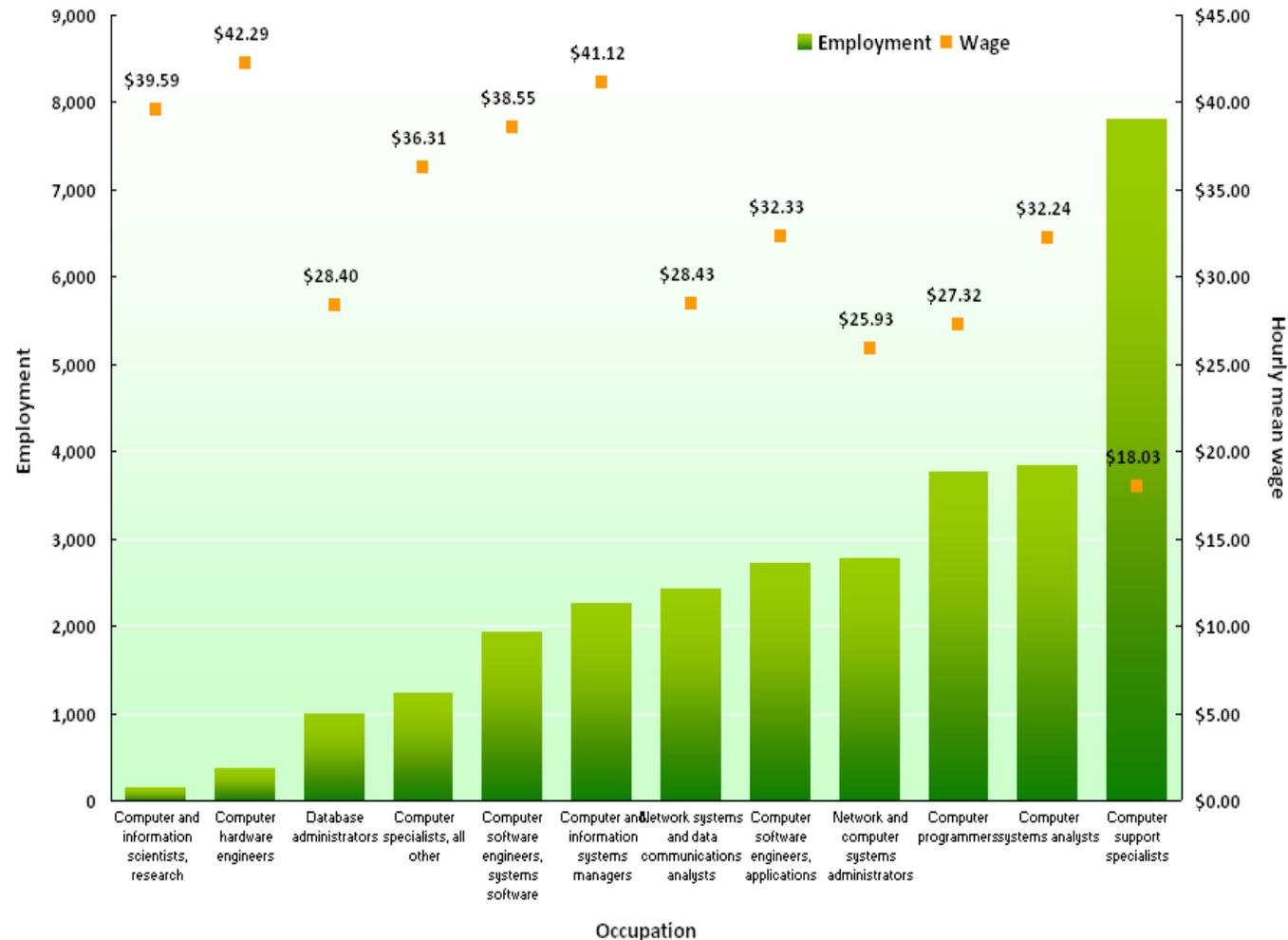


Information technology occupations were paid significantly higher wages than the Oklahoma average.

CHART 6

- Five of the largest IT occupations had wages at least twice the state average for all occupations, \$17.22. The highest paid IT occupation was computer hardware engineers, which had a mean hourly wage of \$42.29.
- The largest IT occupation, computer support specialists, had 7,807 workers and was the lowest paying IT occupation, with an average wage of \$18.03, less than \$1.00 above the state average.
- Workers in the smallest occupation shown, computer and information research scientists, were among the highest paid.

Employment and mean hourly wages of selected information technology (IT) occupations, 2008

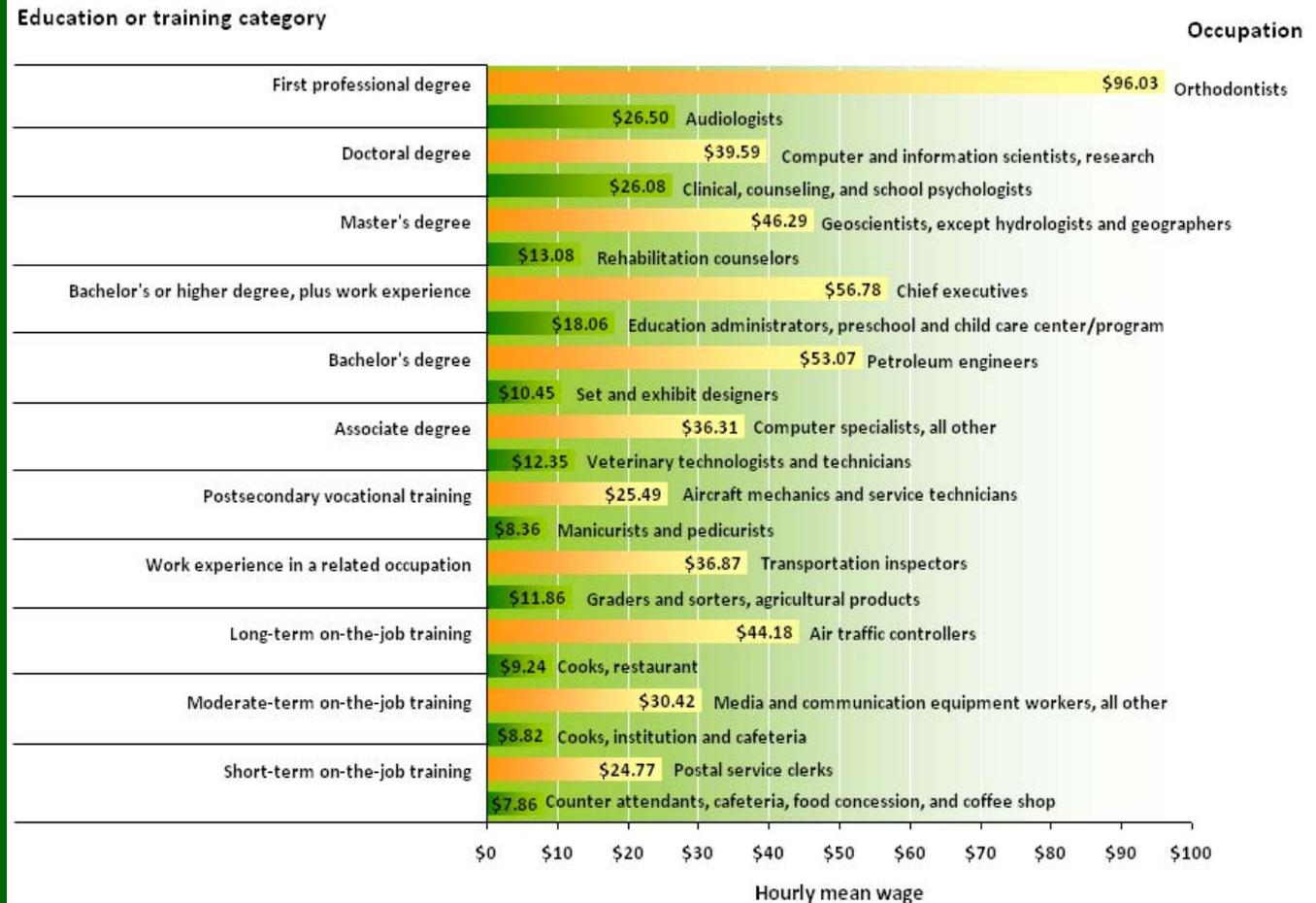


Average wages rise with education level, but wages vary for different occupations with similar levels of education.

## CHART 7

- There is a wide range of opportunities in the labor market for workers in occupations with similar education levels and experience.
- All other computer specialists, for whom the most significant source of education was an associate's degree, earned an average wage higher than that of audiologists, for whom the most significant source of education was a first professional degree.
- Air traffic controllers, for whom the most significant source of training was long-term on-the-job training, were paid higher wages than research computer and information scientists for whom the most significant source of education was a doctoral degree.

**Highest and lowest paying occupations by education and training category, 2008**

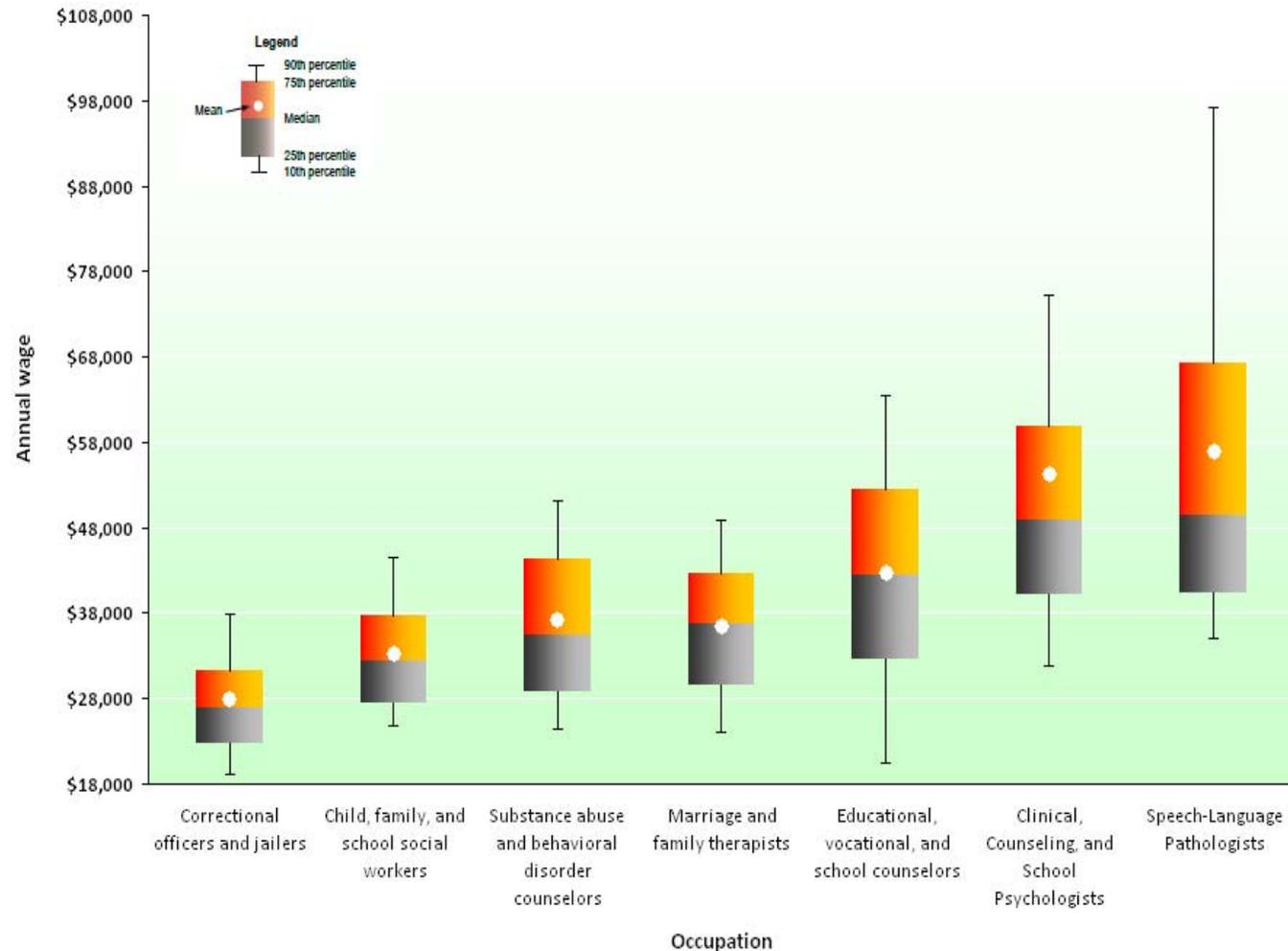


Occupations often chosen by psychology majors generally have above average wages.

## CHART 8

- With the exception of correctional officers and jailers and child, family and school social workers, all occupations shown had a median wage above the Oklahoma median wage of \$35,825.
- The occupation shown with the widest wage range was speech-language pathologists. Ten percent earned a wage below \$35,100 per year, and 10 percent earned more than \$97,260 per year.

Wage distributions of possible occupations for psychology majors, 2008



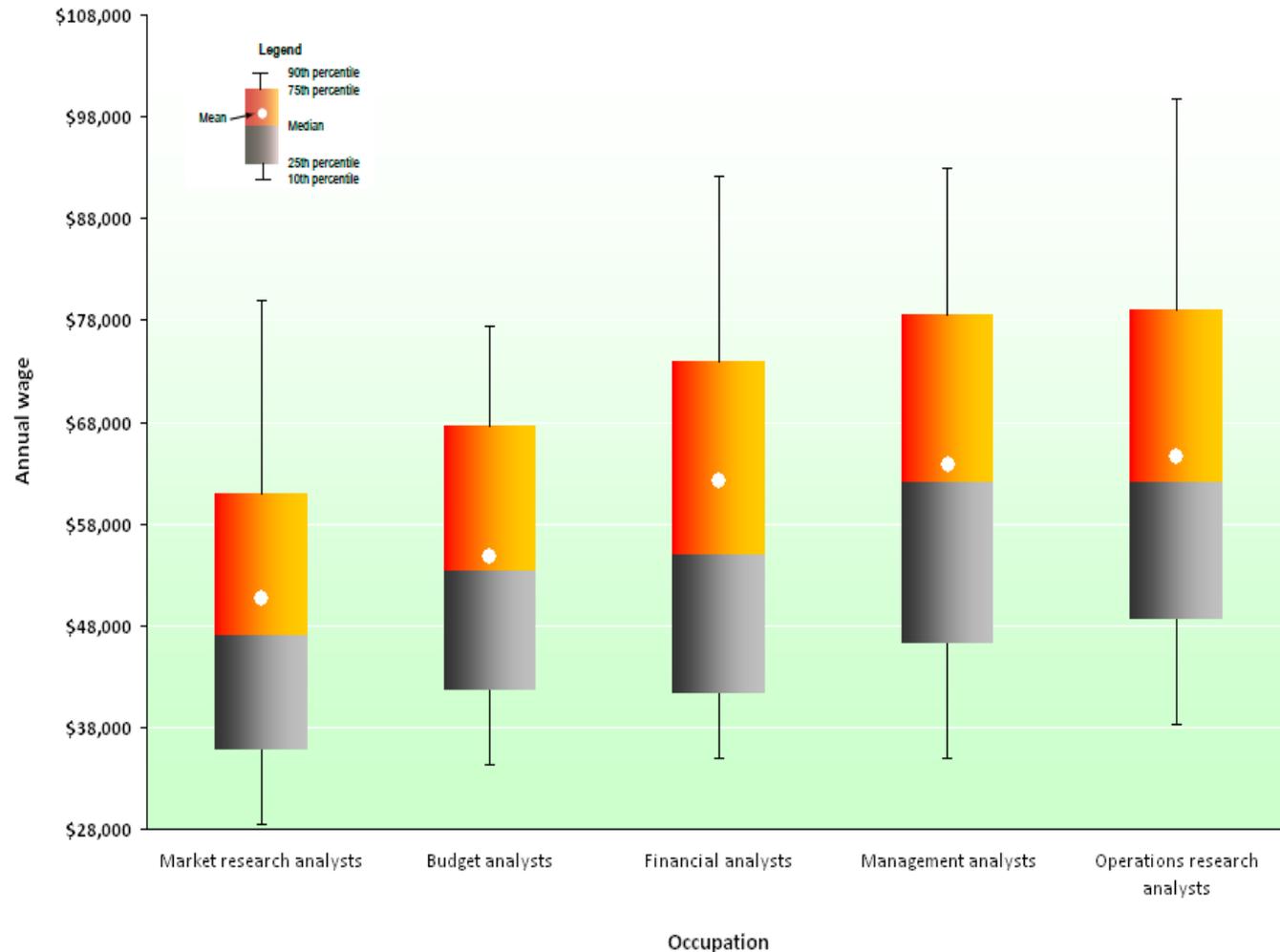
## OCCUPATION FOCUS

Business is the most popular field of study among today's undergraduates, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

### CHART 9

- Graduates with a degree in business can work in a variety of business analyst occupations, such as management analysts, market research analysts, operations research analysts, financial analysts, and budget analysts.
- At the 10th percentile, wages of workers in the selected analyst occupations related to business study ranged from \$28,550 to \$38,280 per year. The 10<sup>th</sup> percentile wages of workers in the selected occupations related to psychology ranged from \$19,160 to \$35,100.
- At the 90th percentile, wages of workers in the selected analyst occupations ranged from \$79,910 to \$99,840 per year. The 90th percentile wages of workers in the selected occupations for psychology majors ranged from \$37,950 to \$97,260.

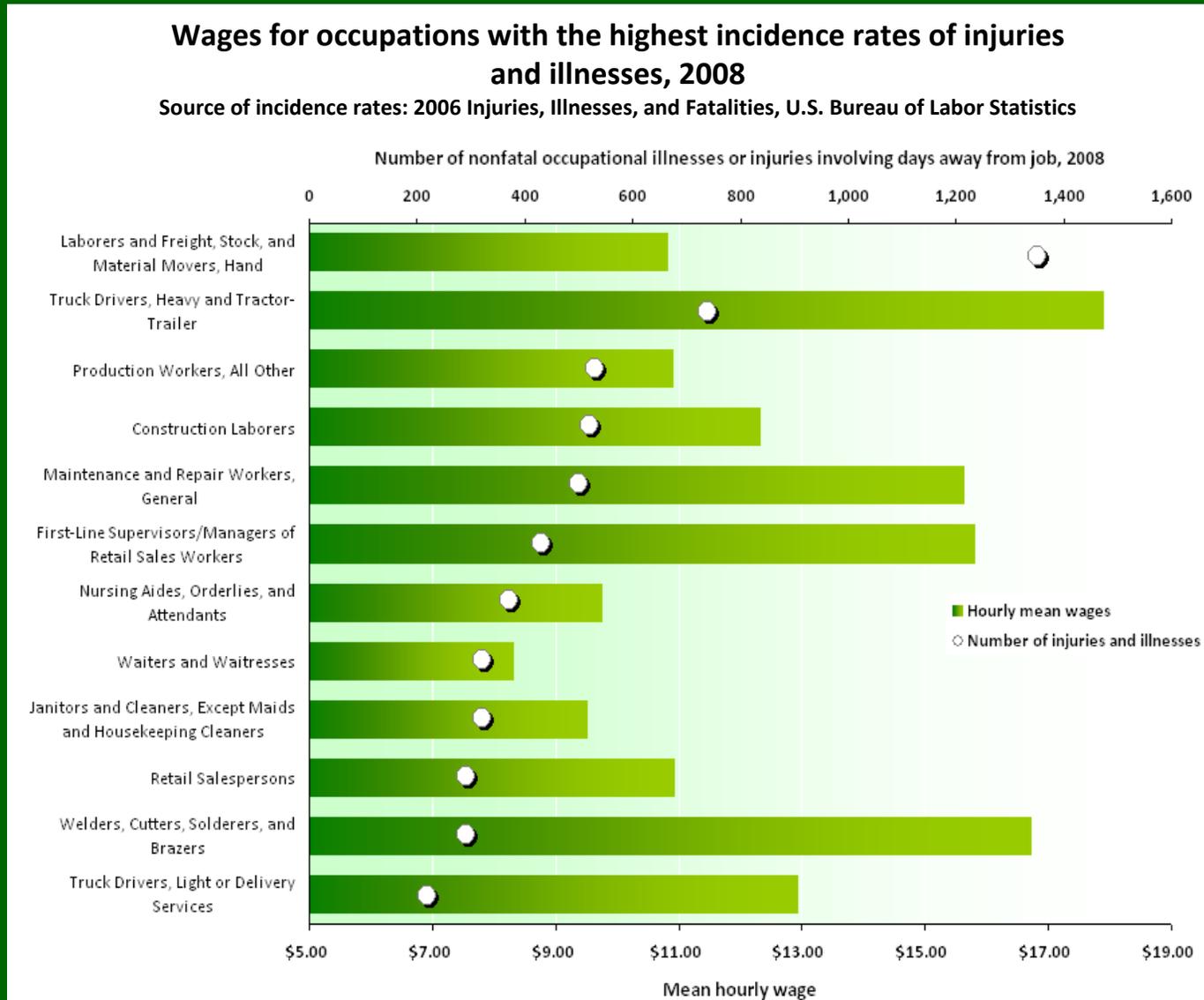
Wage distributions of possible occupations for business majors, 2008



Workers in occupations with high incidence rates of injuries and illnesses tended to earn below-average wages.

**CHART 10**

- Among the occupations with the highest incidence rate of injuries and illnesses, heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers was the only occupation that had hourly wages above the Oklahoma average of \$17.22.
- Retail salespersons was the largest occupation among those listed, with 54,270 jobs.
- Transportation and material moving occupations had the highest incidence rate of all occupations. Within that occupational group, hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers accounted for more than half of the injuries and illnesses. They also earned a low mean wage relative to other occupations shown.





# Industry Focus

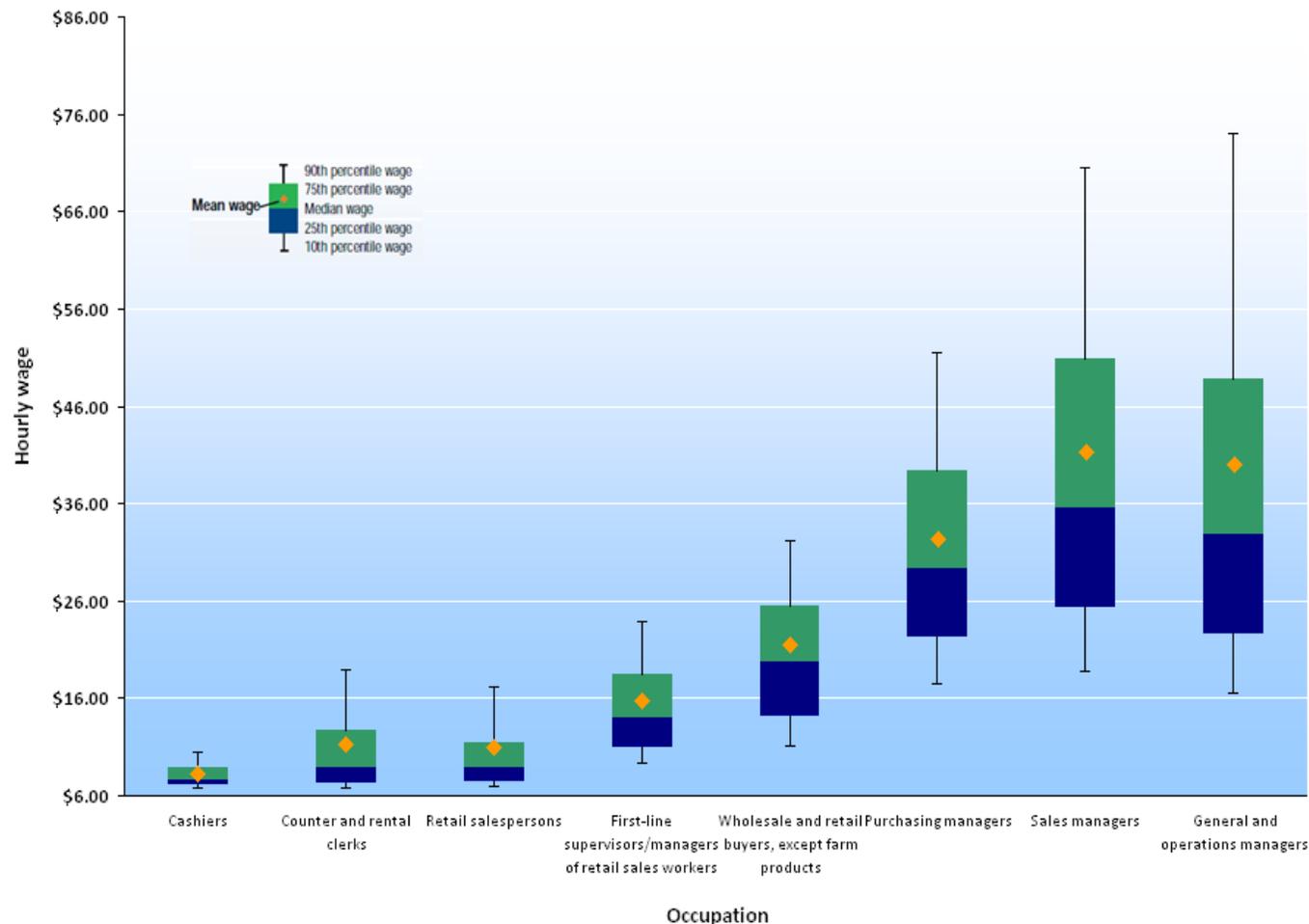


Occupations in general merchandise stores with high skill requirements tend to be higher paid and have lower employment levels.

**CHART 11**

- As salespersons gain experience, training, and seniority, they can move to positions of greater responsibility with higher potential earnings.
- As wages increase, the number of people employed in those occupations tends to decline. Cashiers made up 17.8 percent of total employment in general merchandise stores, while their first-line supervisors made up 9.7 percent.
- Sales occupations with lower mean wages have narrower wage distributions than those with higher mean wages. For instance, the difference between earnings of the top 10 percent and bottom 10 percent of cashiers, counter and rental clerks, and retail salespersons is smaller than that of managers.

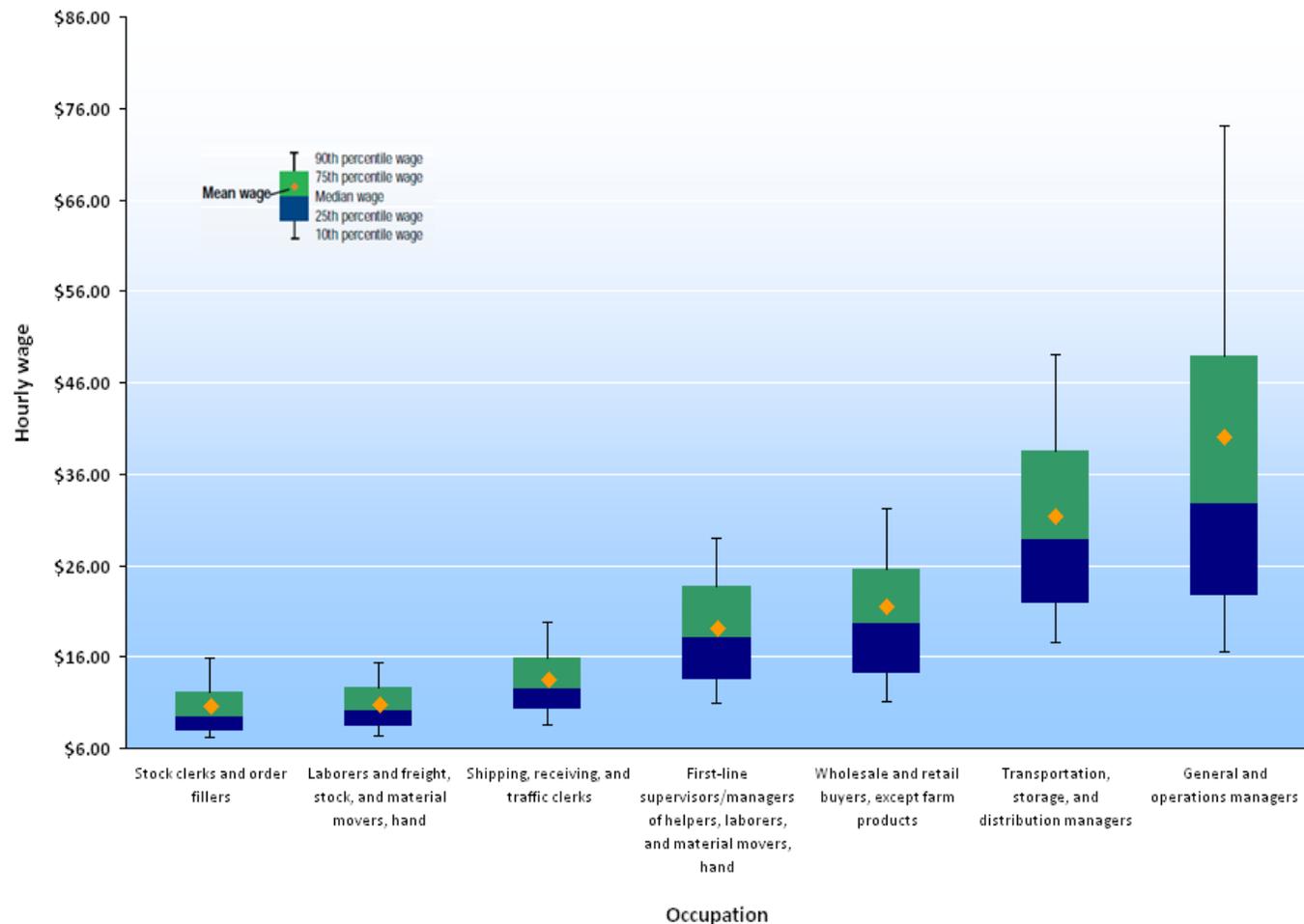
**Career paths and wage distribution for selected sales occupations in general merchandise stores, 2008**



## CHART 12

- With additional experience, training, and seniority, advancement opportunities for stock clerks and order fillers include jobs as supervisors, wholesale and retail buyers, or transportation, storage, and distribution managers.
- Transportation, storage, and distribution managers earn, on average, three times as much as the first three occupations shown.

**Career paths and wage distribution for selected logistics occupations in general merchandise stores, 2008**

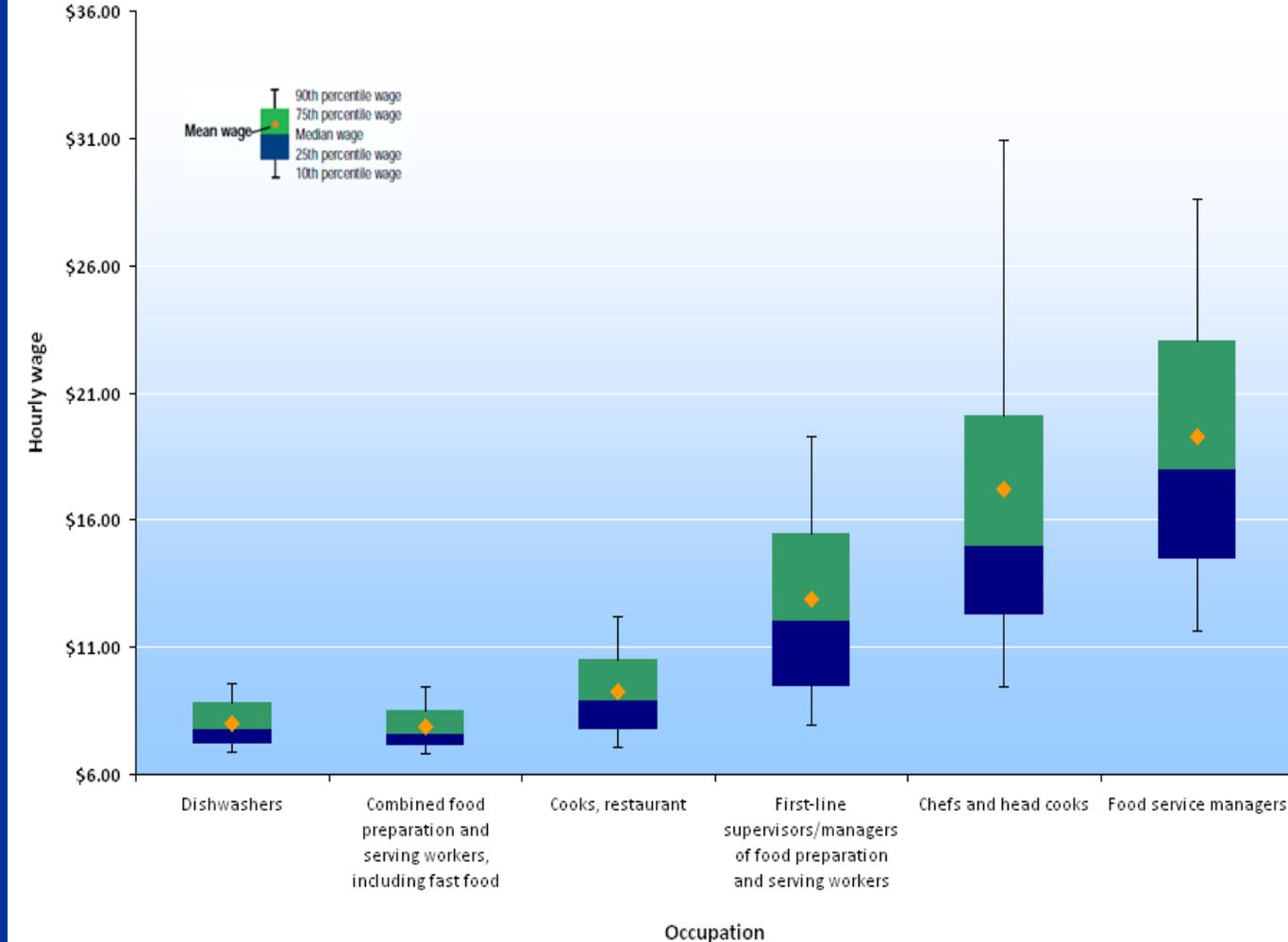


Many food service workers start as untrained food preparation workers and advance to cook positions as they acquire kitchen skills and demonstrate greater responsibility.

**CHART 13**

- Dishwashers and combined food preparation and serving workers were among the lowest paid workers in the food services and drinking places industry. There was little variation in their wages: 80 percent of dishwashers were paid between \$6.85 and \$9.60.
- In contrast, chefs and head cooks as well as food service managers had the highest wages and greatest wage variation. Eighty percent of chefs and head cooks earned between \$9.47 and \$30.90 per hour, and 80 percent of food service managers earned between \$11.66 and \$28.64.
- Many workers earn progressively higher wages as they gain experience or switch to jobs in establishments offering more advancement opportunities or higher pay.

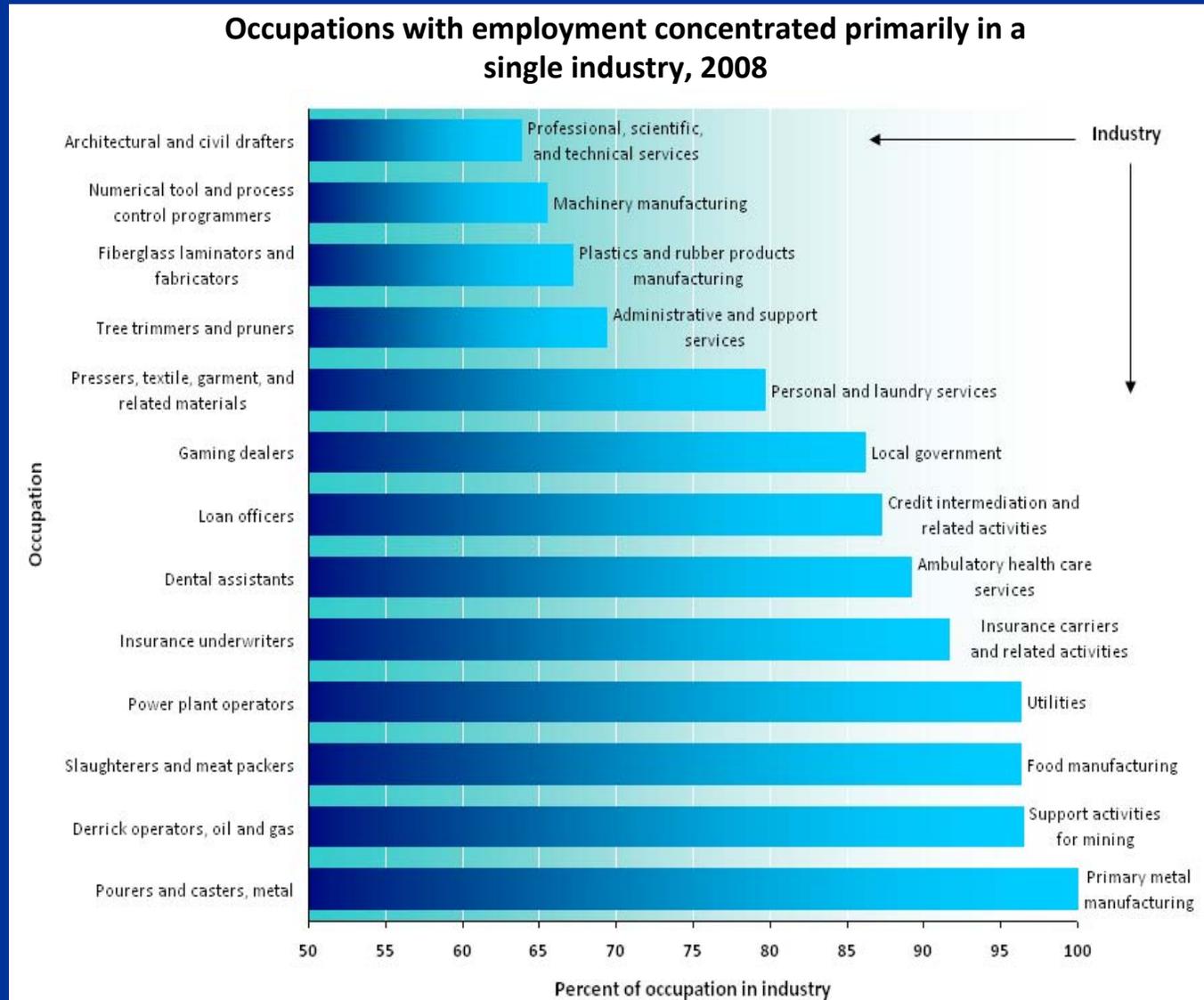
**Career paths and wage distribution for selected occupations in food services and drinking places, 2008**



Many occupations in Oklahoma were concentrated in a single industry: 124 occupations had a majority of their employment in one industry, and 34 of these occupations had over 90 percent of their employment in one industry.

**CHART 14**

- The utilities industry employed over 90 percent of power plant operators, and food manufacturing employed over 90 percent of slaughterers and meat packers
- Occupations that were specific to one industry include postsecondary education teachers, who were specific to colleges, universities, and professional schools; and postal service mail carriers, who all worked for the Government (neither occupation is shown here).

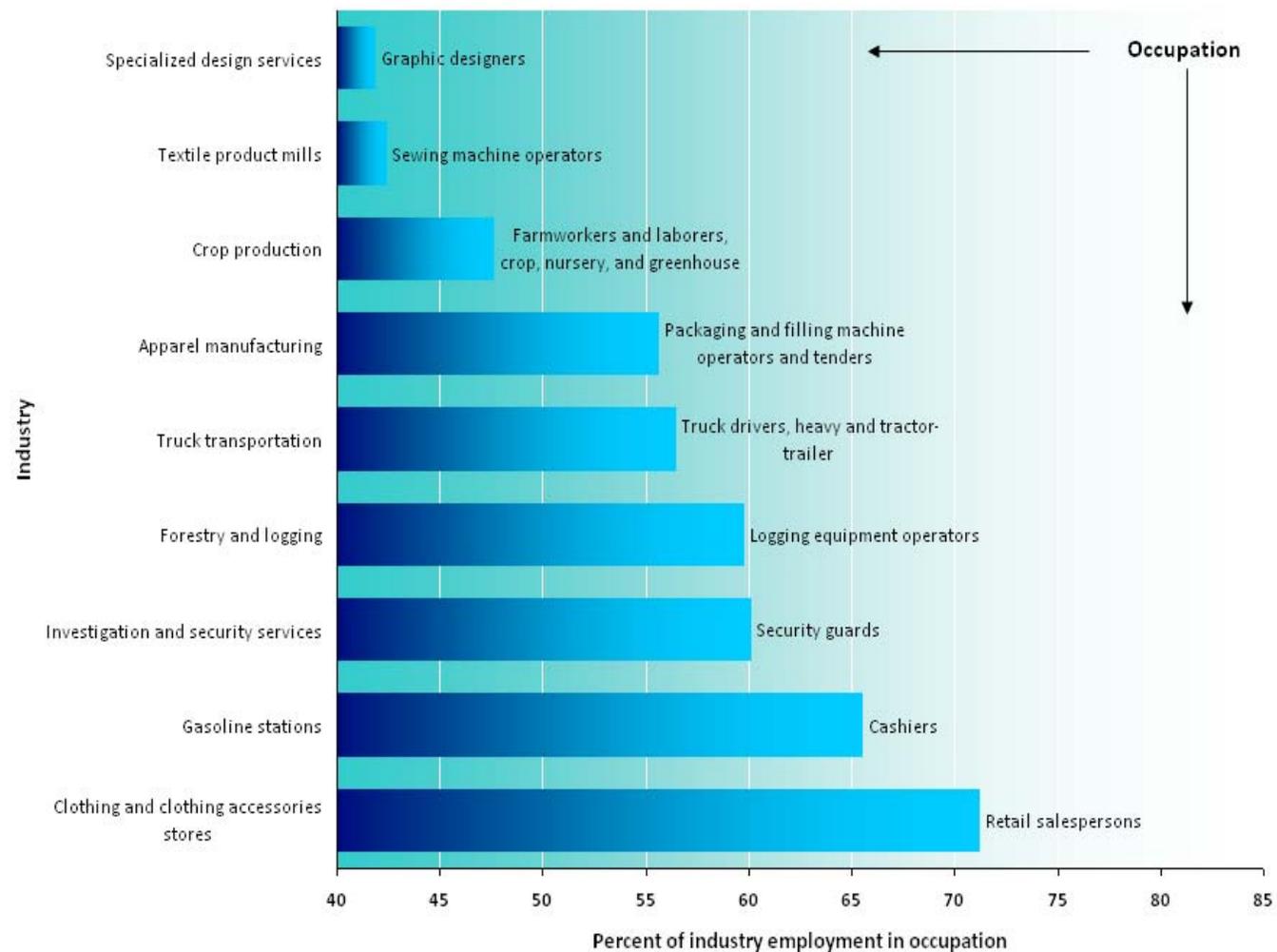


A variety of industries had their employment concentrated in a single occupation.

**CHART 15**

- Retail salespersons or cashiers accounted for the majority of employment in six retail industries, including clothing and clothing accessories stores and gasoline stations.
- Clothing and clothing accessories stores was also the industry with the highest percentage of employment in a single occupation: retail salespersons made up over 71 percent of employment in the industry.
- Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders made up over half of employment in apparel manufacturing, while crop, nursery, and greenhouse farmworkers and laborers, made up just under half of employment in crop production.

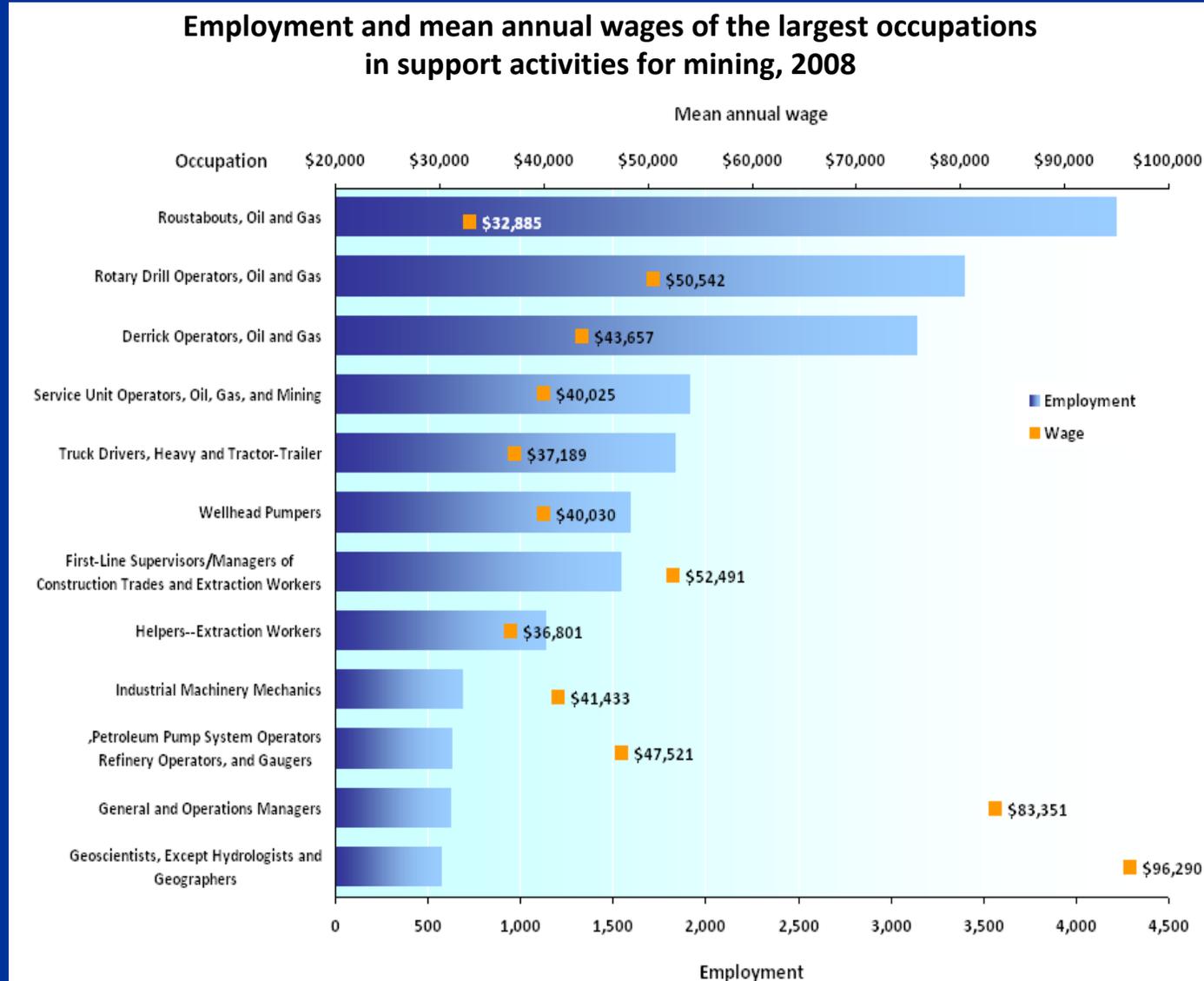
**Industries with employment concentrated primarily in a single occupation, 2008**



Oklahoma has a high concentration of corporate headquarters, regional offices and operations facilities of oil and gas firms as well as a more highly developed network of supporting firms.

**CHART 16**

- The top 12 occupations in support activities for mining accounted for over 71 percent of total employment in that industry in 2008.
- Many of the top occupations in support activities for mining were concentrated in that industry. Almost 98 percent of oil and gas derrick operators were employed in support activities for mining. Over 96 percent of oil and gas rotary drill operators were employed in support activities for mining; along with over 88 percent of oil, gas and mining service unit operators, and over 78 percent of oil and gas roustabouts.
- With the exception of oil and gas roustabouts, wages for occupations employed in support activities for mining are considerably higher than the Oklahoma average.

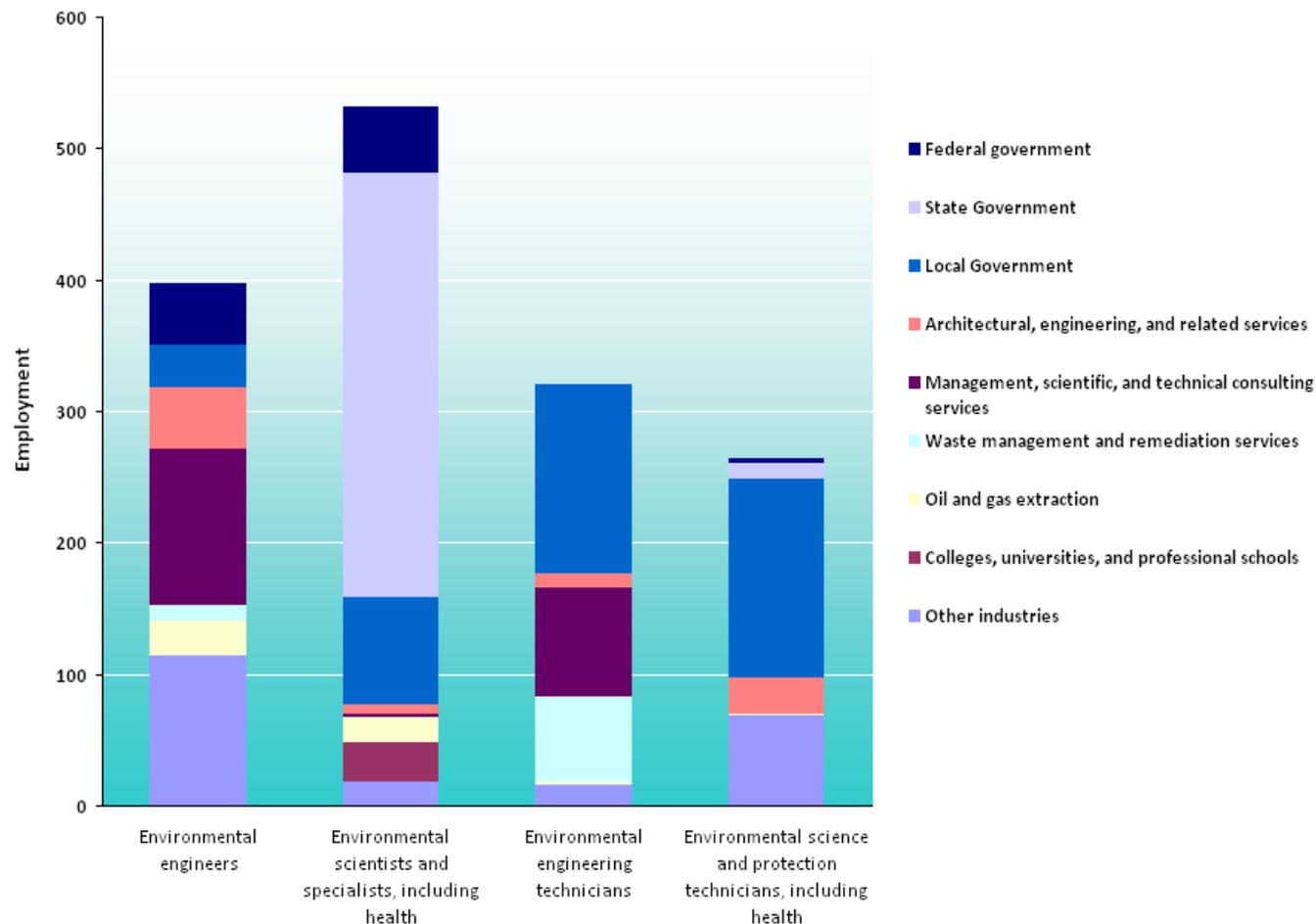


Although there is currently no standard definition of "green" jobs, Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) data are available for a number of occupations associated with protecting and preserving the environment.

**CHART 17**

- With total employment of 530, environmental scientists was the largest of these four occupations, while environmental science and protection technicians was the smallest, with employment of 260.
- Government was the largest employer of all four occupations. Combined, local, state, and federal government employed almost 56 percent of the total employment of these occupations.
- Management, scientific, and technical consulting services was the largest employer of environmental engineers employing approximately 30 percent of this occupation.

**Employment of environmental science and environmental engineering occupations by industry, 2008**



STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) occupations were most often found in research and technical services industries and in government.

**CHART 18**

- Many of the industries that employed large numbers of STEM workers were found in the professional, scientific, and technical services sector. The federal government employed the second largest number of these workers.
- Overall, there were 10,980 STEM workers in architecture and engineering occupations, 9,040 in computer and mathematical science occupations, and 5,340 in life, physical, and social science occupations.

