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**Press Releases****Texas metros dominate 2010 Milken Institute Best Performing Cities Index again; diverse tech sector and limited exposure to the housing bubble helps keep them on top****For Immediate Release**

October 14, 2010

For the second year in a row, Texas metropolitan areas – led by the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood metropolitan area – dominated the Milken Institute's Best-Performing Cities Index. The results show that a business-friendly climate, a vibrant tech industry, and little exposure to the housing bubble kept Texas on stable ground during the economic downturn.

Texas cities occupy an unprecedented 11 of the top 25 positions among the 200 largest metro areas as well as five of the top 10. The index ranks metropolitan areas on their ability to create and sustain jobs.

Researchers found that metros whose economies are heavy on service industries such as health care and on large government employers like military bases have been shielded from the job losses suffered by cities more closely tied to the housing and financial sectors.

"The Great Recession has taken a toll on many cities," said Ross DeVol, executive director of economic research at the Milken Institute. "But those that are sustaining their job markets are doing so through a good mix of high-tech industries, favorable business climates and diversified service-sector industries. These are definite lessons for how American metros can be prepared to survive economic turmoil."

The 2010 top performers (with 2009 rankings) among the 200 largest metros:

1. Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood, TX (2)
2. Austin-Round Rock, TX (1)
3. Huntsville, AL (8)
4. McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX (4)
5. Kennewick-Richland-Pasco, WA (n.a.)
6. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV (25)
7. Raleigh-Cary, NC (10)
8. Anchorage, AK (40)
9. El Paso, TX (14)
10. Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX (5)

Fargo, ND-MN, topped the list of the 179 smallest U.S. metros.

Biggest gains, 200 largest metros (previous rank):

39. Clarksville, TN-KY (up from 136)
44. St. Louis, MO-IL (up from 128)
61. Charleston, WV (up from 144)
32. Pittsburgh, PA (up from 109)
73. Huntington-Ashland, WV-KY-OH (up from 149)

Biggest declines, 200 largest metros (previous rank):

138. Santa Barbara-Santa Maria-Goleta, CA (down from 43)
150. Fort Smith, AR-OK (down from 62)
132. San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA (down from 50)
101. Greeley, CO (down from 20)
160. Eugene-Springfield, OR (down from 81)

The Best-Performing Cities Index includes both long-term (five years) and short-term (one year) measurements of employment and salary growth. There are also four measurements of technology output growth, which are included because of technology's crucial role in creating good jobs and driving regional economies. The index ranks 379 metros and categorizes them as large or small, based on whether their populations fall above or below 245,000. Population changes and modifications in how the census defines certain metropolitan areas added 55 metros to this year's Index. Because of these changes, last year's ranking is not available for all metros.

Data for all metros is also available on our [Best-Performing Cities interactive website](#). The report (PDF) is available here.

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