

Dan Rather Reports

Episode Number: 505

Episode Title: Snapshot

Description: A coast to coast look at one week in jobless America with stories of how the recession continues to dig deep into every corner of the country.

TEASE:

DAN RATHER (VOICE OVER)

TONIGHT. A SPECIAL REPORT ON JOBS. THE FACES AND THE STORIES BEHIND THE UNEMPLOYMENT NUMBERS.

ANGELA JENNINGS

Being unemployed and having bills and children to support, you have to pretty much take what you can get.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SNAPSHOTS FROM ACROSS AMERICA AS A COUNTRY LOOKS FOR WORK.

ED BRADLEY

We have a four-month and a two-year-old in the house, so, yeah that's- that's a motivator.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

WHERE DID THE JOBS OF YESTERDAY GO? AND FROM WHERE WILL THE JOBS OF TOMORROW COME?

KARI STRAUSBAUGH

The several thousands of people who are unemployed here-- are not gonna be reemployed by automotive. They need something else to look forward to in the future.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

HEARTACHE AND HOPE IN SEARCH OF A PAYCHECK. WE'LL BRING YOU THE NEWS, TONIGHT, ON DAN RATHER REPORTS.

WASHINGTON, D.C.:

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

GOOD EVENING FROM NEW YORK. THIS BROADCAST IS ALWAYS ENDEAVORING TO BRING YOU CONTEXT FOR IMPORTANT STORIES. TONIGHT IS NO EXCEPTION. AND THE TOPIC COULD BE NO MORE TIMELY OR IMPORTANT. JOBS. FOR OUR SPECIAL REPORT WE'VE SENT REPORTERS AND PRODUCERS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY IN THE LAST FEW DAYS... TAKING A SNAPSHOT OF AMERICA. AND THE BOTTOM LINE IS THIS -- DESPITE THE DROP IN THE OFFICIAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN JANUARY, THIS RECESSION CONTINUES TO PACK A WALLOP. THE NUMBERS TELL A PAINFUL STORY... SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE RECESSION TWO AND A HALF YEARS AGO, ALMOST EIGHT AND A HALF MILLION JOBS...GONE. ... ALSO, LONG TERM UNEMPLOYMENT IS WAY UP TO SAY NOTHING OF THE UNDEREMPLOYED. THE ECONOMISTS AND STATISTICIANS WHO COMPILE ALL THE NUMBERS HAVE SUDDENLY TAKEN ON A MUCH MORE VISIBLE AND VITAL ROLE. SO WE BEGIN TONIGHT WITH THOSE NUMBER CRUNCHERS IN WASHINGTON AT THE BUREAU OF LABOR...WHERE A ONCE MUNDANE MONTHLY RITUAL NOW HAS THE NATION HOLDING IT'S COLLECTIVE BREATH.

RATHER (VOICEOVER)

IT'S THE FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH AND ON CONSTITUTION AVENUE, JUST A FEW BLOCKS FROM THE NATION'S CAPITAL, THE BUREAU OF LABOR, NOT YOUR USUAL TELEVISION HOTSPOT IN WASHINGTON, IS WALL TO WALL WITH REPORTERS AND CAMERAS. UNEMPLOYMENT IS BIG NEWS DURING BAD TIMES. AND THIS IS THE MORNING THAT, ONCE A MONTH, THE GOVERNMENT TELLS US HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE JOBLESS. THE NUMBERS ARE VERY SENSITIVE INFORMATION AND IF THEY WERE TO LEAK, EVEN SECONDS OR MINUTES EARLY, IT COULD BE A HUGE BENEFIT TO SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE IN THE FINANCIAL WORLD.

REPORTER

Let me know how this is gonna play out. I've got a sound bite I could toss to you if you guys wanted...

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SO HERE'S WHAT HAPPENS...AT 8 AM A GROUP OF REPORTERS IS BRIEFED IN SECRET IN A WINDOWLESS OFFICE AND GIVEN THE DATA FOR THE MONTH.

ANOTHER REPORTER

Yeah, I hope you're hearing and seeing this...

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE INFORMATION IS EMBARGOED UNTIL EXACTLY 8:30 ON THE SECOND. THAT'S THE GOVERNMENT PRESS REPRESENTATIVE COUNTING DOWN TO EXACTLY HALF PAST THE HOUR. THAT'S WHEN IT'S RELEASED TO THE WORLD.

BUREAU OF LABOR PRESS SECRETARY

3 - 2 - 1 Transmit!

REPORTERS

Minus 20 thousand. January non-foreign payrolls fell by 20 thousand. The unemployment rate is 9.7 percent...

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SUDDENLY, THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR BECOMES THE CENTER OF THE MEDIA WORLD -- IF FOR ONLY A FEW MINUTES.

LIZZIE O'LEARY, BLOOMBERG WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT

We do see, though, that decline in the unemployment rate down to 9.7 percent. 20 thousand jobs lost in the month of January, Betty.

BETTY LIU, BLOOMBERG NEWS ANCHOR

OK, you just highlighted those very key numbers for us Betty. I wanna get back to Ethan...

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THEN, AT PRECISELY 9:30 ADMINISTRATION ECONOMISTS GO TO THE HILL TO BRIEF MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.

REPRESENTATIVE CAROLYN B. MALONEY, DEMOCRAT - NEW YORK

The meeting will come to order. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle, because of the snow, have asked unanimous consent to have their statements placed in the record and we may have some others coming on the Democratic side but many people have left because of the snow warning.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

ON THIS DAY, A SNOW STORM IS BEARING DOWN ON WASHINGTON...AND THE REPUBLICAN MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ARE A NO-SHOW...SO THE

DEMOCRATS GET THEIR CHANCE TO SPIN THE NUMBERS UNCHALLENGED.

MALONEY

During the last 3 months of the Bush administration, we lost an average of 727 thousand jobs per month. In contrast, during the most recent 3 months of the Obama administration, we lost an average of 35 thousand jobs each month. We are definitely trending in the right direction...

SENATOR ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., DEMOCRAT - PENNSYLVANIA

...moving in the right direction. I think a strong case can be made that the recovery bill is -- is having and has had a positive impact and is at least, at least, any fair-minded person would say, is beginning to work. So that's -- that's I think important to put on the record...

TENNESSEE:

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

WELCOME TO CENTRAL TENNESSEE. IT'S A LONG WAY FROM WASHINGTON AND ALL THAT SUDDENLY POSITIVE TALK ABOUT THE ECONOMY STARTING TO TURN AROUND.

BRANDI BURGESS

Hey, you remember when this used to be full?

ANDREA DUKE

Oh, yeah.

BURGESS

Now look at it. It ain't got barely nuthin' in it...

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THIS IS THE LOCAL JOB CENTER IN TULLAHOMA. YOU'D THINK THAT EVERYONE HERE WOULD BE THE ONE OF THOSE UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS. YOU WOULD BE WRONG. MANY OF THESE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN FORCED TO TAKE JOBS BELOW THEIR SKILL LEVEL, OR ARE WORKING PART TIME WHEN THEY WANT TO BE WORKING FULL TIME OR THEY'VE JUST STOPPED LOOKING.

WORKER AT CENTER

If you go back to work, you just quit callin' in and that will stop your claim.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

NOW, THEY'RE NOW NOT EVEN COUNTED. WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF THE UNDEREMPLOYED. AND IF YOU DID COUNT THEM IN THE NATIONAL JOBLESS STATISTICS, YOU'D BE LOOKING AT THE HIGHEST NUMBERS SINCE THE GREAT DEPRESSION. IN THIS PART OF THE COUNTRY IT'S PARTICULARLY BAD, NEARLY 40 PERCENT ACCORDING TO A LOCAL STUDY -- A STAGGERING FIGURE, AND EACH NUMBER HAS A STORY.

ANGELA JENNINGS

In fact, I am one of those people...

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

MEET ANGELA JENNINGS. AFTER RETIRING FROM A NINE-YEAR ARMY CAREER, SHE RETURNED HOME TO HER NATIVE TENNESSEE. SHE TOOK COURSES IN COMPUTER SCIENCE, MARKETING AND ACCOUNTING AND THEN STARTED HER OWN SMALL MARKETING FIRM - EVEN SCORING A FEW LUCRATIVE GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS. BUT THOSE CONTRACTS EVENTUALLY DRIED UP AND HER BUSINESS WENT UNDER. SHE WAS ABLE TO STRING TOGETHER SOME INCOME, BUT NOTHING NEAR WHAT SHE EXPECTED TO EARN WITH HER TRAINING AND NOT ENOUGH TO REALLY MAKE ENDS MEET.

JENNINGS

In my profession you start off anywhere from 20 to 30 to 40 dollars an hour and I settled for 12 dollars an hour.

JENNINGS (IN KITCHEN WITH DAUGHTER)

Are you hungry hungry?

DAUGHTER

More like tired...

JENNINGS

I just needed a job so badly that I just took the offer that I was given. And that is one of the problems around here—people are having to take anything that's offered in order just to survive.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE SINGLE MOTHER OF FOUR BARELY SCRAPES BY. SHE HAS BEEN WITHOUT WORK NOW FOR MONTHS.

JENNINGS

When I first started jobs— of course looking for jobs of course I'm looking for jobs that are in my area of expertise. Either in marketing, computer analyst, or in auditing—those of that nature, but now I'm at the point where you gotta take what you can get, whether it be flippin' burgers at McDonalds, or um—you know, just driving a school bus. The problem that I run into in this area is either you're over-educated or you're under-experienced.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE JOB MARKET IN CENTRAL TENNESSEE HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY HARD HIT. BUT THE PEOPLE HERE ARE TOUGH AND REFUSE TO GIVE UP. A NEW STUDY OUT OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY FOUND THAT THE AREA'S AVAILABLE WORKFORCE IS SKILLED BUT SO DESPERATE FOR WORK THEY WILL ENDURE LONG COMMUTES AND LOW WAGES -- EVEN BELOW THE MINIMUM WAGE -- BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO.

JENNINGS (AT DINNER)

I went over to Murray's and fixed his Momma's computer...

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND IF YOU DON'T THINK THEY HAVE GUTS...TAKE A LOOK AT THIS:

JENNINGS (ON TV SHOW)

I can do anything from computer IT, marketing, I'm a certified internal auditor...

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SO DESPERATE FOR WORK, THEY'RE WILLING TO SHARE THEIR PERSONAL PAIN IN A VERY PUBLIC FORUM. THIS LOCAL CABLE PUBLIC ACCESS PROGRAM IS DEDICATED TO THE TOPIC ON EVERYBODY'S MIND.

LANE CURLEE, FORMER MAYOR TULLAHOMA, TENNESSEE (ON THE SHOW)

Hello and welcome to another edition of *Jobs Jobs Jobs*. I'm Lane Curlee. The purpose of this program is to acquaint any employers that might be watching with some of the folks that are unemployed here in Southern Middle Tennessee. Angela Jennings has joined us today. Welcome to the program Angela.

JENNINGS (ON THE SHOW)

Thank you, Lane. Nice to be here.

CURLEE (ON THE SHOW)

Good. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE HOST IS FORMER TULLAHOA MAYOR LANE CURLEE. HE RECENTLY LAUNCHED THE PROGRAM AS A PUBLIC SERVICE. EVERY OTHER WEEK, CURLEE GIVES UNEMPLOYED NEIGHBORS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT WHAT HE CALLS A TALKING RESUME TO 60,000 POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS WHO CAN WATCH THE PROGRAM.

TERESA MAXWELL (ON THE SHOW)

I'm a very hard worker. My work ethic is -- way up there.

JOHN CORAK (ON THE SHOW)

Before that I was a supervisor for a rat coil -- for coil line at a factory and I worked in shipping for four and a half years at Goodman. And I'd love -- I've been doin' music since I was five years old. I play keyboard, I sing, I write songs.

CURLEE (ON THE SHOW)

Um, what other strengths do you think that you have that would be of helpful to an employer?

JENNINGS (ON THE SHOW)

Well, I have a unique charm about myself that flows naturally and, you know, having that background in the military...

CURLEE

They really, really want work. And I think that when they are on this show, they find somehow to rise to the situation, and just do a really good job. I mean it's a powerful story some of them have.

CURLEE (ON THE SHOW)

And joining us now is Philip Gilmore. Philip, welcome to our program.

PHILIP GILMORE (ON THE SHOW)

Thank you. Pleasure to be here.

CURLEE (ON THE SHOW)

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

GILMORE (ON THE SHOW)

I'm a 45 year old male -- happily married for 17 years.

CURLEE (ON THE SHOW)

If you had 30 seconds and you had a prospective employer in front of you right now, what would you want him or her to know about you?

GILMORE (ON THE SHOW)

That I can be cross-trained -- I'm not necessarily just a construction person.

CURLEE

It causes them to think about what are your strengths? How have you helped an employer? So believe it or not, the television can almost be a practice for them when they're talking to a real prospective employer.

GILMORE (ON THE SHOW)

Very dedicated family member - just a dedicated individual and ready to work.

CURLEE (ON THE SHOW)

Sounds like you're ready to go to work.

GILMORE (ON THE SHOW)

Yes, sir.

GILMORE

I feel bad for havin' to be on this. I've always been a provider for my family and I've always been a strong provider. And it hits somebody with -- with pride and ego really hard. And when you wake up the next morning and you don't have anything planned, you don't have any jobs comin', it -- it really weighs on a man because he's got his family to do - that's dependin' on him to go out there and kill the deer, and bring it home. And when you can't go hunting because you don't have bullets, I don't have anything to work with. It is hard. It's hard.

SHEFFIELD

I have furthered my education and I'm trying to -- in order to get that government job I been talkin' about, I think I'm gonna need a little bit more...

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

WE SPOKE TO ALL FIVE OF CURLEE'S GUESTS THAT DAY – AND THEY ALL HAD SIMILAR PROFILES -- ALL SKILLED IN TRADES THAT IN HEALTHIER ECONOMIC TIMES, WOULD BE MARKETABLE.

SHEFFIELD

I really know how to get people started without that cup of coffee. You know, just go in and say, "Hey, we got this to do today. If you need help today, let me know."

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

FOUR WERE VETERANS.

CURLEE

So you've had a very diverse background in the military, it sounds like.

SHEFFIELD

Yes sir. So I had to find the best of those guys to help get the job done.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND THEY WERE ALL EAGER TO WORK, AND AT THIS POINT, WILLING TO TAKE ALMOST ANY JOB TO PAY THEIR BILLS.

CURLEE

And you're ready to go to work?

MAXWELL

Today.

CURLEE

Ok. Good.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE CONFIDENCE THEY PROJECT ON CAMERA BELIES THEIR INCREASINGLY DESPERATE SITUATIONS AT HOME.

CURLEE (ON THE SHOW)

Well, thank you very much for being here today and once again, if any employers are watching and would like to visit with Angela and learn a little bit more...

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

JENNINGS, WHO IS DEEPLY RELIGIOUS, SAYS GOD IS TESTING HER FAITH. SHE RECENTLY WAS HOSPITALIZED FOR A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN – AND LOST HER 12-YEAR-OLD SON IN A CUSTODY BATTLE WITH THE BOY'S FATHER.

JENNINGS

Not only am I dealing with being unemployed and being a single mom, and um—just having to deal with the economy the way it is. I have friends that are homeless that are living in their cars. And I took 'em in to give them a warm place to stay, and the judge pretty much said I endangered my children by doing that. So, it's just hard because I am a Christian and I am a minister as well so I try to live the life that a Christian is supposed to live, in helping a neighbor and its frustrating to know that there are jobs there—out—that exist but people choose to hire people from other states. They choose to turn their heads and not help their own and it just makes me angry because I've been in countries where folks didn't care about their own people, and I saw how it affected the children and I saw how it affected families and so I don't want to be like that. I want to do my part, even though I don't have much. If I am able to help somebody, I want to do that.

CORAK (SINGING)

I like the preacher from the Church of Christ...

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

IRAQ WAR VETERAN JOHN CORAK HAS ALSO RELIED ON HIS FAITH TO MAKE IT THROUGH A YEAR OF LOW-PAYING AND ODD JOBS.

CORAK

Well, I just believe that God has one thing out there for me. That's what its gonna be and I know if I stay motivated in everything I do, no matter how little it is, and I do the right thing and I work hard at whatever I can, then I know its gonna work out. And it will eventually.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SINCE RETURNING FROM IRAQ A FEW YEARS AGO, CORAK HAS SPENT COUNTLESS HOURS EARNING A NUMBER OF ONLINE DEGREES AND CERTIFICATIONS IN MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION.

CURLEE (ON THE SHOW)

Remind us again what you think your strengths are.

CORAK (ON THE SHOW)

I'm just -- I'm honest and I work hard, you know, there's a lot of people who don't work hard for their money. I mean they're in there to get out, you know, make it through the day and make their paycheck. I don't believe in that. I wanna succeed.

CURLEE (ON THE SHOW)

That was excellent. Another good job.

CORAK (ON THE SHOW)

Thanks, Lane.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

HE HOPES TO FIND A JOB AS A PROJECT MANAGER. BUT DESPITE HIS SKILLS AND HIS MILITARY SERVICE, HE HAS GOTTEN NARY A NIBBLE.

CORAK

It's very frustrating 'cause I know there's people out there who are working, who aren't really making an effort yet they have a job. Here I know from my past—if they just called my past employers, they'd find out that, hey, I'm a good worker. I'm motivated. I'm intelligent. I can do the job, you know, hands down. And, uh, no one- it's just like no one—like I'm screaming for help but nobody's hearing, almost.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

LIKE MANY DURING THIS RECESSION, CORAK HAS HAD TO PUT ASIDE HIS DREAMS FOR AWHILE.

CORAK

Honestly, I'll take about any job I can, nine or ten dollars an hour if I need. In fact, I am starting one that I finally got but it's with cable sales, Monday. Which that's, you know, my degree doesn't fit at all, nothing really fits in there, but it's something and I'll be starting that Monday.

JENNINGS

I'm willing to even start at the entry level, you know. I believe that in order to lead you must first follow, so whatever it takes to get the job done, to work long hours, to travel, to relocate—whatever it takes to get the job done. I'm the person for that job.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

TONIGHT, WE'RE GIVING YOU A LOOK AT SNAPSHOTS OF THE JOB PICTURE AROUND THE COUNTRY. YOU'VE ALREADY SEEN HOW THE UNEMPLOYMENT NUMBERS, AS HIGH AS THEY ARE, DO NOT ACCURATELY REFLECT THE PAIN OF MANY AMERICANS. NOW WE TURN TO HOW PEOPLE ARE LOOKING FOR JOBS IN SOME SURPRISING LOCATIONS AND ARE TRYING TO CHANGE A BUSINESS CLIMATE THAT SEEMS TO BE STUCK IN NEUTRAL. IN THIS NEXT SEGMENT, WE HAVE THREE DIFFERENT STORIES FROM THREE PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. TOGETHER THEY SHOW HOW TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES ARE CHANGING AMERICA IN SUBTLE AND PERHAPS LASTING WAYS.

CHICAGO:

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

CHICAGO HAS ALWAYS BEEN A CITY THAT DREAMS BIG. TOUGH. GRITTY. THE HEART OF AMERICA. ALWAYS BUILDING A BIGGER TOWN THAT REACHED FOR THE SKY. SO IT IS WITH SAD IRONY THAT ONE OF THE CITY'S EMPLOYERS IS SUDDENLY HIRING PEOPLE TO DISASSEMBLE THAT DREAM. THIS HOTEL IS JUST OUTSIDE CHICAGO IN SCHAUMBURG ILLINOIS. INSIDE THE HOTEL, ON THE SAME DAY THE NEW UNEMPLOYMENT NUMBERS WERE RELEASED, IS A JOBS FAIR, BUT IT'S NOT JUST FOR ANY JOBS. YOU NEED TO BE HIGHLY QUALIFIED AND RECEIVE AN INVITATION TO ATTEND. STILL HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE MAKE THE LIST. THIS IS A SUIT AND TIE CROWD. AND MANY OF THE JOBS THEY'RE GOING FOR REQUIRE ADVANCED DEGREES. AND IT'S PACKED. THE POLICE ARE CALLED IN TO CONTROL THE CROWD. THE HOTEL BALLROOM HAS BECOME AN ISLAND IN A SEA OF UNEMPLOYMENT MISERY. THIS IS A JOBS FAIR THAT IS FUELED BY FAILURE. IT'S RUN BY THE FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION, THE F-D-I-C. AND THE REASON SOME OF THE PEOPLE WILL GET WORK IS BECAUSE SO MANY BANKS ARE GOING BELLY UP, AND NOW THE GOVERNMENT NEEDS WORKERS--LOTS OF KNOWLEDGEABLE WORKERS TO CLEAN UP THE MESS.

DAVID SHOOK

Uh, they had a full house. I don't know how many it holds, but we were wedged in there pretty good so.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

DAVID SHOOK WORKED HIS WAY UP FROM TELLER TO THE UPPER ECHELONS OF BANK MANAGEMENT OVER 25 YEARS. THAT CLIMB ENDED LAST YEAR.

SHOOK

Actually, I was downsized through a bank-rebuilding effort.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND HERE HE IS, LOOKING FOR WORK WITH HUNDREDS OF OTHERS LIKE HIM.

SHOOK

Frankly I didn't know age-wise what to expect and I was pretty much right in the middle in terms of um the median age of the people that where in the room and on this side I had two former bank presidents, on this side I had a CPA and an attorney so there's quite a bit of knowledge and expertise in the room.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND THERE ARE ENOUGH JOBLESS IN CHICAGO TO FILL LOTS OF BALLROOMS. THE STATE IS SUFFERING. DECEMBER MARKED THE 23RD CONSECUTIVE MONTHLY DECLINE IN JOBS. IN 2009, COMPANIES STATEWIDE CUT ALMOST A QUARTER OF A MILLION WORKERS. IN CHICAGO, STREET CORNERS AND ABANDONED SHOP WINDOWS SHOW THE SIGNS OF LOSS AND STAGNATION. GREG WATSON IS IN CHARGE OF THE F-D-I-C FOR THE MIDWEST.

GREG WATSON

You know, I have to tell you, closing a bank is not fun. It's very traumatic to those bank employees; you know they don't know if they still have a job or if they don't. Closing of a bank in a small town can be traumatic to the local community.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

YOU DONT HAVE TO TELL MANY UNEMPLOYED WORKERS ABOUT TRAUMA. THIS IS AN ANXIOUS CROWD. A WHITE COLLAR AUDIENCE FILLED WITH BANKERS, LAWYERS, REAL ESTATE EXPERTS. PEOPLE WHO WERE CONVINCED THEIR JOBS WERE SOLID--MADE BIG MONEY AND HAD THE LIFESTYLE TO PROVE IT. NOW, THEY HOPE TO LATCH ON HERE, EVEN IF IT'S JUST FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS. BUT STILL THERE'S A SENSE OF EXCITEMENT IN THE AIR. THESE ARE REAL JOBS--HUNDREDS OF THEM, AND THEY NEED TO BE FILLED FAST.

ED BRADLEY

I'm glad I came 'cause, you know definitely a lot of bank failures in the market today.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THIS ASSET MANAGER, ED BRADLEY, HOLDS OUT HOPE FOR FINDING A JOB HERE...

BRADLEY

I just had my second child so we have a 4-month and a 2-year-old in the house, so yeah that's a motivator to say the least.

WATSON

How many of you are CPAs, accounting type people -- wild, you guys are wild and crazy. I know, and we have a need for you too! Real estate sales. How many of you have your real estate licenses? And are active in selling real estate? Yeah, good number. Good. We need ya, we need ya. Resource management, you know. We're gonna be runnin' an office here of four or five hundred people. This basically encompasses the HR area. Who's got HR background in their past? Yeah, equally. Excellent, excellent!

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

PLUS, LEST WE FORGET, EVERY TRANSACTION AND TAKEOVER HAS TO BE OVERSEEN BY ATTORNEYS.

FDIC COUNSEL

Who doesn't like their lawyers? This is an in-house legal operation; it's building a law office up from the very beginning.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

IF THOSE JOBS SOUND FAMILIAR, IT'S BECAUSE THEY'RE EXACTLY THE JOBS HARDEST HIT BY THE GREAT RECESSION. SO IRONICALLY, THESE LENDERS, ADVISORS, AND REAL ESTATE AGENTS -- PEOPLE WHO GOT INTO THEIR FIELDS TO BUILD PEOPLE'S DREAMS -- NOW HOPE TO FIND WORK DISMANTLING THEM. RICHARD SCHMALZER HAS BEEN WITH THE FDIC FOR OVER 30 YEARS AND KNOWS THE ORGANIZATION INSIDE AND OUT. HE SAYS THE CREDIT CRUNCH HAS MEANT AN UNFORTUNATE UPTICK IN BUSINESS FOR THE FDIC IN HOTSPOTS AROUND THE COUNTRY.

SCHMALZER

So the FDIC in response to that has first opened up a satellite office on the West Coast, in Irvine, California, more recently in Jacksonville, Florida, and now we're in the process of opening up one here in in Schaumburg, Illinois in the Chicago area.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

JUST DOWN THE BLOCK FROM THE INFO SESSION, UNCLE SAM HAS SIGNED A LEASE FOR 150,000 SQUARE FEET OF OFFICE SPACE FOR 500 EMPLOYEES. BEST KNOWN FOR INSURING BANK DEPOSITS, THE FDIC DOESN'T JUST PAY OFF DEPOSITORS AND WALK AWAY, THEY STAY INVOLVED, SOMETIMES FACILITATING MERGERS, LIKE THIS ONE BETWEEN US BANK AND THE FAILED PARK NATIONAL – AND THE FDIC EVEN ACCESS PROPERTY MANAGER FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES BANKS FORECLOSED ON BEFORE THE BANKS THEMSELVES WENT UNDER. LAST YEAR, 26 FDIC-INSURED BANKS WENT UNDER IN ILLINOIS -- THAT'S THE SECOND-HIGHEST NUMBER IN THE COUNTRY, AFTER GEORGIA. AND BACK IN THE HALL, THEY HAD TO HAVE A SECOND SESSION BECAUSE SO MANY PEOPLE LOOKING FOR WORK SIGNED UP FOR THE EVENT.

SHOOK

Honestly I hate to say this but I didn't know if it'd be a room full of people who had had just gotten out of college and as it turns out I'm in good company in terms of the level of expertise and professionalism that the FDIC's looking for.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND IT'S NOT JUST ILLINOIS, BUT ACROSS THE COUNTRY THAT THE FDIC IS ON A --TEMPORARY, THEY EMPHASIZE -- HIRING SPREE. FROM 4500 EMPLOYEES IN 2007, TO 7000 LAST YEAR, TO OVER 8,600 IN 2010. AND THEY KNOW THEY'RE LUCKY TO GET THE CALIBER OF PEOPLE HERE TODAY.

SCHMALZER

As the overall economy has shrunk, you end up with some very talented people who are looking for--for good jobs, and we are anticipating that we will end up hiring quite a few of them.

NORTH CAROLINA:

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES, CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA HAS SEEN SUNNY ECONOMIC TIMES. LED BY THE GROWING BANKING SECTOR - WHOSE HEADQUARTERS BECAME LANDMARKS FOR THE CITY'S PROSPERITY. BUT AS THE ECONOMIC FORTUNES HAVE CHANGED, THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE HAS SURGED TO OVER 12 PERCENT. AND THE JOB MARKET IS NOW BEING DRIVEN IN PLACES A WORLD AWAY FROM THE HEIGHTS OF HIGH FINANCE. FIREFIGHTING HAS ALWAYS BEEN STEEPED IN TRADITION... MEN JOINING THE RANKS BECAUSE THEIR FATHERS HAD... OR TO BECOME PART OF A PROFESSION LONG SYNONYMOUS WITH HEROISM... IT'S WHY MANY OF THESE PERSPECTIVE FIREFIGHTERS IN CHARLOTTE ARE JOINING. BUT NOT TREMAYNE BATTLE.

TREMAYNE BATTLE, FIREFIGHTER RECRUIT

I said, "I don't wanna be a firefighter. They go into fire. And I'm not-- wanna-- be associated with that."

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE 34-YEAR-OLD BATTLE IS IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS TENTH WEEK AT THE CHARLOTTE FIRE ACADEMY. ONE OF 60 NEW RECRUITS TRAINING FOR A JOB ON THE FRONT LINES... BUT WHAT GOT HIM OVER HIS FEARS WASN'T DREAMS OF SOMEDAY BEING A HERO. HE SAYS HE'S HERE BECAUSE HE NEEDED A JOB AND HAD NO CHOICE.

BATTLE

I probably applied for 100 jobs with no-- callbacks, maybe one callback-- no interviews.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

JUST A COUPLE MONTHS AGO, BATTLE WAS A PHARMACY TECHNICIAN, WHO WANTED TO BECOME A LICENSED PHARMACIST. HE WAS STRUGGLING TO MAKE ENDS MEET WHILE ALSO TAKING PHARMACY SCHOOL PREREQUISITES AT A LOCAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE. BATTLE IS MARRIED, WITH AN 11 YEAR OLD SON.

BATTLE

With the economy going downhill-- I had to put school on hold. My wife had to take a pay cut-- due to possibly being laid off from her job. It means I had to go back to work a little bit more. So I had to find something that was more financially stable-- or-- better for our family.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

33-YEAR-OLD DENNIS HAMPTON WAS FEELING THE SAME PRESSURE. ANOTHER OF CHARLOTTE'S FIREFIGHTING RECRUITS DRIVEN HERE NOT BY CHOICE, BUT BY NECESSITY.

DENNIS HAMPTON, FIREFIGHTER RECRUIT

My reasons for becoming a firefighter were economic. I worked as a general contractor-- building mainly single family and multi-family housing. And our business-- was about three and a half, four years old. And then about a year and a half ago, things started to slow.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

IT WAS THE MIDDLE OF THE HOUSING MARKET COLLAPSE, AND HAMPTON HAD JUST HAD HIS FIRST CHILD. TERRIFIED OF LOSING EVERYTHING HE HAD WORKED FOR – HE FACED A DIFFICULT DECISION-- EITHER HOPE HIS SAVINGS WOULD LAST UNTIL THE MARKET PICKED UP AGAIN-- OR TRADE IN THE FREEDOM OF BEING HIS OWN BOSS, FOR THE RIGORS – AND SECURITY – OF BEING A ROOKIE FIREFIGHTER – A JOB HE'D NEVER IMAGINED HIMSELF DOING.

DENNIS HAMPTON

For me, the benefits mean a lot. Now there is also room-- for growth. My goal is, in the next few years-- I'd like to continue to press on and-- and try to be promoted to be a captain. And that's one thing that attracted me-- to the department is the fact that it was room for growth.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

ROOM FOR GROWTH, BUT ALSO A BIG PAY CUT. IN HIS BEST YEAR IN BUSINESS HE MADE SIX FIGURES. NOW, HIS ROOKIE FIREFIGHTER SALARY IS \$36,000. STILL, IN AN ECONOMIC CLIMATE THAT SHOWS FEW SIGNS OF IMPROVING ANY TIME SOON.... FOR HAMPTON AND FOR MANY OF THE NEW RANKS OF CHARLOTTE'S BRAVEST... IT'S A GAMBLE WORTH TAKING.

RICH GRANGER, FIRE CHIEF

We're seeing a higher-- percentage of people coming in for second careers-- people that have been in manufacturing or business or banking. As those jobs have-- been eliminated-- they're towards-- this type of-- position. And they're-- they're even accepting the pay cuts in exchange for the stability.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF RICH GRANGER HAS BEEN WITH THE CHARLOTTE FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR 23 YEARS. HE SAYS DEMAND FOR FIREFIGHTING JOBS HAS NEVER BEEN HIGHER. LAST YEAR, ABOUT 1,600 PEOPLE APPLIED FOR JUST 60 OPENINGS AT THE DEPARTMENT, AND GRANGER SAYS, THE POOL OF CANDIDATES WAS THE MOST QUALIFIED EVER.

GRANGER

It-- it has become more competitive. They're coming to the table with-- qualifications that we used to give them on-- on duty or after-- after being hired. They're coming to the table with those qualifications before.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND IT'S NOT JUST LOCALS COMPETING FOR THESE JOBS.

GRANGER

We actually have people from all over the world apply here. And I think it is because of what we offer. We can offer that stability in an area that's still growing when other areas are contracting.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

STABILITY IS WHAT THE HAMPTONS HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR AFTER SEEING 80% PERCENT OF THEIR INCOME VANISH OVER THE LAST YEAR. BUT STILL, IT WASN'T AN EASY SELL AT FIRST FOR HAMPTON'S WIFE, MELANIE, WHO NOW RUNS THEIR PARED DOWN CONTRACTING BUSINESS WHILE DENNIS IS AT HIS NEW DAY JOB.

MELANIE HAMPTON, DENNIS' WIFE

I-- actually, I thought he was crazy at first. I didn't-- I didn't think it was a good idea. But-- it's-- it's proved to be a real blessing.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

A BLESSING BECAUSE IT'S A SHOT AT GETTING BACK AT LEAST SOME WHAT THEY HAD--BEFORE THE RECESSION CHANGED EVERYTHING.

MELANIE HAMPTON

Oh wow. It is so nice to get steady income in every week. It's really helping out a lot.

DENNIS HAMPTON

The exact same insurance that's offered to me as an-- as an employee with the Charlotte Fire Department, we were-- we were actually paying for that on our own. It was costing twice the amount that we have to pay now. So-- that makes a huge difference.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND THERE ARE OTHER BENEFITS TOO ...

MELANIE HAMPTON

It's pretty attractive. (Laughs)

DENNIS HAMPTON

She's just glad that I'm losing weight and getting in better shape. Right?

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT IT'S NOT JUST HIS WIFE WHO APPRECIATES WHAT HAMPTON IS ACCOMPLISHING AS A FIREFIGHTER.

DENNIS HAMPTON

I have been very surprised at the reaction that ones give me when I tell them that I'm training to be a firefighter. I was-- I've always respected firefighters myself. But I've never given any further thought. During-- during 9-11, obviously, we all thought about firefighters and how important they were. But when I tell individuals that I know, friends or family or-- just ones that I meet, that that's what I'm doing, I'm really surprised at the level of respect and appreciation that they have for the service that's provided.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND TREMAYNE BATTLE, WHO ALSO CAME TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT IN SEARCH OF A STEADY PAY CHECK--HE TOO IS LOOKING WITH HOPE TO HIS FUTURE CAREER.

BATTLE

I enjoy being a firefighter and to be picked for the position, you have to be grateful. You-- be for-- be grateful that the-- this was presented to you, and take full advantage of it. Yeah. Now, make the best of it.

CALIFORNIA:

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND NOW FROM EAST COAST TO WEST, WHERE THE THE JOBS CLIMATE IS NO DIFFERENT. THE OLD SONG CALIFORNIA DREAMIN' COULD NOW BE ABOUT FINDING WORK. AND IN LOS ANGELES, SUFFERING RECORD HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT--THE GOVERNMENT IS SEEN AS THE OBSTACLE TO CREATING NEW JOBS. THAT'S BECAUSE IN BIG CITIES LIKE L.A STARTING A NEW VENTURE OFTEN MEANS COMING FACE TO FACE WITH A SUFFOCATING BUREAUCRACY AND MOUNTAINS OF RED TAPE THAT OFTEN PUTS EVERYTHING ON HOLD, INCLUDING AN UNTOLD NUMBER OF JOBS. A PERFECT CASE IN POINT IS PRO-VEH-CHO, IT'S A TRENDY PLACE TO BE SEEN IN DOWNTOWN L.A. THE RESTAURANT IS PACKED, ESPECIALLY AT HAPPY HOUR WHEN THEY SERVE A HIGHLY RESPECTED MARGARITA. BUT PRO-VEH-CHO, AND ITS 75 EMPLOYEES LOST A LOT OF REVENUE AND PAYCHECKS BECAUSE WHEN THE RESTAURANT WAS BEING BUILT, CITY HALL NEARLY INSPECTED IT TO DEATH.

JILL BIGELOW

They're not thinking of the bigger picture—that the faster they can help you get open, the quicker you're contributing to the community.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

JILL BIGELOW IS A PARTNER IN PRO-VE-CHO. SHE SAYS SHE COULDN'T BELIEVE THE RED TAPE, COUNTLESS FORMS AND THE ENDLESS PARADE OF CITY INSPECTORS BEFORE SHE COULD FINALLY OPEN HER NEW RESTAURANT.

BIGELOW

We'd have inspectors come out and-- see things that were built per the plans, exactly per the plans, and say, "I don't like it this way. You're gonna-- you're gonna need to change this." And they'd either bad mouthed whoever had approved the plans and said they didn't know what they were doing, or they would say, "Well, they must not have known about X, Y and Z." It ended up causing-- it-- it-- depending on how you look at it, between five and eight months of delay on our project. Not to mention we would build something, and they'd have to tear it out.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND IN THOSE MONTHS DOZENS OF WORKERS WHO'D BEEN PROMISED JOBS, EITHER WENT WITHOUT, OR WENT ELSEWHERE.

BIGELOW

We did lose a lot of employees because, people don't have-- especially people that work in restaurants don't have some sort of savings set aside so they can say, "Okay, just open whenever you open, you know. I'll be here to be your server or your busser." We lost some kitchen staff the same way.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND IT'S NOT AS IF LOS ANGELES IS AWASH IN JOBS. THE CITY'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE. EVEN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY--LONG THE CITY'S GOLDEN GOOSE, IS HURTING. FORTUNE 500 COMPANIES ARE LEAVING--NORTHROP-GRUMMAN, HILTON HOTELS, E-BAY, ALL RELOCATING. LOS ANGELES HAS THE REPUTATION OF BEING A VERY COMPLICATED PLACE TO DO BUSINESS. ENTER A WEALTHY INVESTMENT BANKER WITH A LITTLE TIME ON HIS HANDS. AUSTIN BEUTNER WAS JUST APPOINTED DEPUTY MAYOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, BUT HIS MISSION IS ABOUT ONE THING:

AUSTIN BEUTNER

Create jobs. It's real simple. And-- ourselves, we can't create a single job. We're not gonna hire people directly on the city's payroll. But what we can do is act as an enabler and help the business community create more jobs. So that's the number one thing. We have services we provide to our constituents.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BEUTNER MADE FORTUNE IN PRIVATE EQUITY. IN LA'S CULTURE OF GLITZ, HE'S KNOWN AS A "DEAL MAKER." BUT AFTER A SERIOUS BICYCLE ACCIDENT A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, HE RETIRED FROM BUSINESS. HE DIDN'T STAY RETIRED FOR LONG. L.A'S MAYOR CONVINCED BEUTNER THE CITY NEEDED HIS SMARTS.

BEUTNER

I know the city well from the outside. In my private sector career, we had many businesses which did business in Los Angeles. And-- I think if you went to the business round table in Washington and asked 25 top CEOs to name your top five business friendly cities, Los Angeles wouldn't make the list.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND ONE OF MAIN REASONS IS ALL THAT RED TAPE. SO, BEUTNER HAS MADE IT HIS JOB TO SLASH IT.

BEUTNER

You know, the economic impact is what this is all about. I mean, we have record unemployment in this city, if you include-- people who are underemployed, it's chronic, it's terrible. In that provides an opportunity to say, "Okay, we need to do something different."

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND DIFFERENT MEANS SOMETHING LIKE THIS--REDUCE THE ENDLESS INSPECTIONS AND PAPER WORK SO BUSINESSES CAN OPEN FASTER AND FILL JOBS SOONER.

BEUTNER

Depending upon the nature of your business-- there could be as many as six or eight, ten different agencies you have to deal with in the city to open a business. That makes no sense.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO TELL THAT TO THE OWNER OF PEAR GARDENS PRODUCE FACTORY. THIS LITTLE BUSINESS OWNED BY KOREAN-AMERICANS HAS BEEN GROWING BEAN SPROUTS AND MAKING RICE CAKES FOR ALMOST 30 YEARS. THEY WERE FORCED TO MOVE WHEN THE CITY DECLARED EMINENT DOMAIN ON THEIR FACTORY.

TONY HAN

The local school district decided to expand and they needed our property.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

OWNER, TONY HAN AND HIS FAMILY WERE HAPPY TO MOVE THEIR PLANT, THE PROBLEM WAS WHERE. HE WANTED TO STAY IN LOS ANGELES, BUT THE MOUNTAIN OF RED TAPE THEY SAY THEY FACED IN OPENING A NEW FACILITY ALMOST FORCED THE COMPANY, AND IT'S 30 JOBS TO LEAVE TOWN.

HAN

Well, there would have been many jobs lost, and revenue as well, I think we contribute a significant amount of revenue and employment to the city.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

HE SAYS THEY HAD THE SAME PROBLEM AS THE RESTAURANT, PROVECHO--AN ENTRENCHED CITY BUREAUCRACY CHOCK FULL OF INSPECTORS THAT SEEMED TO CARE LITTLE ABOUT JOBS.

HAN

The inspection process and the permitting process is very, very complicated, and it's just a long process where there's a lot of different agencies involved. After roughly six months of an inability to open and frustration, we actually started considering alternative locations, but we spoke with the city and were placed in contact with the city's economic development office, headed by Austin Beutner and he was able to rectify the situation, and got us through the process in just a matter of weeks.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

IT WAS BEUTNER'S FIRST SUCCESS AT CITY HALL AS THE DESIGNATED RED TAPE REDUCER.

BEUTNER

I'd say it's a bad situation throughout this country. And we in government need to help provide solutions, sometimes just get out of the way-- and allow private sector employers to create opportunity.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND THE OPPORTUNITY CAME JUST IN TIME FOR PEAR GARDEN'S BUSIEST SEASON, CHINESE NEW YEAR. RICE CAKES LIKE THE ONES MADE AT PEAR GARDENS ARE CONSIDERED "GOOD LUCK" THROUGHOUT ASIAN CULTURE.

OHIO:

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

WELCOME BACK. TONIGHT WE'VE BEEN LOOKING AT THE JOB MARKET AROUND THE UNITED STATES AND THE NEWS HAS BEEN BLEAK. FOR MANY PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, THIS LEVEL OF ECONOMIC DESPAIR IS RELATIVELY NEW, A RESULT OF THE WORST DOWNTURN SINCE THE GREAT DEPRESSION OF THE THIRTIES. BUT IN THE UPPER MIDWEST, THE SO-CALLED RUST BELT, THE FORCES OF DISLOCATION AND UNCERTAINTY HAVE BEEN DECADES IN THE MAKING. THE LOSS OF THE HEAVY INDUSTRY THAT ONCE SERVED AS THE BACKBONE OF THE AMERICAN ECONOMY HAS LEFT CITIES LIKE DETROIT, MICHIGAN, TOLEDO, OHIO, AND BUFFALO, NEW YORK SHADOWS OF THEIR FORMER SELVES -- LOSING POPULATION AND HOPE. ECONOMISTS TELL US THESE WELL-PAYING BLUE-COLLAR JOBS ARE NOT COMING BACK. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY TELL US WE CAN NO LONGER HAVE AN ECONOMY BASED ON CONSUMPTION. WE HAVE TO BE A COUNTRY WITH NEW INDUSTRIES IF WE HOPE TO RETURN TO AN ERA OF SUSTAINED AND WIDESPREAD PROSPERITY.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE SMALL TOWN OF MAUMEE IN NORTHWEST OHIO, LOOKS A LOT LIKE THE REST OF THE UPPER MIDWEST - A PLACE WITH A RICH HISTORY AND AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE. ITS RIVER BROUGHT COMMERCE BEFORE THE AGE OF THE RAILROAD. AND THIS SUBURB OF TOLEDO, JUST AN HOUR'S DRIVE FROM DETROIT, GREW PROSPEROUS WITH THE AGE OF THE AUTOMOBILE. THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN THESE PARTS IS NOW OVER 12 PERCENT. HOUSE FORECLOSURES AND EMPTY COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE ARE EVERYWHERE. THE CITY RESTORED ITS OLD MOVIE THEATER, WITH DOLLAR-FIFTY TICKETS ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS TO LIFT THE SPIRITS OF CASH-STRAPPED RESIDENTS. BUT WHILE RESTORING THE PAST MAY BE COMFORTING, NOSTALGIA DOES NOT TRANSLATE INTO JOBS. PEOPLE HERE KNOW THEY CAN'T COUNT ON THE AUTO INDUSTRY THE WAY THEY ONCE DID. 20 YEAR OLD COREY MCLUCKIE USED TO WORK AT FACTORY THAT MADE CAR PARTS.

COREY MCLUCKIE

We were just unemployed all of a sudden, 'cause there weren't anybody buying vehicles for the parts. So they didn't need us to be working at the time, I guess.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

NOW THIS REFUGEE FROM THE AUTO INDUSTRY SPENDS HIS DAYS WORKING ALONE IN A NEARLY EMPTY ROOM. THIS PLACE MAY NOT LOOK LIKE MUCH, BUT IT REPRESENTS THE DREAM OF 29-YEAR-OLD ENTREPRENEUR KARI

STRAUSBAUGH. MCLUCKIE IS HER FIRST EMPLOYEE.

KARI STRAUSBAUGH, PRESIDENT OF SMASHRAY, LTD.

Being able to hire our first employee, who said I-- I was in the automotive industry and I haven't been able to find a job for an entire year-- it's a fantastic feeling. It's part of why we started the company. I-- I was in the automotive industry. I grew up in it. My entire family was affected by what happened. And it was an emotional start to a company. It-- it's part of the reason why we want to do this. We-- we think the people here deserve to get back to work.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

STRAUSBAUGH'S COMPANY IS CALLED SMASHRAY, AND THEY'RE HOPING TO TURN THE RUST BELT GREEN. THEIR PRODUCT REPLACES FLUORESCENT LIGHTS WITH HIGH-TECH LIGHT-EMITTING DIODES - OR LED'S.

STRAUSBAUGH

LED lighting is the future of lighting. It's-- it's a better quality of light. It's extremely efficient. And it is cutting down on costs of all of our customers.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND STRAUSBAUGH SAYS THEY'RE THE PERFECT LONG-TERM INVESTMENT IN THESE TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES. SHE SAYS THE LIGHTS PAY FOR THEMSELVES IN TWO YEARS.

STRAUSBAUGH

Businesses are cutting down on their operating costs, not only through energy reduction, but through reducing their maintenance and replacement costs, as well as their-- requirements for storage. And with Smash Ray specifically, what's so intriguing about what we're doing is that we're leaving the existing fixtures in place. So we're-- we're creating a further reduction in what's going into the waste stream.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE PATENT IS PENDING, AND WE WERE REQUESTED NOT TO SHOW DESIGN DETAILS THE COMPANY SAID WERE TRADE SECRETS. STRAUSBAUGH SAYS GREEN INDUSTRY IS GROWING QUICKLY, AND SHE WORRIES HER COMPETITORS WILL STEAL SMASHRAY'S EDGE.

STRAUSBAUGH

Business is exceeding our expectations. We now are up to a team of seven. And we expect to be hiring-- between five and ten people in the next month-- next few months. And-- the expectation

is to create 40 jobs within the next three years.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THIS KIND OF OPTIMISM IS A RARE COMMODITY IN A REGION USED TO JOBS BEING LOST, NOT CREATED. THE MIDWEST IS LITTERED WITH EMPTY FACTORIES. THEY WERE THE CORE OF A ONCE VIBRANT ECONOMIC ENGINE THAT FOR MANY WORKERS HAS SPUTTERED AND DIED.

STRAUSBAUGH

The several thousands of people who are unemployed here-- are not gonna be reemployed by automotive. They need something else to look forward to in the future.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

FOR STRAUSBAUGH, THIS ISN'T JUST A SALES PITCH, THIS IS HER LIFE STORY. SHE GREW UP IN MICHIGAN HEARING ABOUT DETROIT'S HEYDAY. SHE FULLY EXPECTED TO CAST HER FORTUNE WITH THE AUTO INDUSTRY AS WELL.

STRAUSBAUGH

My family worked for the big three since before I can remember. And I got an engineering degree at Ohio State. I left there. I went into the automotive industry, like the rest of the family. And-- when that ended, I really didn't know what to do. So I spent a few months being depressed and-- and complaining, and worrying about what had happened. And then, realized with my partners that someone needed to step up and-- and lead us into the new economy and-- and help put these people back to work. I would recommend to anyone to start a company in northwest Ohio. There's just a support system here that I've never seen anywhere else. Everyone wants - wants the newcomer to succeed. I don't want to use the word desperate - but people are looking for the turnaround. They're looking for the creation of a new manufacturing industry here. I saw a lot of people, good people lose their jobs and lose their path in life and I think that's part of what's so intriguing to people about Smashray is that we're a company with a soul. We stand for hope in this area I think. We -- we're a sign that there is a new future and that people don't have to be unemployed forever.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

WE TRAVELED WITH STRAUSBAUGH TO DOWNTOWN TOLEDO, TO A CITY CENTER THAT HAD SEEN BETTER TIMES. IT'S HERE THAT YOU'LL FIND "THE SOURCE," A GOVERNMENT FUNDED JOB CENTER. STRAUSBAUGH HIRED HER FIRST EMPLOYEE THROUGH HERE, AND SHE HOPES TO HIRE MANY MORE AS HER BUSINESS GROWS.

MICHAEL VEH, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

How are you?

STRAUSBAUGH

Good, how are you?

VEH

Good to see you.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

MICHAEL VEH HAS BEEN HELPING TO OVERSEE THE JOB CENTER SINCE IT OPENED IN 2004.

VEH

With more and more people out of work, more and more people finding themselves looking for jobs when they have never had to look for jobs in the past-- they know that we're here to help them out.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

LIKE THE OTHER JOB CENTERS WE HAVE REPORTED FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY, WE WERE STRUCK BY THE FACES HERE OF THOSE LOOKING FOR WORK. ON THE DAY WE VISITED, MORE THAN 200 INDIVIDUALS HAD SIGNED IN. THEY'D COME TO SEEK HELP WITH RESUMES, LEARN BASIC COMPUTER SKILLS, AND SCOUR THE INTERNET IN SEARCH OF A NEW BEGINNING.

VEH

I think people are starting to realize they have to go out there and find jobs differently than they did before, and if they don't have the skills of-- the-- to find these new jobs, they have to develop those skills. The community's come to realize that this is not a temporary blip. Being based in the auto industry with a lotta auto industry in this area supporting the economy, auto workers are used to layoffs for three, four months at a time. And then everything comes back. I think what the community realizes is that there's a dramatic shift taking place.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

61-YEAR-OLD ROBERTO MARTINEZ CAME TO THE SOURCE SEVERAL YEARS AGO WHEN HE WAS OUT OF WORK. HE GOT A JOB, BUT HIS COMPANY JUST RECENTLY LAID HIM OFF.

ROBERTO MARTINEZ

It was because of lack of work. And bottom-of-the-totem-pole person gets-- you know, so I was the one who was let go first.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

MARTINEZ SAYS WHEN YOU'RE TRYING TO RE-INVENT YOURSELF FOR A CAREER, YOU NEED PLACES LIKE THE SOURCE TO GET YOUR JOB SEARCH QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

MARTINEZ

"What am I doing wrong? What am I critique my-- resume to-- to make it fit the job that I'm lookin' for?" Cover letters, you know, where to get cover letters-- samples, you know? And if you don't have a job, you don't have ti-- the money for the internet, you know. I mean, you-- you can get the internet-- inexpensive. But is it really one of my priorities? I think priority would be-- bein' able to put food on the table-- bein' able to pay utilities. Yes, job searchin' is important. But, you know, you have to have a back-and-forth to-- to go to the library. You know, I mean-- if you don't have the internet at home, where would you go?

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

VEH SAYS HE STRUGGLES EVERYDAY WITH KEEPING PEOPLE MOTIVATED. AND THERE'S NOW A WALL AT THE SOURCE PROMOTING GREEN JOBS. HE'S PUTTING HOPE IN BUSINESSES LIKE KARI STRAUSBAUGH'S.

VEH

We look very optimistically at Smash Ray and companies like Smash Ray. Because they're new technologies. They're growth industries. They're the beginning of something new. They may not be hiring a lotta people at this point. But as they grow, they'll need more people. And a big piece of what we're hoping is gonna happen in this region is that a growing cluster of-- clean energy-- environmentally friendly companies, will develop in this region to create a whole new industry other than the automotive sector that's always been the backbone of this community.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

GREEN JOBS REBUILDING COMMUNITIES -- IT'S A DREAM THAT STRETCHES FROM TOLEDO ACROSS THE COUNTRY. FROM NEW SOLAR PANELS INSTALLED ON ROOFTOPS... TO BUILDINGS BEING RETROFITTED IN ORDER TO MAKE THEM MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT. THE STIMULUS BILL SET ASIDE BILLIONS OF DOLLARS FOR THESE KINDS OF PROJECTS. AND IN THE RECENT STATE OF THE UNION, PRESIDENT OBAMA MADE THE CASE THAT GREEN INITIATIVES ARE THE WAY BACK TO FINANCIAL PROSPERITY IN THE CENTURY AHEAD.

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

Providing incentives for energy efficiency and clean energy are the right thing to do for our future. Because the nation that leads the clean energy economy will be the nation that leads the global economy. And America must be that nation.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT THE QUESTIONS REMAIN. WHAT EXACTLY ARE GREEN JOBS? AND DOES A GREEN ECONOMY HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO REPLACE THE MILLIONS OF JOBS LOST WITH THE CRUMBLING OF MORE TRADITIONAL MANUFACTURING. BUT IF GREEN JOBS DO PROVE TO BE THE FUTURE, THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THEY'RE STARTING OUT IN ROOMS LIKE THIS.

STRAUSBAUGH

What I would tell people is to take the leap, to be the leader, to create this new world that we're gonna live in. This is gonna be the next industrial revolution. This will be the largest market we see in our lifetime. And someone-- someone needs to step up and-- and start leading before we lose the race.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

AND MAKE NO MISTAKE. THE RACE TO LEAD IN SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND GREEN TECHNOLOGY IS A GLOBAL ONE. IN YEARS PAST, EUROPE, PARTICULARLY GERMANY, JUMPED OUT TO AN EARLY LEAD. BUT ASIAN COUNTRIES ARE NOW PUMPING BILLIONS OF DOLLARS INTO DEVELOPING THEIR GREEN TECHNOLOGIES. AND NO COUNTRY HAS DONE MORE IN RECENT YEARS THAN CHINA.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BY 2013, THE CHINESE ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE Poured 400 BILLION DOLLARS INTO CLEAN ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES. THIS YEAR THEY BECAME THE WORLDS LEADING PRODUCER OF SOLAR PANELS AND WIND TURBINES. THE FACT THAT CHINA IS ALSO BUILDING DIRTY COAL POWER PLANTS TO POWER ITS CITIES AND FACTORIES SUGGEST THAT WHEN IT COMES TO GREEN TECHNOLOGIES, THE COUNTRY IS MORE INTERESTED IN IMPROVING ITS ECONOMY THAN ITS ENVIRONMENT.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

AND IT'S NOT JUST GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT. ACCORDING TO ONE STUDY, GLOBAL PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN GREEN TECHNOLOGY WILL REACH 600 BILLION DOLLARS A YEAR BY THE END OF THE DECADE. THIS HAS LED BUSINESS LEADERS AND POLITICIANS IN THE UNITED STATES, OF ALL POLITICAL PERSUASIONS, TO SAY WE NEED TO BECOME MAJOR PLAYERS IN THIS DEVELOPING MARKET. THAT'S A WORTHY GOAL AND ONE THAT WILL

HOPEFULLY, WHEN COMBINED WITH OTHER GROWTH INDUSTRIES, RETURN AMERICA TO ITS BEST TRADITIONS. SINCE THE EARLY DAYS OF THE REPUBLIC, THIS COUNTRY HAS FORGED A REPUTATION FOR HARD WORK AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION. NOW, SO MANY AMERICANS, WHOSE WORK ETHIC IS UNQUESTIONED, SEEK EMPLOYMENT AND FIND LITTLE OR NOTHING. WE HEAR TERMS LIKE "A JOBLESS RECOVERY" AND WONDER WHAT OUR FUTURE HOLDS. THAT SUGGESTS WE MAY WANT TO IMPLORE OUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES TO MEASURE THE HEALTH OF OUR ECONOMY IN TERMS OF JOBS CREATED NOT JUST GDP OR THE GROWTH OF STOCK PORTFOLIOS. AND THAT'S OUR REPORT FOR TONIGHT. FROM NEW YORK, FOR HDNET, DAN RATHER REPORTING. GOOD NIGHT.