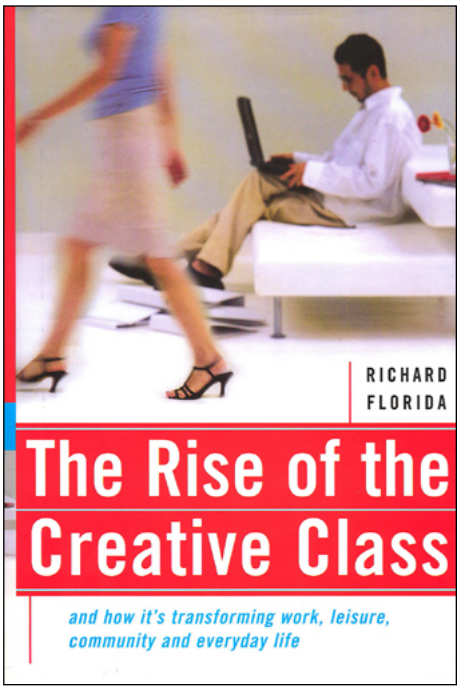
BENCHMARKING THE CREATIVE CLASS IN ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

How does Arlington compare to the nation and the rest of the Washington D.C. region?

Introduction

Richard Florida's book, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, has gained substantial attention among the economic development community as a new paradigm for economic growth[1]. Building on regional growth theories focused on knowledge-based, cluster-oriented, and technology-led job growth, Florida correlates job growth in technology centers with specific demographic characteristics. He theorizes that communities with a high degree of diversity attract young, educated and creative people that contribute directly to economic growth. Conversely, the lack of diversity, tolerance, and a knowledge-based business base leads to a "brain drain" of this population to more attractive Creative Class communities. Such seemingly unrelated cities as Tampa, Providence, Memphis and Pittsburgh have based their economic development strategies, at least partly, on building amenity-rich communities attractive to the Creative Class worker.



The Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area is ranked by Florida first among metros of one million or more in percentage of Creative Class population and eighth on his Creativity Index[2]. This paper benchmarks Arlington's position within the Washington D.C. region as a Creative Class community. The purpose of this paper is to provide perspective on local and regional demographics as they relate to those attributes associated with the Creative Class.

Economic Growth Theories

Michael Porter popularized the cluster-based theory of economic growth a decade ago, and the economic development community has nearly universally embraced his approach[3]. Porter suggested that innovation is derived from specialization and dense networks of interrelated firms and workers. The workers may be related by industry, occupation, age or education. Economists suggest that agglomeration economies, essentially efficiencies and comparative advantage, occur when firms cluster in geographic space. Saxenian and

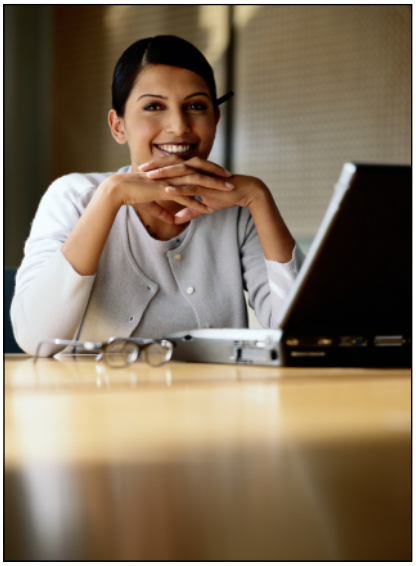
1 Florida, Richard. *The Rise of the Creative Class*. Basic Books. New York, NY. 2002. All references to the "Creative Class" are derived from this text.

2 Florida, p.237.

3 Porter, Michael. 1990. *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*. The Free Press. New York, NY.

Fukuyama advance a cultural element to the theory to explain the dissemination or dispersion of innovation within clusters[4]. Clusters build on their increasing specialization and rapid and constant innovation to increase their global competitiveness.

Richard Florida adds to this the notion that job growth in the new information economy is strongly correlated with labor force characteristics that match up to the requirements of technology-based employment. Education is especially important as the second of his three "T"s of economic growth – technology, talent and tolerance. The third "T", tolerance, is a reflection of high levels of acceptance of ethnic and lifestyle differences. These, in turn, are a function of diversity, age and education among other factors. Florida's analysis correlates these factors with economic growth and suggests that communities that have these demographic, community and economic characteristics are more likely to be economically successful.



Arlington has the highest educated population in the region.

Florida has used statistical techniques to create a series of indexes that are highly correlated with economic growth. He then combines these into an overall Creativity Index to describe a new social class – the Creative Class. He writes that "as with other classes, the defining basis of this class is economic. Because creativity is the driving force of economic growth, in terms of influence, the Creative Class has become the dominant class in society."[5] What, more precisely, is the Creative Class?

Florida's indexes that describe the Creative Class are somewhat complex to explain and replicate. Essentially, his overall Creativity Index is based on four factors:

1. The Creative Class share of the workforce, based largely on occupational characteristics;
2. Innovation, as measured by patent activity;
3. The high technology share of the economic base; and
4. Diversity, based on indexes related to sexual orientation, bohemianism (counter culture or cutting edge arts and culture), and diversity (foreign born population).

In combination, the component indexes add up to an overall index that ranks the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area in the top 10 among metro areas of one million or more population.

The indicators used by Florida that are most specifically not used in this paper are his Gay Index and Bohemian Index. There is little doubt that Arlington would score towards the top of the scale for theses measures, however, the difficulty of compiling consistent and accurate data across the region precludes the use of these indicators in this paper. Two factors have been added to the model – mobility and housing affordability. Mobility is implicit in the Creative Class concept and affordability is an important element of mobility.

4 Saxenian, Annalee. 1996. *Regional Advantage: Culture and Competition in Silicon Valley and Route 128*. Harvard University Press. and Fukuyama, Francis. 1996. *Trust*. Simon & Schuster.

5 Florida, p. ix.

Methodology

This paper does not purely replicate all of the measures used by Florida, but substitutes some relatively simple measures that are consistent with the premises of the Creative Class theory. Eight measures are selected to reflect the attributes of the Creative Class. No overall composite index is derived. Each of the individual measures reflects an important attribute of the Creative Class based on Florida's construct:

1. The proportion of the population aged 25–34 represents the mobile, educated and creative heart of the Creative Class;
2. The foreign born proportion of the population reflects cultural and ethnic diversity;
3. The proportion of the adult population with a bachelors degree or higher level of education is the source of innovation and creativity;
4. The proportion of the population in "super creative core" occupations - scientists, artists, designers, architects, engineers, writers, etc. are the Creative Class as defined by their work;
5. The percentage of the population moving within the past five years measures mobility;
6. The concentration of employment in technology sectors measures high tech economic activity;
7. Patents per capita over a ten-year period measure innovation; and
8. The percentage of renters spending less than 35 percent of their income for housing costs indicates relative housing affordability.

The 25–34 year old population is the "gold standard" in a knowledge-based economy.

Data is drawn from the Bureau of the Census *(www.census.gov)* and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office *(www.uspto.gov)*. Indicators are expressed as location quotients (LQ), which are generally used to measure economic specialization, but are equally suitable as a measure of concentrations of all sorts.[6] The analysis also examines changes between 1990 and 2000 (or other relevant period) for each indicator. Trends can be as telling as the benchmarks themselves.

Age 25–34 Population

The proportion of the population aged 25–34 is of primary importance in any analysis of the Creative Class. A study prepared for Tampa found that "statistically, 25–34 year olds are the hardest working segment of the population. In their mid-20s, they are also at the peak of their mobility and more likely to move across state lines than at any times in their lives. In the time between their 25th and 34th birthdays, these young adults not only start careers, but find mates, start families, and put down roots. Once rooted in place, the likelihood of their moving to another state or metropolitan area will decline precipitously."[7] The Tampa study describes this group as "the gold standard in the knowledge-based economy" because they are critical to long term economic health of their communities.

Over the past decade, the nation lost some 3 million 25–34 year olds as the size of this cohort shrunk. In many communities,

6 The location quotient measures relative concentration. It is the ratio of a variable in one geographic area expressed as a percentage to the percentage of that variable nationwide.

7 *The Young and the Restless: How Tampa Bay Competes for Talent*. 2003. P.5.

migration resulted in a further loss of this young, educated and talented population, representing a "brain drain" in many communities as this highly mobile group relocated. To many economic developers, the recruitment or capture of mobile 25–34 year-olds is as important as corporate recruitment was a decade ago.

Alexandria and Arlington have the highest proportions of 25–34 year-olds within the metropolitan area with location quotients of 1.79 and 1.78 respectively (Table 1). Within the region, young people are more likely to live in the most urban environments.

Table 1: Population Aged 25–34, 1990–2000
(Selected Washington D.C. Metro and Creative Class Metro Areas)

		Change 1990–2000		
Jurisdictions	**2000**	**Number**	**Percent**	**LQ**
Alexandria	32,571	2,506	7.7%	1.79
Arlington County	47,675	3,525	7.4%	1.78
District of Columbia	101,762	-19,514	-19.2%	1.25
Loudoun County	29,965	11,629	38.8%	1.25
Prince William County	45,311	-803	-1.8%	1.14
Prince George's County	126,178	-24,978	-19.8%	1.11
Fairfax County	150,257	-8,345	-5.6%	1.09
Montgomery County	126,567	-22,380	-17.7%	1.02
Subtotal	**660,286**	**-58,360**	**-8.8%**	
Austin, TX	228,717	62,753	27.4%	1.29
Raleigh-Durham, NC	208,672	56,687	27.2%	1.24
San Francisco, CA	1,157,647	-60,798	-5.3%	1.16
Denver, CO	424,165	62,417	14.7%	1.16
Washington, DC	790,559	-61,935	-7.8%	1.13
Seattle, WA	550,398	53,917	9.8%	1.09
Minneapolis, MN	457,105	-40,818	-8.9%	1.09
Boston, MA	874,993	71,279	8.1%	1.06
Hartford, CT	155,815	-41,696	-26.8%	0.93

Source: www.census.gov Quick Tables-American FactFinder

These two communities, plus Loudoun County, are the only ones to experience an increase in this age group, in spite of the substantial increase of the overall population in most suburban jurisdictions. The increases in Loudoun County were largely due to the rapid and substantial growth of population overall. Unfortunately, even with an above average percentage of young adults, the Washington D.C. Metropolitan area lost more than 60,000 persons in the 25–34 age group in the 1990s in spite of an overall population increase of 536,000.

Foreign-Born Population

Florida places a great deal of importance on diversity. He points out that "diversity is something that they (the Creative Class) value in all its manifestations…I take it to be a fundamental marker of Creative Class values."[8] Nationwide, about 40 percent of population growth has been the result of international immigration. The proportion of foreign born population is a simple but important measure of cultural diversity.

According to the Census Bureau, Arlington has the highest percentage of foreign-born population among local jurisdictions. Arlington has a location quotient of 2.52, with some 27.8 percent of all Arlingtonians born outside of the United States, more than twice the national average (Table 2).

Table 2: Percent Foreign Born Population, 1990–2000
(Washington D.C. Metro and Selected Creative Class Metro Areas)

		Change 1990–2000		
Jurisdictions	**2000**	**Number**	**Percent**	**LQ**
Arlington County	52,693	16,177	44.3%	2.52
Montgomery County	232,996	91,830	65.1%	2.41
Alexandria	32,600	14,602	81.1%	2.30
Fairfax County	237,677	110,171	86.4%	2.22
Prince George's County	110,481	40,672	58.3%	1.25
District of Columbia	73,561	14,674	24.9%	1.16
Prince William County	32,186	18,739	139.4%	1.04
Loudoun County	19,116	14,236	291.7%	1.02
Subtotal	**791,310**	**321,101**	**68.3%**	
San Francisco, CA	1,902,304	651,611	34.3%	2.44
Washington, DC	832,016	342,348	41.1%	1.53
Boston, MA	721,060	285,550	39.6%	1.12
Austin, TX	152,834	99,300	65.0%	1.11
Seattle, WA	414,355	212,373	51.3%	1.05
Denver, CO	277,127	183,232	66.1%	0.97
Hartford, CT	120,355	24,271	20.2%	0.92
Raleigh-Durham, NC	108,803	81,017	74.5%	0.83
Minneapolis, MN	210,344	122,964	58.5%	0.64

Source: www.census.gov Quick Tables-American FactFinder

8 Florida, p. 79.

Several other area jurisdictions also have relatively high percentages of foreign-born population, including Montgomery County, Alexandria and Fairfax County. Each of these communities has a percentage of foreign-born population significantly above the District of Columbia, which was about 16 percent above the national average.

The Washington D.C. Metro area ranks second among the top Creative Class communities in foreign born population, with a location quotient of 1.53, well behind San Francisco's 2.44. Only five of the top nine large Creative Class communities exceed the national average on this variable.

According to Audrey Singer of the Brookings Institution, Washington's foreign-born population itself is highly diverse, with no one country comprising more than 10 percent of the total.[9] Singer also found that, if not for the foreign-born immigrants, the Washington D.C. region would have lost population over the past decade, as both domestic migration and natural population growth was negative over that period. Further, the foreign-born are dispersed, with 90 percent of the new immigrants locating in the suburbs, especially Fairfax County. While the inner suburbs of Arlington, Montgomery and Alexandria have the highest percentage of foreign-born population, the outer suburban jurisdictions of Loudoun and Prince William Counties are experiencing the greatest percentage growth in this population segment.

Educational Levels

Educational levels are generally highly correlated with creativity, innovation and economic growth. While Florida did not use education as a single variable, it is however, imbedded in a number of indexes. Education is fundamental to the human capital theory on which the Creative Class is based. The highest ranking Creative Class communities all have levels of educational attainment well above the national average.

Arlington has the highest education level in the region, with more than 60 percent of the adult population holding a Bachelors or advanced degree, yielding a location quotient of 2.47 (Table 3). All Metropolitan Washington D.C. Area jurisdictions, including the District of Columbia, rank above the national average on educational attainment. This is especially significant in that Arlington, and the region as a whole, has a high level of foreign immigrant population which is often associated with lower levels of education. The presence of the international diplomatic corps and H1B visa-holders may be reasons why Washington's foreign-born population may have higher levels of education than those nationwide.

Table 3: Population with Bachelor's Degree or Higher, 1990–2000 (Washington D.C. Metro and Selected Creative Class Metro Areas)

Jurisdictions	2000	Percent	Change 1990–2000	LQ
Arlington County	83,584	60.2%	27.1%	2.47
Fairfax County	357,974	54.8%	35.2%	2.25
Montgomery County	324,343	54.6%	26.7%	2.24
Alexandria	51,981	54.3%	30.7%	2.23
Loudoun County	51,716	47.2%	187.4%	1.93
District of Columbia	150,353	39.1%	10.4%	1.60
Prince William County	53,883	31.5%	54.3%	1.29
Prince George's County	137,006	27.2%	17.2%	1.11
Subtotal	**1,210,840**		**29.9%**	
Washington, DC	1,361,997	41.8%	24.9%	1.71
Raleigh-Durham, NC	296,990	38.9%	83.0%	1.59
San Francisco, CA	1,777,042	37.3%	37.2%	1.53
Austin, TX	281,910	36.7%	87.3%	1.50
Denver, CO	593,034	35.5%	61.8%	1.45
Boston, MA	1,343,889	34.4%	58.7%	1.41
Minneapolis, MN	633,814	33.3%	49.0%	1.36
Seattle, WA	752,609	32.0%	65.8%	1.31
Hartford, CT	236,738	29.8%	25.1%	1.22

Source: www.census.gov Quick Tables-American FactFinder

9 Singer, Audrey. 2003. *At Home in the Nations Capital: Immigrant Trends in Metropolitan Washington*. The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy.

The Washington D.C. region ranks highest in educational attainment among the top nine Creative Class large regions with a location quotient of 1.71. Somewhat surprisingly, Washington D.C scores well above such major educational centers as Boston, Austin, and San Francisco.

Arlington has the highest proportion of foreign-born population in the region.

Creative Occupations

Florida uses the percentage of the employed population in those occupations considered part of the "super creative core", such as scientists, writers, artists, educators, architects, engineers, athletes, entertainers, etc., as the principal measure of the Creative Class.[10] Florida credits Jane Jacobs with making the connection between a city's ability to attract creative people and economic growth.[11]

Arlington leads the region on this measure with a location quotient nearly four times the national average (Table 4). All of the Washington D.C region jurisdictions have location quotients of 2.46 or higher, well over twice the percentage nationally. The regional economy is largely service based and is dominated by the federal government as both an employer and purchaser of services. This high concentration of "super creative core" workers led to Florida's ranking of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area as the top large Creative Class region. Approximately 20 percent of those employed in the Washington D.C. area are in "super creative core" occupations.

Mobility

Much of the interest in the Creative Class is focused on the potential for a "brain drain" due to the relatively high mobility of the 25–34 year old demographic cohort. Florida found that "the migratory patterns of the Creative Class cut across the lines of race, nationality and sexual orientation. People of varied backgrounds are all migrating to the same kinds of cities. Members of the Creative Class are moving away from places that … do not reflect their interests in favor of those that validate

Table 4: Super Creative Core Occupations, 2000
(Washington D.C. Metro and Selected Creative Class Metro Areas)

Jurisdictions	Number	Percent	LQ
Arlington County	28,633	25.1%	3.85
Montgomery County	113,024	24.6%	3.78
Fairfax County	123,617	23.7%	3.63
Loudoun County	21,033	22.6%	3.46
Alexandria	17,028	22.2%	3.41
District of Columbia	54,900	20.9%	3.20
Prince William County	25,297	17.5%	2.68
Prince George's County	63,971	16.0%	2.46
Subtotal	**447,503**		
Washington, D.C.	523,426	20.5%	3.15
Raleigh-Durham, NC	125,917	20.1%	3.07
Austin, TX	127,087	19.2%	2.95
Boston, MA	329,831	18.9%	2.90
San Francisco, CA	171,593	18.7%	2.86
Seattle, WA	216,921	17.2%	2.64
Denver, CO	221,911	16.2%	2.49
Hartford, CT	89,501	15.3%	2.35
Minneapolis, MN	246,984	15.3%	2.34

Source: www.census.gov Quick Tables-American FactFinder

10 Occupational categories comprising the "super creative core" include computer and mathematical occupations; architecture and engineering occupations; life, physical and social science occupations; education, training and library occupations; and arts, design, entertainment, sports and media occupations.

11 Jacobs, Jane. 1984. *Cities and the Wealth of Nations*.

their identities in the very structure of daily life."[12] The Creative Class is highly mobile. Mobility, as defined here, is the percentage of the population over the age of five that moved from another county within the 1995–2000 period. It does not measure intra-county moves, but does count moves from within the local metro area. High levels of mobility can be associated with either high levels of population growth or rapid population turnover. Areas with greater proportions of rental housing, like Arlington, tend to have higher turnover.

The communities of Alexandria, Loudoun and Arlington each have high levels of mobility. All three have location quotients above 2.0 on this measure (Table 5). In each of these communities, more than 43 percent of the 2000 population lived elsewhere in 1995. Every community in the Washington D.C. area has a level of mobility above the national average.

Table 5: Mobility Status for the Population 5 Years and Older, 1995–2000 (Washington D.C. Metro and Selected Creative Class Metro Areas)

Jurisdictions	Number Moved	Percent Moved	LQ	Population Growth	Ratio of Growth/Moved
Alexandria	57,425	47.7%	2.28	14,289	24.9%
Loudoun County	66,778	43.6%	2.08	53,570	80.2%
Arlington County	77,817	43.5%	2.08	16,033	20.6%
Prince William County	92,477	36.0%	1.72	38,418	41.5%
Fairfax County	289,218	32.1%	1.53	81,929	28.3%
District of Columbia	143,428	26.6%	1.27	19,755	13.8%
Montgomery County	195,901	24.1%	1.15	63,272	32.3%
Prince George's County	171,422	23.0%	1.10	41,674	24.3%
Subtotal	**1,094,466**	**29.5%**		**328,940**	**30.1%**
Austin, TX	409,168	35.3%	1.69	248,709	60.8%
Denver, CO	821,353	34.2%	1.64	355,055	43.2%
Raleigh-Durham, NC	360,610	32.6%	1.56	195,149	54.1%
Washington, DC	1,347,197	29.4%	1.40	430,135	31.9%
Minneapolis, MN	677,446	24.6%	1.17	243,162	35.9%
Seattle, WA	809,542	24.3%	1.16	292,053	36.1%
San Francisco, CA	1505116	22.8%	1.09	491,574	32.7%
Boston, MA	1,085,329	19.9%	0.95	295,929	27.3%
Hartford, CT	187,301	16.9%	0.81	40,017	21.4%

Source: www.census.gov Quick Tables-American FactFinder

Both population growth and turnover affect mobility rates. While Loudoun's mobility is largely due to growth (80 percent), Arlington's mobility rate is reflective of a much more transient population, one where only about 20 percent of the population mobility is attributable to population increases. Arlington's population mobility is more than twice the national average and its population turnover is well above that of any other community in the Washington D.C. region.

Those Metro areas with the greatest population growth also have the highest mobility location quotients. Washington D.C. ranks below these faster growing areas on this measure, however, a location quotient of 1.40 places Washington D.C. well above the national average.

Technology Base

Much of Florida's thesis involves the emergence of the information age, the increase in the number of knowledge workers, and the growth of technology clusters. Technology is one of four indexes he uses to compute an overall Creativity Index. This paper uses two measures of the technology base, a localized measure based on location quotients for specific industry clusters, and a regional measure of technology-based GDP published by the Milken Institute.

Within the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area, Arlington ranks first or second by location quotient for all six technology sectors used in the

12 Florida, p.242-3.

comparison (Table 6). Arlington's location quotients range from 1.85 for software publishing and data processing to 10.58 for scientific research and development services. Technology in Arlington is largely

Table 6: High Tech Sector Location Quotients 2001 (Washington D.C. Metro Area)

	NAICS Codes (4-digit)					
Jurisdictions	**5112**	**5415**	**5416**	**5417**	**5413**	**5142**
Alexandria	0.05	5.24	4.86	8.54	4.32	0.05
Arlington County	1.85	6.58	5.64	10.58	6.06	1.85
District of Columbia	0.68	1.48	4.11	7.04	1.27	0.68
Fairfax County	3.39	11.84	6.46	8.36	3.34	3.39
Loudoun County	0.05	5.06	1.31	2.46	1.72	0.05
Montgomery County	1.57	5.45	2.99	7.35	2.72	1.57
Prince George's County	1.43	3.91	1.40	3.02	2.14	1.43
Prince William County	0.29	1.24	0.62	0.38	1.27	0.29

5112 Software Publishing
5415 Computer Systems Design and Related Services
5416 Management, Scientific and Technical Services
5417 Scientific Research and Development Services
5413 Architectural, Engineering and Related Services
5142 Data Processing Services

Source: www.census.gov Quick Tables-American FactFinder

in services, not manufacturing.[13] Only Fairfax County has location quotients in technology sectors higher than those found in Arlington.

Based on the Milken Index, the Washington D.C. Metro area ranks fourth among the top nine top large Creative Class metros in high technology GDP with a location quotient of 1.64 (Table 7). Seattle tops the list, followed by Raleigh-Durham and Austin.

Table 7: High Tech Sector GDP, 2001 (Selected Creative Class Metro Areas)

Jurisdictions	**LQ**
Seattle, WA	2.44
Raleigh-Durham, NC	2.11
Austin, TX	1.94
Washington, DC	1.64
Denver, CO	1.59
San Francisco, CA	1.58
Boston, MA	1.45
Minneapolis, MN	0.94
Hartford, CT	(NA)

(NA) Data not available for record

Source: Milken Institute

Innovation

Florida used patents per capita over the 1990–1999 period as his measure of innovation. This measure was one of four (along with the Creative Class share of the workforce, high-tech industry, and diversity) that he used to develop his "Creativity Index" which was itself a measure of the ability of regions to "translate that underlying advantage into creative economic outcomes in the form of new ideas, high-tech businesses and regional growth."[14]

Using the same measure as Florida, Arlington ranks below the national average, as do most of the Washington D.C. area jurisdictions (Table 8). Only Montgomery County and Alexandria have location quotients significantly above the national average. The biotechnology sector represents the preponderant patent activity in Montgomery County, most of which results from National Institute of Health funded research.

Table 8: Patent Grants, 1990–1999 (Washington D.C. Metro and Selected Creative Class Metro Areas)

Jurisdictions	**Total Patents**	**Patent Growth**	**LQ**
Montgomery County	4,029	6.8%	2.17
Alexandria	520	0.6%	1.91
Loudoun County	208	10.6%	0.71
Fairfax County	1,444	5.5%	0.71
Arlington County	274	4.4%	0.67
Prince George's County	839	4.6%	0.48
District of Columbia	531	3.2%	0.40
Prince William County	155	3.2%	0.27
Subtotal	**8,0000**	**5.7%**	
Austin, TX	7,761	15.7%	3.35
Minneapolis, MN	15,209	6.8%	2.46
Boston, MA	26,419	6.6%	2.32
Raleigh-Durham, NC	4,759	14.8%	2.17
Hartford, CT	4,304	2.2%	1.66
Seattle, WA	8,010	9.0%	1.15
Washington, DC	9,498	5.7%	0.91
Denver, CO	4,290	5.3%	0.85
San Francisco, CA	9,492	12.0%	0.63

Source: US Patent and Trademark Office

13 See *Fostering Emerging Technology Sectors in Arlington, Virginia*, 2004.

14 Florida, p.244.

Much of the $4.5 billion spent by federal agencies on research and development in the region, especially by the Department of Defense, did not lead to local patent filings. The Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area has a location quotient for innovation of only 0.91 and significantly trails tech centers such as Austin, Minneapolis, Boston and Raleigh-Durham, each of which exceeds 2.0 on this measure.

Housing Affordability

While *The Rise of the Creative Class* did not address the cost and affordability of housing, it is a significant issue for the highly mobile 25–34 year old age group. Housing costs clearly affect the attractiveness of a community, especially for those in their early earning years.

Arlington has a progressive affordable housing program.

This measure is a composite of both rental costs and the income of the renter household. It measures the percentage of all households paying less than 35 percent of their income on rent. The focus is on rent, since Arlington has a high percentage of renters and housing affordability is less of an issue for those that have already purchased a home.

Arlington, Fairfax and Alexandria all have similar location quotients of 1.12 as affordable communities, meaning that they are relatively more affordable than housing nationwide (Table 9). Arlington's affordability actually increased over the past decade, with the percentage of renters paying less than 35 percent of their incomes for rent increasing by 18.7 percent. All of the Washington D.C. area jurisdictions have location quotients above 1.0 on this factor, meaning that they are more affordable than the national average.

Washington D.C. is, in fact, the most affordable of the top large Creative Class metro areas, with a location quotient of 1.08. Again, this is not indicative of low housing costs, but of the balance between rents and incomes. Such "hot" areas as San Francisco and Austin have the greatest affordability challenges.

Table 9: Households Paying less than 35% of Income for Housing, 1990–2000 (Washington D.C. Metro and Selected Creative Class Metro Areas)

		Change 1990–2000		
Jurisdictions	**2000**	**Percent**	**Percent**	**LQ**
Alexandria	27,575	76.3%	19.1%	1.12
Arlington County	35,840	76.1%	18.7%	1.12
Fairfax County	73,869	76.1%	24.6%	1.12
Loudoun County	8,320	75.4%	64.5%	1.11
Prince William County	18,655	75.1%	33.7%	1.10
Prince George's County	75,529	73.6%	0.2%	1.08
Montgomery County	70,237	72.2%	15.6%	1.06
District of Columbia	95,123	69.7%	-6.8%	1.02
Subtotal	**405,148**	**73.3%**	**9.5%**	
Washington, DC	457,759	73.3%	15.9%	1.08
Minneapolis, MN	212,979	71.0%	10.0%	1.04
Hartford, CT	102,117	70.1%	3.9%	1.03
Boston, MA	557,938	70.0%	35.5%	1.03
Seattle, WA	335,910	68.7%	26.6%	1.01
Raleigh-Durham, NC	102,902	68.1%	31.0%	1.00
Denver, CO	218,649	68.2%	15.3%	1.00
San Francisco, CA	692,885	67.6%	10.8%	0.99
Austin, TX	122,728	66.1%	27.6%	0.97

Source: www.census.gov Quick Tables-American FactFinder

Conclusions

The attributes associated with the Creative Class are so aligned with Arlington's mission statement that it could easily be thought of as the Creative Class manifesto:

"Arlington will be a diverse and inclusive world-class urban community with secure, attractive residential and commercial neighborhoods where people unite to form a caring, learning, participating, sustainable community in which each person is important." — Adopted by the Arlington County Board on January 26, 2002

In reality, Arlington, Virginia is a Creative Class community by any measure. Arlington tops the chart within the Washington D.C. metropolitan area on four of the eight measures and ranks second on three more:

- The "super creative core" represents 25 percent of Arlington's adult population, resulting in a location quotient of 3.85 in a region that leads all others on this measure;
- Arlington ranks first in diversity, by a significant margin, based on the percent of the population that is foreign born, with a location quotient of 2.52;
- Again, Arlington leads the region in educational attainment with a location quotient of 2.47, with more than 60 percent of all adults holding a bachelors or advanced degree;
- Arlington is tied with Alexandria and Fairfax on housing affordability – all have location quotients of 1.12 for households paying less than 35 percent of their income for rent;
- Of the six NAICS sectors reviewed, Arlington ranks first in two categories and second in four, slightly trailing Fairfax County as the highest scoring jurisdiction in the region on the high-tech measure;
- Only Alexandria has a higher level of mobility than Arlington, although a lesser percentage of Arlington's movers result from population growth and more from the general turnover of the population;
- Arlington ranks a close second among local jurisdictions on the proportion of its population in the 25–34 year old cohort, with a location quotient of 1.78; and
- The only measure where Arlington ranks in the middle of the regional pack is innovation as represented by patents per capita.

The Creative Class status of Arlington results from the values and mission of the community itself, which goes a long way in explaining Arlington's superlative rankings on so many variables. The focus on community building has also served Arlington well in creating a place where people want to both live and work.

Arlington's extraordinary population mobility raises important questions about community change and our ability to monitor what amounts to a turnover of nearly ten percent of our residents annually. We are becoming even more of a Creative Class community, with increased ethnic diversity, educational levels, income and wealth. Ranking high on the Creative Class scale may lead to increased economic sustainability as well as a more interesting and healthy community.

This research study was prepared by Terry Holzheimer and Lauren Hodgin of Arlington Economic Development (AED). Lisa Fowler of the Arlington County, Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development provided valuable comments. Aaron Hodukavich of AED provided assistance with the statistics.