

Oconee, Pickens unemployment drops

SC sees record leap in number employed

THE JOURNAL STAFF

COLUMBIA — The unemployment rate fell in both Oconee and Pickens counties in the month of February, while South Carolina on the whole experienced the largest one-month increase in the number of people working in its history.

According to a news release from the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, statewide employment climbed by 10,645 people, bringing the total number of people employed for February to 2,219,833 people. The state's labor force, meanwhile, increased in February by 12,380 to 2,323,023 people, and the majority of those entering the workforce found jobs.

"It is exciting to see that nearly 11,000 of the more than 12,000 people entering the labor force had found work — that is four out of every five people, and that is something to celebrate," said SCDEW executive director Cheryl Stanton. "The economy in

South Carolina is robust as businesses continue to grow and expand here, and more and more people are feeling optimistic about opportunities available to them in South Carolina.

"We do have more work to do. We need to help match the 103,000 unemployed with the jobs available across the state."

In Oconee County, the unemployment rate for February was 4.6 percent — an improvement over 4.9 percent in January and 5.8 percent this time a year ago.

In Pickens County, last month's unemployment rate was 4.4 percent, besting both January's 4.8-percent figure and last February's 5.4-percent mark.

The state's unemployment rate held steady at 4.4 percent from January, while the national unemployment rate fell from 4.8 percent in January to 4.7 percent.