

**The Center For American Progress. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.** Access: <http://www.bls.gov>.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) site provides a wealth of timely and accurate statistics of national interest. The well-designed homepage serves as a one-stop center for streamlined access to Department of Labor (DOL) datasets and publications, many of which are still available in print, such as the popular "Occupational Outlook Handbook." Because these items are available within a few clicks and because most statistics are hyperlinked to more detailed information and other relevant statistics, users will probably have more information at their fingertips than is housed at several large federal depository libraries.



Historical data is often available and is annotated with a small dinosaur icon.

The homepage is subdivided into 18 major topical headings. The left side lists the headings: "Inflation and Consumer Spending," "Wages, Earnings and Benefits," "Productivity," "Safety and Health," "International," "Occupations," "Demographics," "Other Statistical Sites," "BLS Information Offices," and "About BLS." The right side lists the headings: "Employment and Unemployment," "At a Glance Tables," "Publications," "Research," "Industries," "Business Costs," "Geography," and "Kids' Page." Each of these headings has relevant subdivisions.

All the topical information is extremely valuable, because it may be difficult to locate quickly by other methods. For example,

"Safety and Health" furnishes statistics about workplace injuries and fatalities, "International" gives information about import and export pricing and labor statistics from foreign countries, and "At a Glance Tables" enables users to retrieve one-page state overviews from an interactive visual map of the United States.

The center of the page presents a graphic of a globe with the logo "Spotlight on Statistics: Around the World in Eight Charts." These charts show major indicators for several major countries across the world. Immediately underneath are the latest increases or decreases of eight economic indicators for the previous month, including consumer price index, unemployment rate, payroll employment, average hourly earnings, producer price index, employment cost index, productivity, and the U.S. import price index.

Across the top of the page are additional features for navigation, such as advanced searching, an A-Z list, and "Find It! In DOL."

The last section takes searchers to a list of DOL subjects organized by topic and audience. This resource is an invaluable dataset for economists, researchers, and policymakers, as well as individuals monitoring the economy, and, therefore, BLS is recommended for all academic libraries.—*Caroline Geck, Kean University, cgeck@cougar.kean.edu*

**Refugees International.** Access: <http://www.refugeesinternational.org/>.

The Refugees International Web site provides information about the 29-year-old organization, its humanitarian assistance efforts, and the ways world citizens can help to improve the lives of displaced people and refugees. Refugees International is the premier advocacy organization for international refugees and boasts an impressive list of international board members, which includes H.M. Queen Noor of Jordan and several American ambassadors.

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The “About Us” section of the Web site contains several pages of information about the organization, including annual reports, history, a list of board members, etc. In addition, this section describes opportunities for jobs, internships, and fellowships with Refugees International.

In the section “Where We Work,” detailed and up-to-date information about the organization’s recent missions, and past humanitarian work is listed by country. Within each country, Refugees International presents its concerns about refugees in that particular country, as well as policy recommendations, recent news, reports, the political and economic environment, advocacy letters, images, profiles of refugees, congressional testimonies, and information about other related missions.

Of particular note, on this page one can filter by issue, region, or by keyword by clicking on the “View All Country Detail” link on the bottom of the page. This key tool is easily missed and should be highlighted at the top of the page. Another helpful feature on this page is a map displaying current statistics of the number of refugees in each region of the world.

The “Issues” page displays information about the key issues that Refugees International is most concerned with, such as emergency relief, women and displacement, building local capacity, etc. The “Ways You Can Help” page breaks down how people can donate money, spread the word about refugee issues, or host a Refugees International event.

In addition, the Web site has a blog entitled “world:bridge” that contains entries from Refugees International advocates and other staff members in the field and alerts about new updates on the Web site. The blog has some neat features, such as RSS feeds and a widget; however, users of the site are unable to leave feedback or comment on blog entries. Turning the blog into an open but monitored forum would allow users to have a voice on this site. Users have the opportunity to participate

and interact on the Refugees International Facebook page.

The Refugees International site is an excellent resource for students, as well as anyone who would like to get involved with world advocacy. It is highly recommended for any world citizen.—*Colleen Lougen, SUNY, New Paltz, [lougenc@newpaltz.edu](mailto:lougenc@newpaltz.edu)*

**Why Files.** Access: <http://whyfiles.org>.

The Why Files is a weekly publication about the science behind current news headlines and events that occur in daily life. Founded in 1996 as part of National Institute for Science Education, it is now supported by the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. One of the main goals of the Why Files is to “present those topics in a clear, accessible and accurate manner,” which is admirably done. The Web site is geared towards the general public and contains a limited amount of technical lingo.



There is a list of recent stories on the homepage, with a notice for upcoming story releases (includes RSS feed), and a link to an archive of more than 450 stories. The two ways to browse the archive are through a drop-down bar of eight subjects and twenty-three themes. Examples of themes include “Body parts,” “Life & death,” “Sports,” and “Wacky science.” A search engine is also available to help locate specific topics.

There is an education link on the homepage geared towards teachers of grades five through eight and nine through twelve. “Teacher Activity Pages” provides several classroom activities ranging from “Science meets sports” to “Polar science.” The “Educator’s Page” also provides access to the archives by grade level and topic.

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Chapel Hill, died suddenly of a heart attack on April 20. Ovitt became government data librarian in 2005 after serving as a reference librarian and a student assistant at UNC's Davis Library.

James Harvard Ovitt

Before entering the field of librarianship, Ovitt spent nearly 20 years in the media industry in New York as a producer and director of documentary and industrial films. He was a member of ACRL and the Government Documents Round Table. He was also a member of the North Carolina Library Association (NCLA) and of NCLA's Government Resources Section. ¶¶

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The Why Files also sports an incredible collection of "Cool Science Images" from various external institutions, and these images can be browsed by topic: "Biology," "Earth and Space," "Environment," "Health," "Physical Science," and "Technology." Descriptions are included that help put images in context, and links to external Web sites are included. Images have no unique identifier, such as titles or numbers, for identification purposes. There are some duplicate photos

and broken links throughout the image collection.

Why Files articles vary in length and coverage; many include bibliographies and suggested literature for further reading, and links to related topics. There are fun interactive animations that help articulate specific concepts, such as the double rainbows phenomena and how the atmosphere influences baseball games. Overall, this Web site is suggested for educators of grade school through undergraduate.—*John Repplinger, Willamette University, jrepplin@willamette.edu ¶¶*

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