



PRESS RELEASE - For Immediate Release

ACCRA COST OF LIVING INDEX

Among the 311 urban areas that have participated in the first quarter 2008 *ACCRA Cost of Living Index*, the after-tax cost for a professional/managerial **standard of living ranged from more than twice the national average in New York (Manhattan) NY to almost 20 percent below the national average in Joplin MO.** The *ACCRA Cost of Living Index* is published quarterly by C2ER – The Council for Community and Economic Research.

The Ten Most and Least Expensive Urban Areas in the ACCRA Cost of Living Index (COLI)

First Quarter 2008

National Average for 311 Urban Areas = 100

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index	Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index
1	New York (Manhattan) NY	218.8	1	Joplin MO	82.2
2	San Francisco CA	173.6	2	Pryor Creek OK	83.2
3	Honolulu HI	165.3	3	Palestine-Anderson County TX	83.5
4	New York (Queens) NY	155.7	4	Douglas GA	83.5
5	San Jose CA	154.3	5	Harlingen TX	83.5
6	Orange County CA	153.7	6	Lubbock TX	85.9
7	Stamford CT	153.5	7	Dyersburg TN	86.0
8	Nassau County NY	152.7	8	Brownsville TX	86.0
9	Los Angeles-Long Beach CA	150.3	9	Morristown TN	86.1
10	Oakland CA	150.1	10	Mason City IA	86.2

The *ACCRA Cost of Living Index* measures regional differences in the cost of consumer goods and services, excluding taxes and non-consumer expenditures, for professional and managerial households in the top income quintile. It is based on more than 50,000 prices covering almost 60 different items for which prices are collected quarterly by chambers of commerce, economic development organizations or university applied economic centers in each participating urban area. Small differences should not be interpreted as showing a measurable difference.

The composite index is based on six components – housing, utilities, grocery items, transportation, health care and miscellaneous goods and services.

Who has the least expensive groceries?

Each quarter, C2ER collects more than 50,000 prices from communities across the US for the COLI. This quarter, C2ER features the communities with the most and least expensive groceries as measured by the grocery number. C2ER collects data on 26 separate items to represent the grocery component of the index.

**The Five Most and Least Expensive Places for Groceries by Index Number
in the ACCRA Cost of Living Index (COLI)
First Quarter 2008
Average for 311 Urban Areas = 100**

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	Index	Ranking	Urban Areas	Price
1	Honolulu HI	164.0	1	San Marcos TX	80.0
2	Kodiak AK	148.5	2	Victoria TX	80.2
3	Anchorage AK	142.7	3	Waco TX	80.4
4	New York (Queens) NY	141.1	4	Dyersburg TN	80.5
5	New York (Manhattan) NY	141.0	5	Corpus Christi TX	80.6

A Closer Look at Grocery Store Items in Texas

Texas cities frequently rate among the least expensive in the index and prices are often below the national average - especially for items found in the grocery store. Here's a snapshot of prices for five items in Texas:

Quarter 1, 2008	T-Bone Steak (per pound)	Dozen Eggs (large eggs)	Potatoes (10 lb. sack)	Cascade (75 oz. box of powder)	Frozen Meal (8-10 oz. Healthy Choice or Lean Cuisine chicken entree)
San Marcos TX	\$8.48	\$1.47	\$3.49	\$3.32	\$2.12
Victoria TX	\$8.46	\$2.03	\$2.94	\$3.67	\$2.34
Waco TX	\$8.31	\$1.94	\$3.56	\$3.23	\$1.98
Corpus Christi TX	\$7.34	\$1.93	\$3.44	\$3.64	\$2.08
Houston TX	\$7.33	\$1.96	\$3.52	\$3.60	\$1.84
Midland TX	\$6.84	\$2.27	\$3.92	\$3.48	\$2.47
National Average	\$9.05	\$2.03	\$3.97	\$4.13	\$2.46

The quarterly ACCRA Cost of Living Index is available by subscription for \$140 per year (print or PDF version) or \$250 per year (electronic version). Send check, payable to C2ER, P.O. Box 100127, Arlington VA 22210-0407, or subscribe on the Internet at www.coli.org.

If you need additional information on the ACCRA Cost of Living Index or other COLI-related products such as the COLI Web Calculator and the COLI Historical Index, please contact Dean Frutiger at dfrutiger@c2er.org or Erol Yildirim at ey@c2er.org or by phone at 703-522-4980.