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Skill Shortages?

Aaron's Question Column

by Jerry Lerman (344)

Our President recently signed a bi-partisan infrastructure bill into law. With that act, quite a sizable sum of money is destined to fund a lot of long needed public works projects over the next decade - perhaps longer.

I'm writing this with VERY incomplete knowledge of the law's implementation plans, so I'm eager to be corrected if some of our readers know a good deal more on the subject, but here is a concern that I harbor regarding getting that plethora of big things done: **Who will be doing the work?**

We're a large country – with vast resources of not just natural riches but also talented and hard-working individuals. While our national economy is still struggling to recover from the effects of Covid, it's pleasing to see reports of low unemployment. But might a paucity of available and properly skilled labor create a problem as we undertake rebuilding airports, bridges, tunnels, high-capacity internet, etc.?

A Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas study from 2020, "**How Does Immigration Fit into the Future of the U.S. Labor Market?**" focuses on an important contributor to the national skills bank: *immigrant labor*. From its abstract: "A larger role for immigrant workers also can help mitigate other symptoms of the economy's long-run malaise, such as low productivity growth, declining domestic geographic mobility, and falling entrepreneurship, as well as help address the looming mismatch between the skills U.S. employers want and the skills U.S. workers have." *Continued on page 3*



An Image of Santa Claus



Saint Nicholas

Question: What is the historical origin of the Saint Nicholas we know as Santa Claus? Is it rooted in any particular country? -Jerry

Aaron's Answer (A'sA): Saint Nicholas was a Christian bishop who lived in Turkey during the Roman Empire. Due to a wide variety of good occurrences attributed to his intercession, he was also known as Nicholas the Wonderworker. One aspect of him which made him especially popular was his secret gift-giving. He often helped others anonymously by giving gifts of various sorts, such as when he saved a trio of girls from labor by gifting them the money they needed to stay afloat. He
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