TURNER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY
COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

2025

CYBERSECURITY AND IT IN GEORGIA

A Deep Dive into Georgia's Cybersecurity Sector

TURNER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY
COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

The Butler Center for Research and Economic Development

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CONTENTS

1 CONTACT US

2 OBJECTIVE

3 METHODOLOGY

5 FINDINGS

11 MEAN ANNUAL WAGES

12 CONCLUSION

13 DISCLOSURES

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OBJECTIVE

Columbus State University's (CSU) Butler Center for Research and Economic Development has undertaken a comprehensive study to evaluate the potential need for a strategic capital investment in the university's Cybersecurity program. This analysis aims to identify the occupations most directly tied to cybersecurity and assess the depth of employer demand across the region and beyond. By examining workforce trends, occupational classifications, and projected job growth, the study seeks to determine whether an expanded investment in cybersecurity education is both necessary and economically justified to meet the needs of a rapidly evolving labor market.

METHODOLOGY

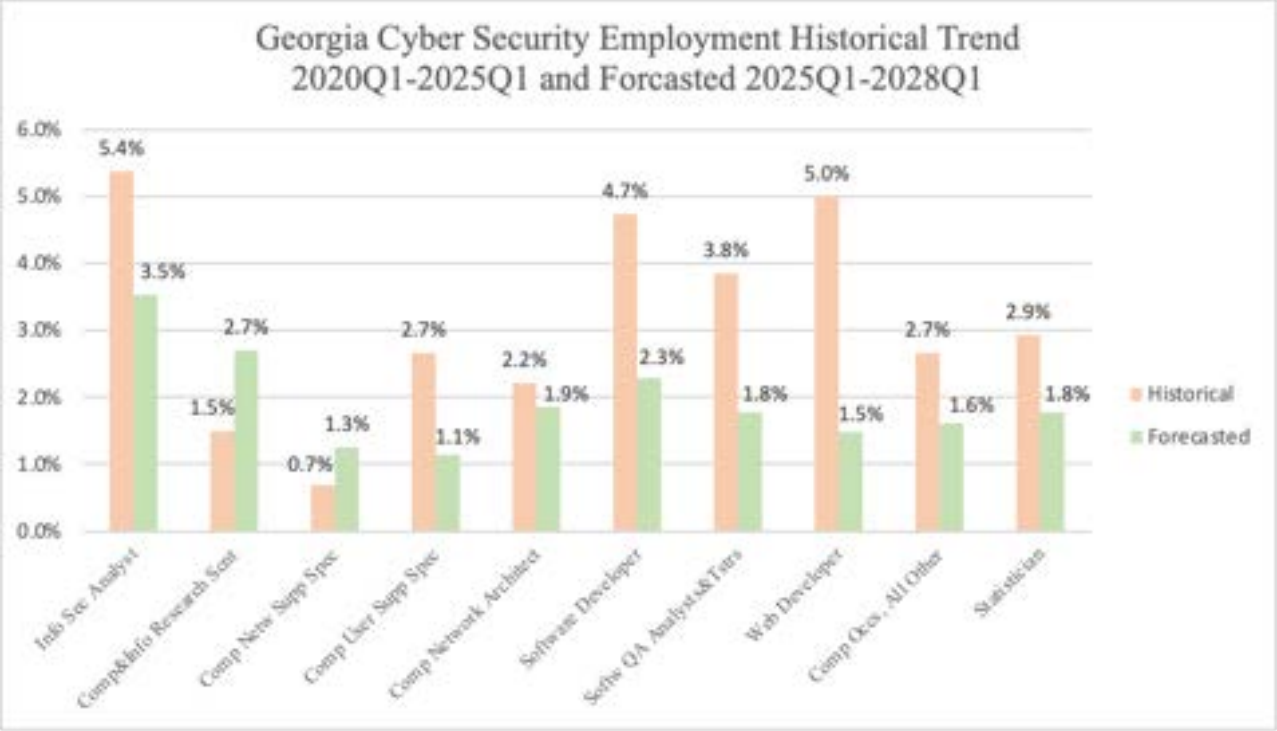
The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is used to categorize and organize occupations in a consistent manner across federal statistical agencies. Drawing on data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and incorporating the updated 2020 SOC codes specific to information security, the following SOC codes were included in this analysis.

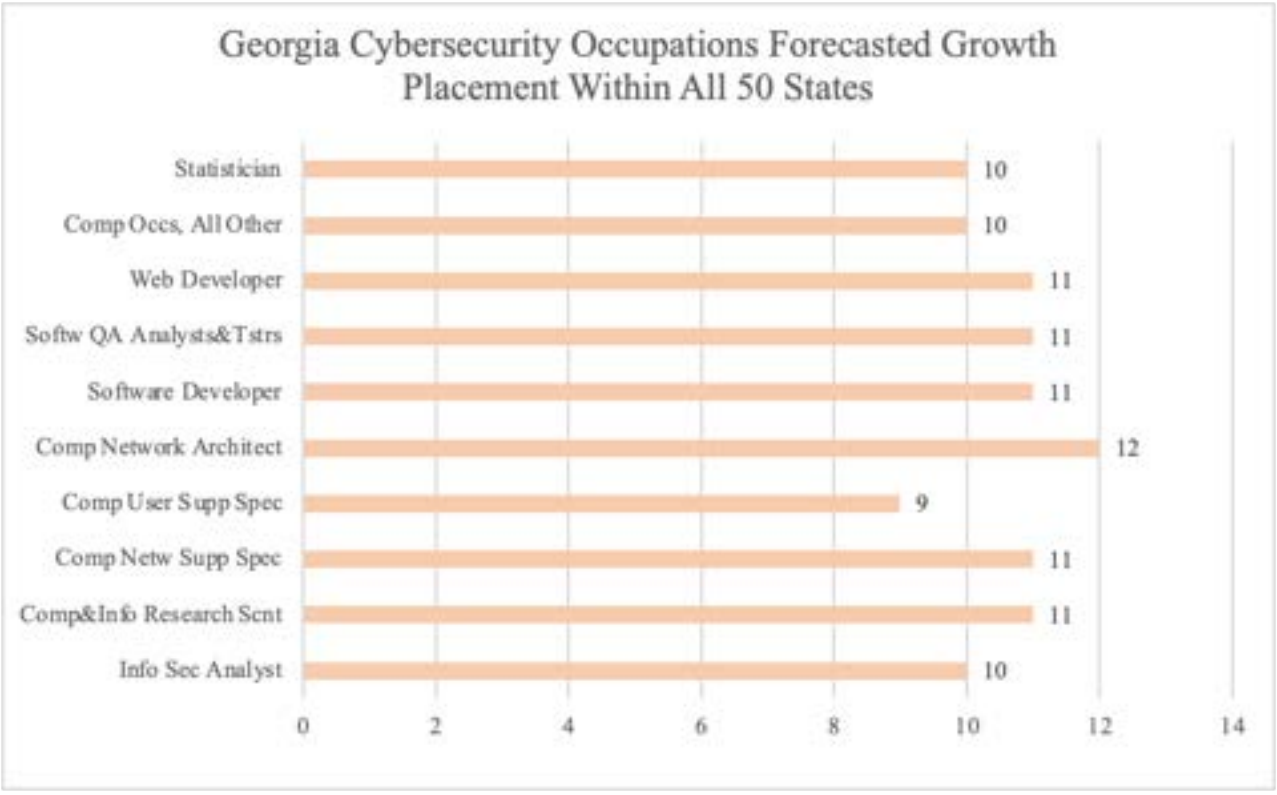
SOC Code	Official Title	Common Cybersecurity Roles	Typical Responsibilities
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	Cybersecurity Analyst, Security Operations Center (SOC) Analyst, Threat Analyst	Monitor networks for security breaches, investigate incidents, implement security measures, and ensure compliance.
15-1221	Computer & Information Research Scientists	Cybersecurity Research Scientist, Cryptographer, Cyber Threat Researcher, AI Security Researcher, Quantum Computing Security Scientist, Cybersecurity Innovation Specialist	Cyber research and development.
15-1231	Computer Network Support Specialists	Network Support Technician, Security Support Specialist	Provide technical support, troubleshoot network and security issues, maintain secure network operations.
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	Helpdesk with security functions.	Helpdesk with security functions.

SOC Code	Official Title	Common Cybersecurity Roles	Typical Responsibilities
15-1241	Computer Network Architects	Network Security Architect, Infrastructure Security Engineer	Design and implement secure network architectures, develop security frameworks, and oversee system hardening.
15-1252	Software Developers	Secure Software Developer, Application Security Engineer	Develop secure software applications, conduct code reviews, implement secure coding practices.
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	Security Systems Analyst, Cybersecurity Systems Integrator	Analyze system requirements, design secure solutions, integrate cybersecurity protocols into IT infrastructure.
15-1254	Web Developers and Digital Interface Designers	Web Security Specialist, Application Security Specialist	Secure web applications, prevent vulnerabilities like XSS/SQL injection, ensure secure interfaces.
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	Penetration Tester, Ethical Hacker, Cybersecurity Specialist	Perform penetration testing, risk assessments, vulnerability management, and advanced cybersecurity operations.
15-2041	Statisticians / Data Scientists (for Cyber Analytics)	Cybersecurity Data Scientists, Cyber Threat Intelligence Analyst, Cyber Analytics Specialist, Machine Learning Engineer, Insider Threat Data Scientist	Develops statistical and machine learning models to detect anomalies, identifying emerging threats and supports predictive cybersecurity analysis.

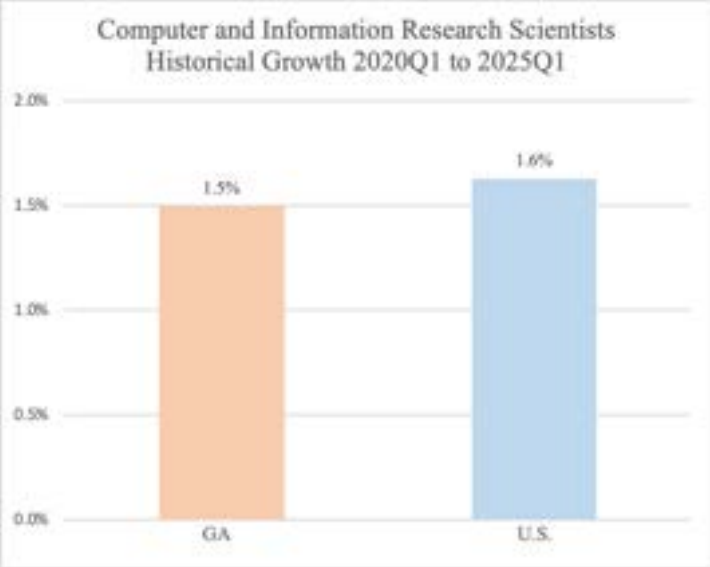
FINDINGS

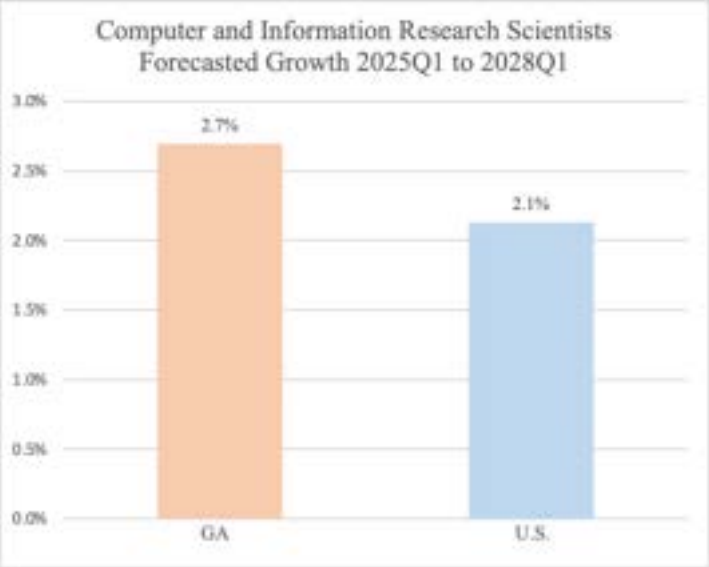
All ten SOC codes associated with Cybersecurity have benefited from significant growth within the state of Georgia over the past five years. Additionally, the state of Georgia consistently ranks in the upper quartile (25%) of all states in forecasted growth over the next three years among all ten SOC codes associated with Cybersecurity. Furthermore, many neighboring states also rank in the upper quartile and could benefit from educational offerings within the state of Georgia.

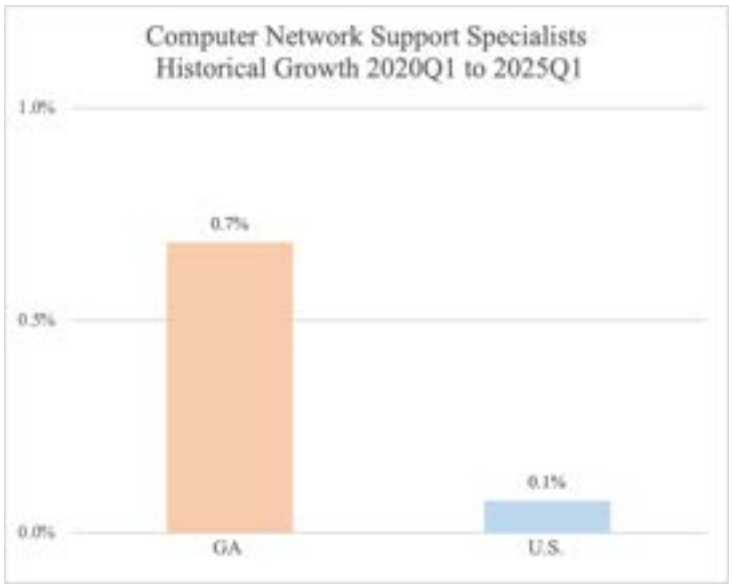


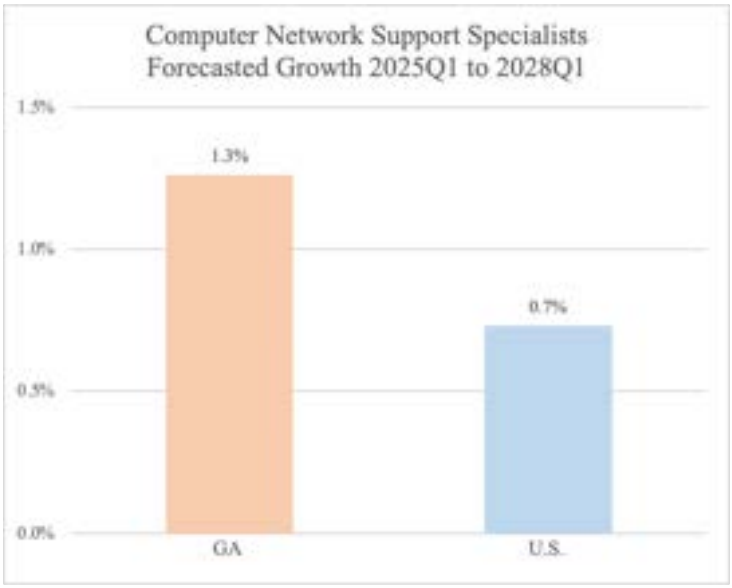


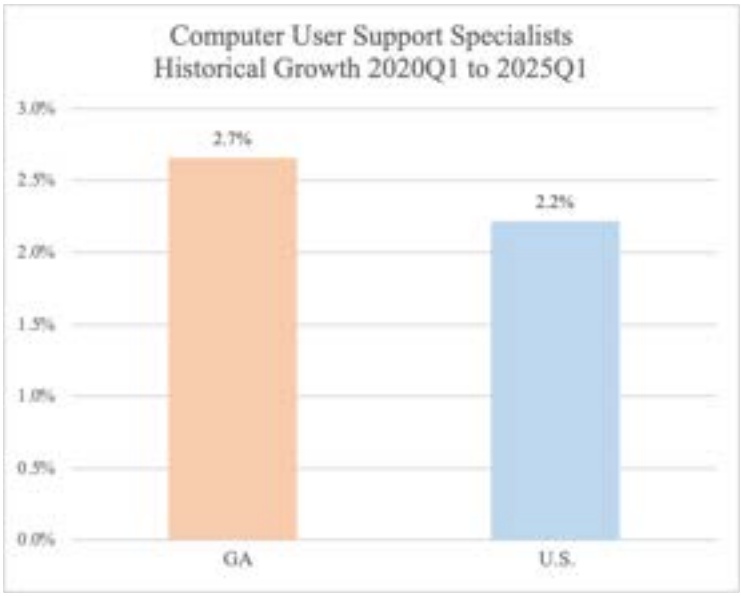
Georgia outpaced the annual growth percentage change over the past five years when compared to the US in nine out of ten of the SOC codes associated with Cybersecurity. More importantly, Georgia is forecasted to grow more quickly than the US in the next three years in all ten of the SOC codes associated with Cybersecurity.

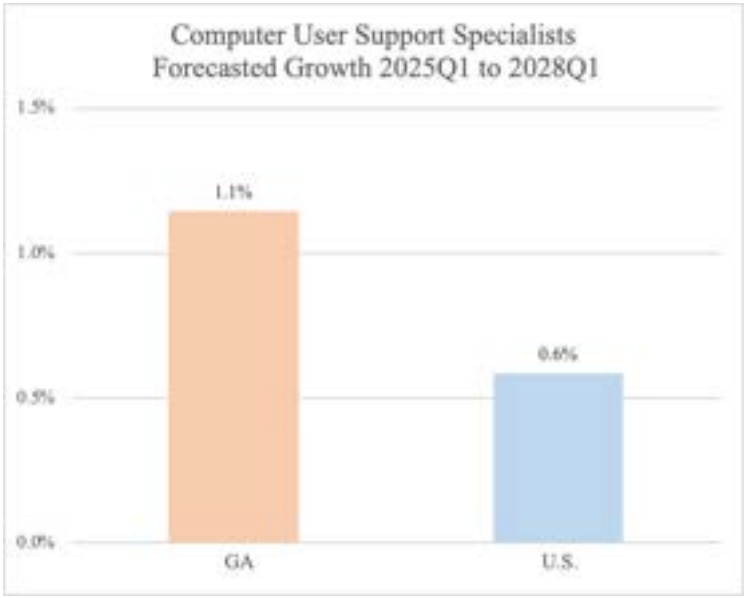


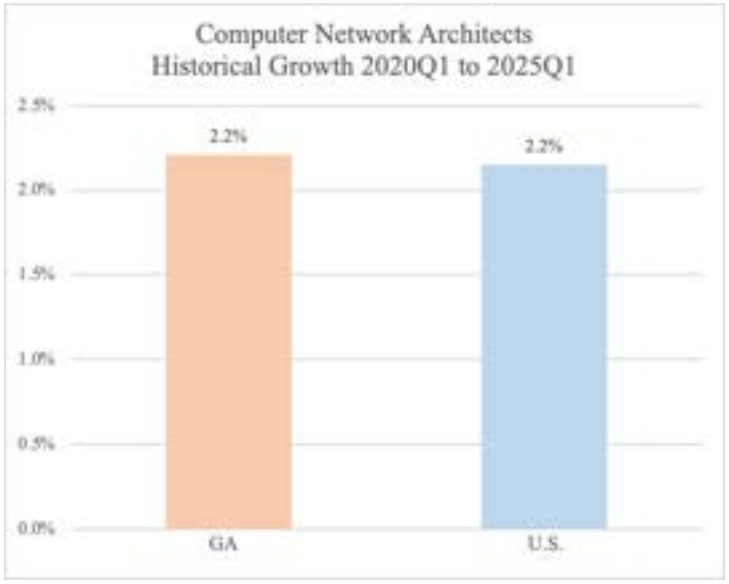


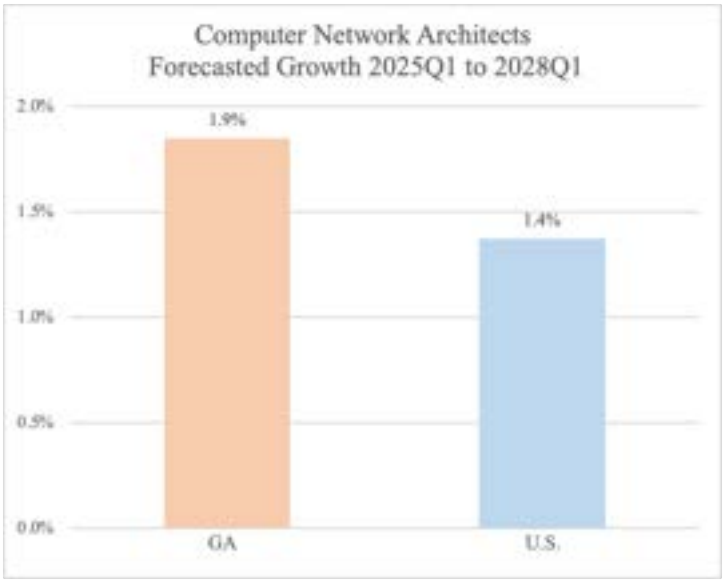

Computer Network Support Specialists
Historical Growth 2020Q1 to 2025Q1
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
0.7%
0.1%
GA
U.S.

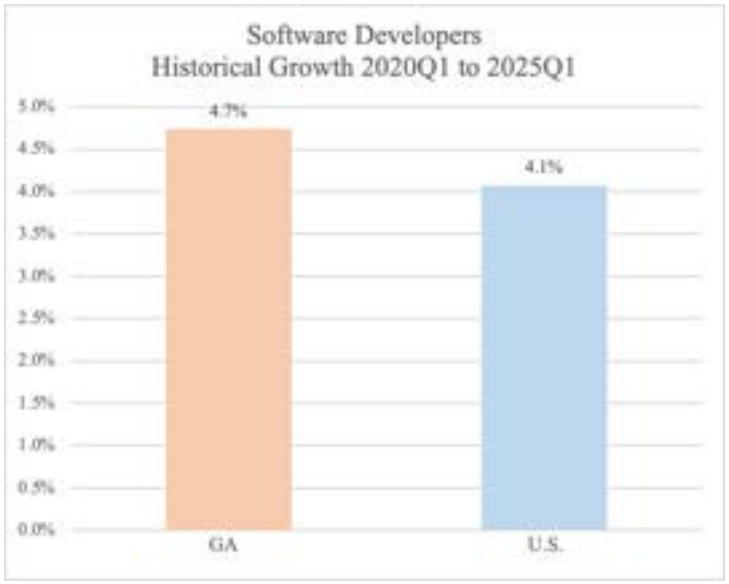

Computer Network Support Specialists
Forecasted Growth 2025Q1 to 2028Q1
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
1.3%
0.7%
GA
U.S.

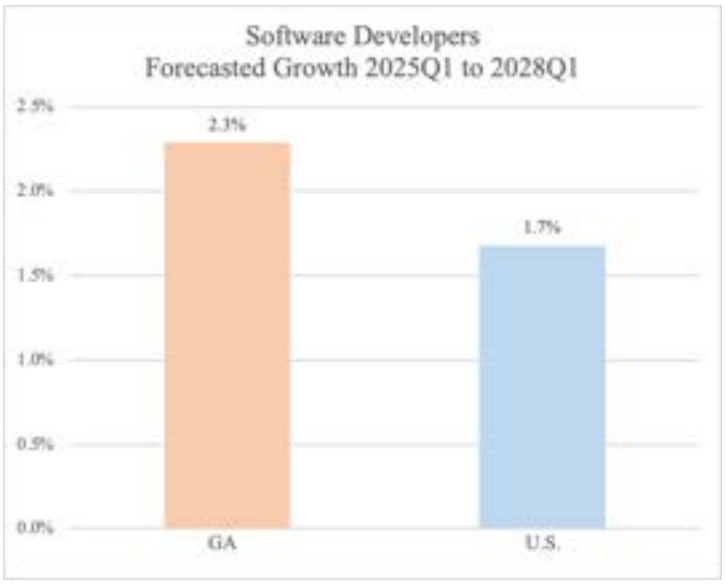

Computer User Support Specialists
Historical Growth 2020Q1 to 2025Q1
3.0%
2.5%
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
2.7%
2.2%
GA
U.S.

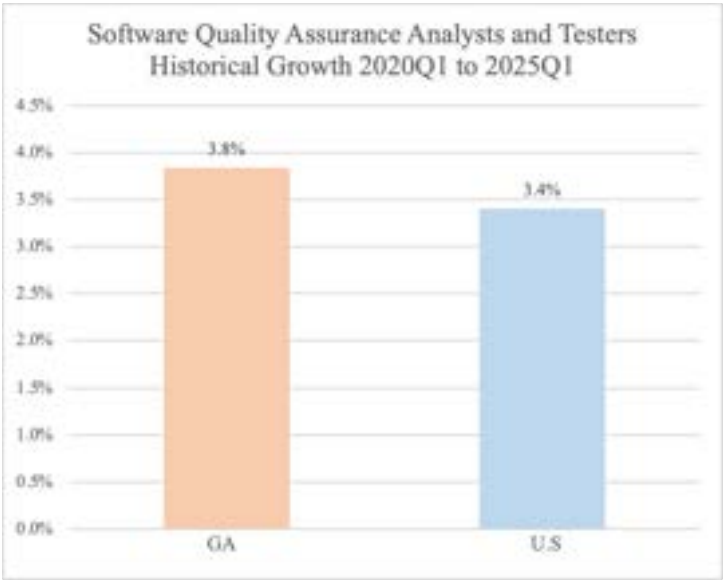

Computer User Support Specialists
Forecasted Growth 2025Q1 to 2028Q1
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
1.1%
0.6%
GA
U.S.

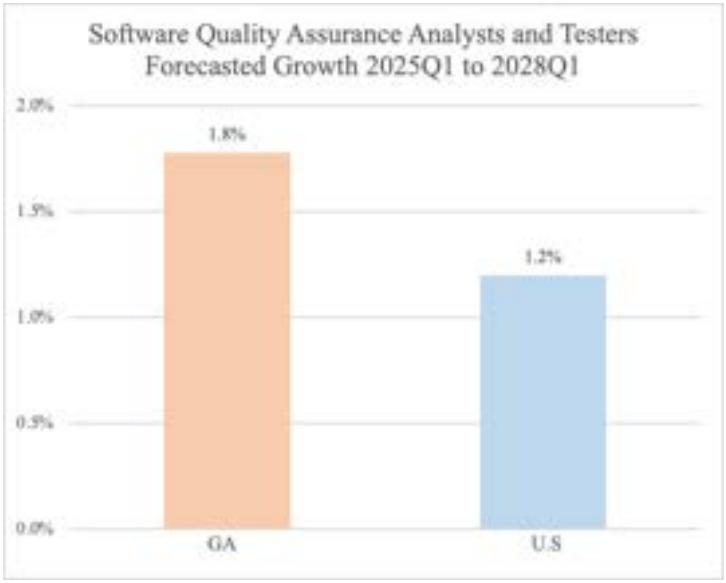

Computer Network Architects
Historical Growth 2020Q1 to 2025Q1
2.5%
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
2.2%
2.2%
GA
U.S.

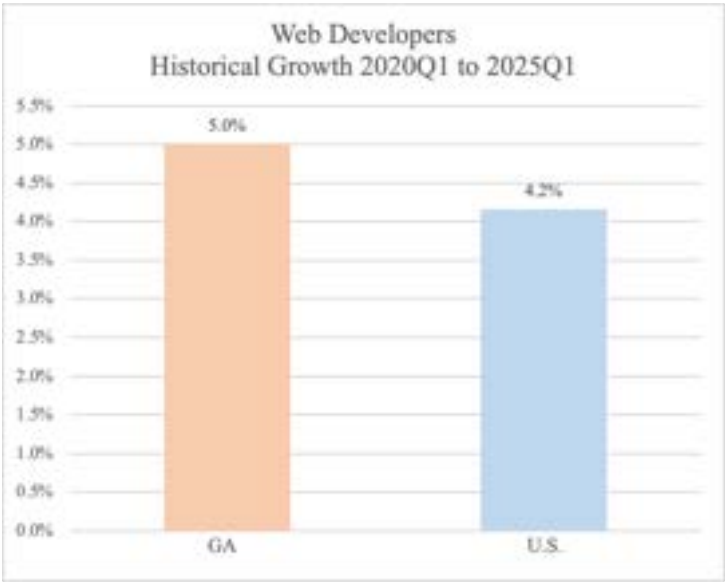

Computer Network Architects
Forecasted Growth 2025Q1 to 2028Q1
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
1.9%
1.4%
GA
U.S.

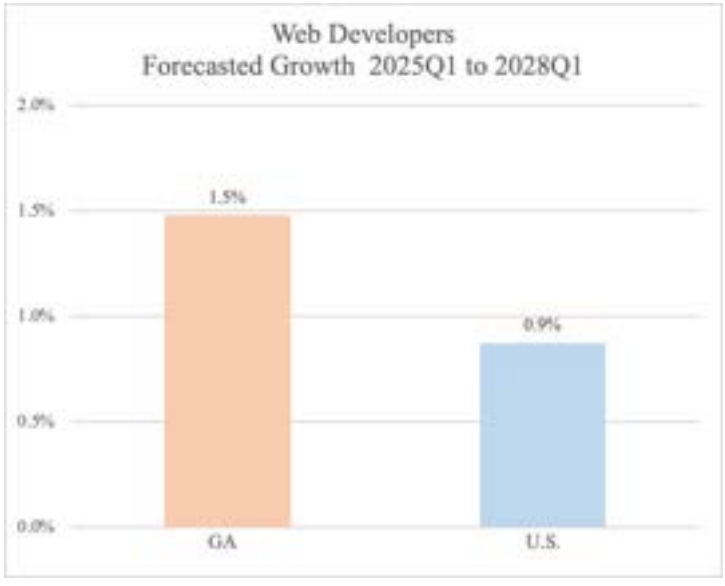

Software Developers
Historical Growth 2020Q1 to 2025Q1
5.0%
4.5%
4.0%
3.5%
3.0%
2.5%
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
4.7%
4.1%
GA
U.S.

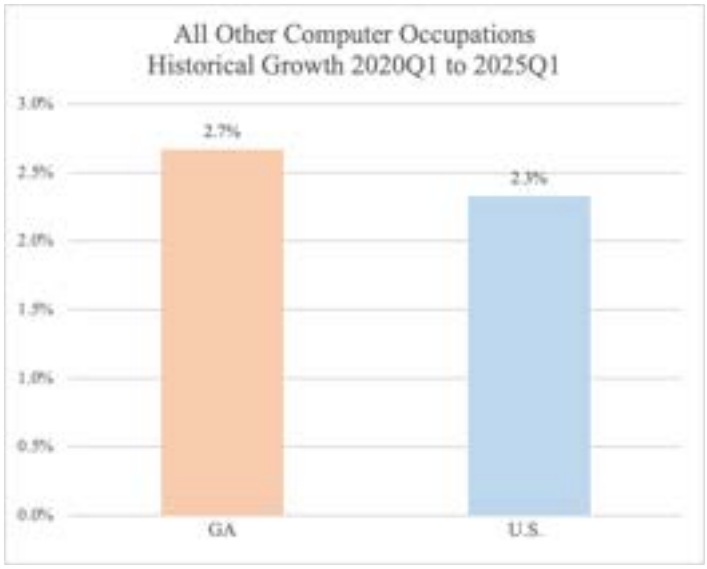

Software Developers
Forecasted Growth 2025Q1 to 2028Q1
2.5%
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
2.3%
1.7%
GA
U.S.

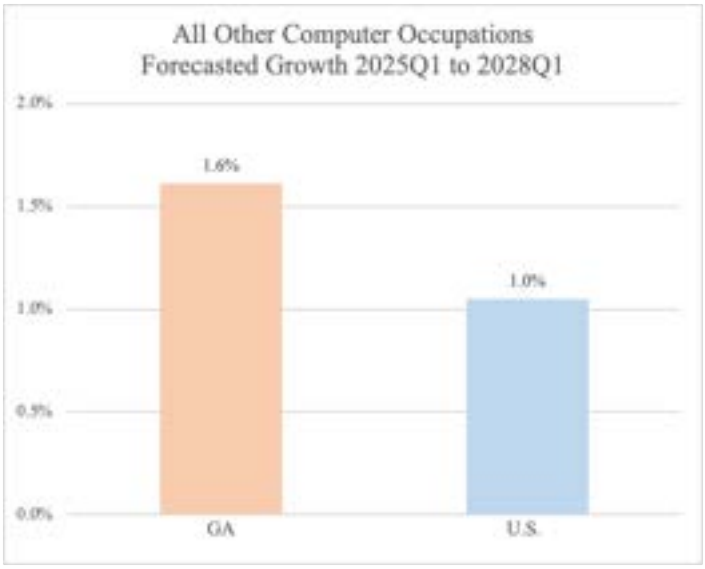

Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers
Historical Growth 2020Q1 to 2025Q1
4.5%
4.0%
3.5%
3.0%
2.5%
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
3.8%
3.4%
GA
U.S

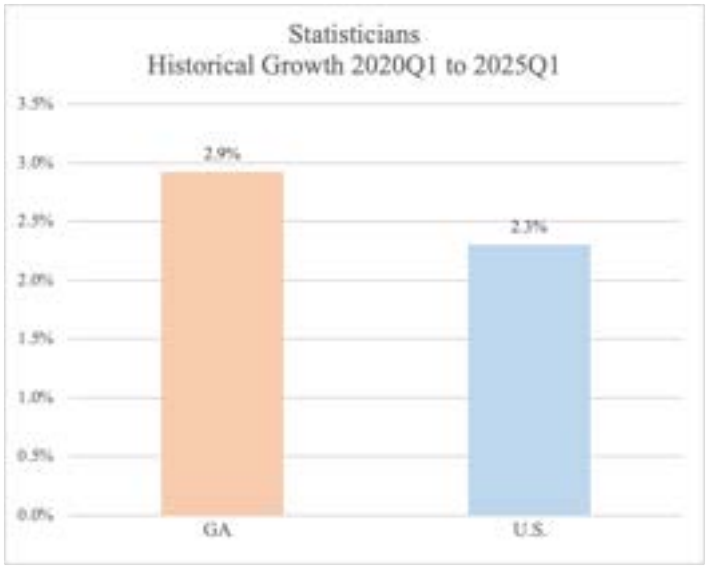

Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers
Forecasted Growth 2025Q1 to 2028Q1
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
1.8%
1.2%
GA
U.S

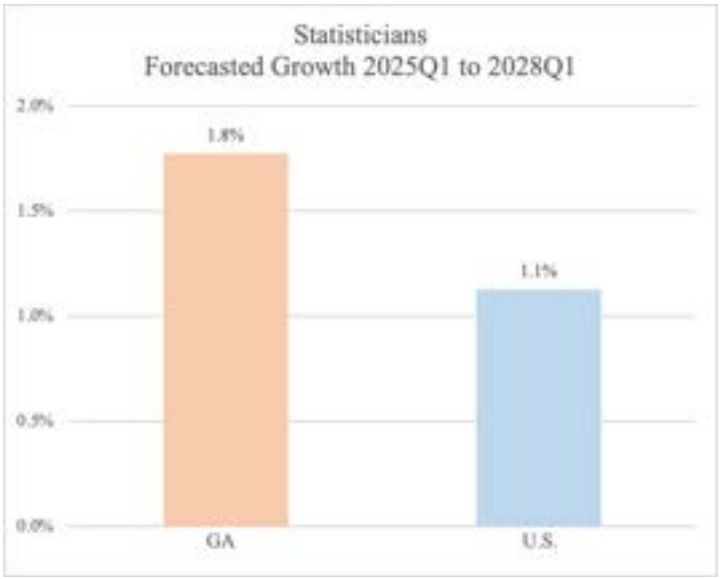

Web Developers
Historical Growth 2020Q1 to 2025Q1
5.5%
5.0%
4.5%
4.0%
3.5%
3.0%
2.5%
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
5.0%
4.2%
GA
U.S.


Web Developers
Forecasted Growth 2025Q1 to 2028Q1
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
1.5%
0.9%
GA
U.S.


All Other Computer Occupations
Historical Growth 2020Q1 to 2025Q1
3.0%
2.5%
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
2.7%
2.3%
GA
U.S.

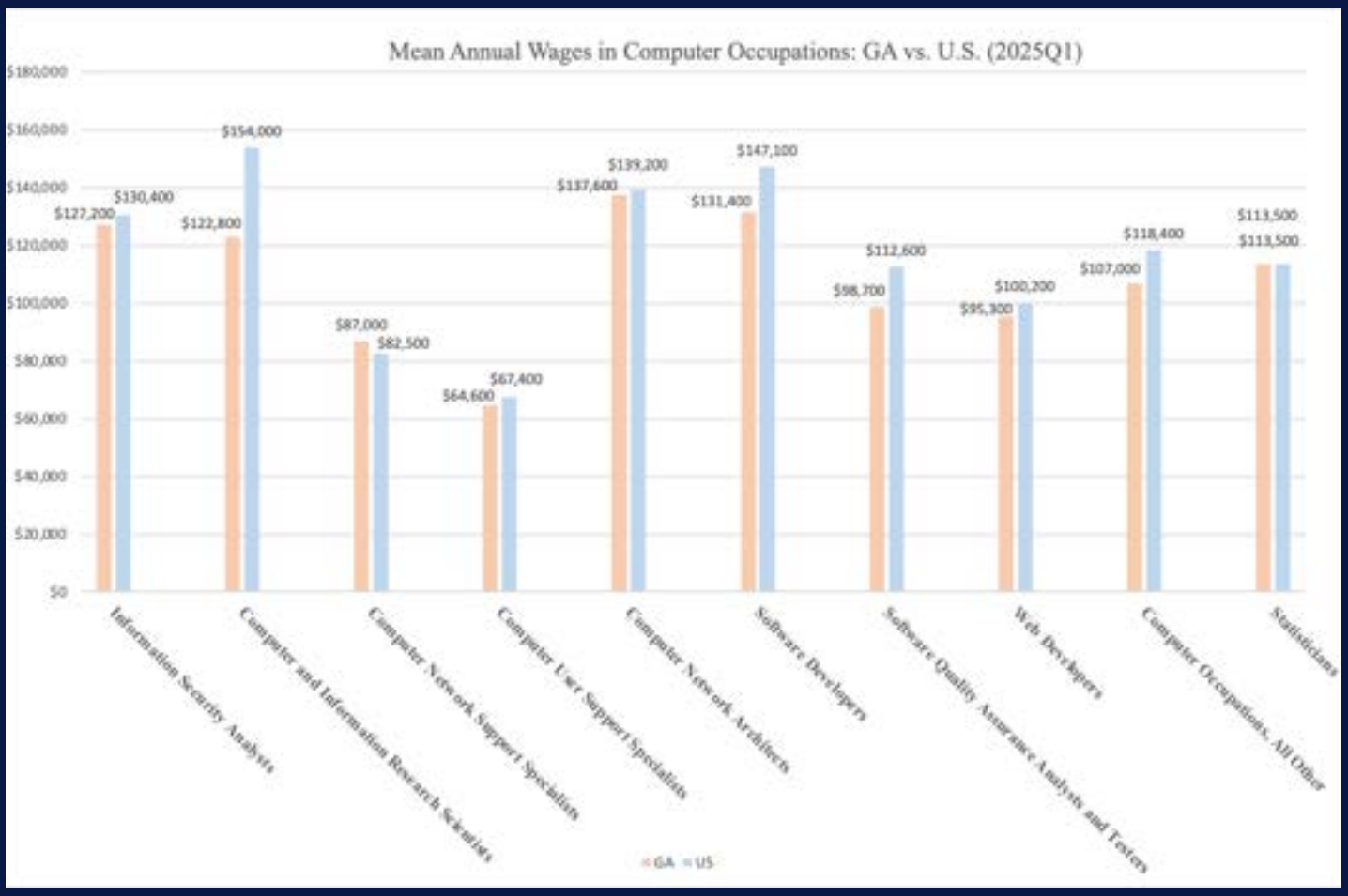

All Other Computer Occupations
Forecasted Growth 2025Q1 to 2028Q1
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
1.6%
1.0%
GA
U.S.


Statisticians
Historical Growth 2020Q1 to 2025Q1
3.5%
3.0%
2.5%
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
2.9%
2.3%
GA
U.S.


Statisticians
Forecasted Growth 2025Q1 to 2028Q1
2.0%
1.5%
1.0%
0.5%
0.0%
1.8%
1.1%
GA
U.S.

MEAN ANNUAL WAGES

Even though cost-of-living adjustments were not factored into the analysis, Georgia's relatively low cost of living provides important context for understanding the state's labor market. According to the Missouri Economic Research & Information Center (MERIC), Georgia ranks 14th lowest among the states in cost of living (Q2 2025) with an index value of 91.7 (U.S. = 100). This means that wages close to the national average stretch further in Georgia than in many other states. At the same time, employers are facing a significant shortage of workers across Cybersecurity occupations, which is pushing demand beyond the supply of qualified talent. Given the low cost of living in Georgia, the narrow gap between wages in Georgia and the U.S. in the Cybersecurity field provides evidence that the demand exceeds the supply of labor.



CONCLUSION

Given the extraordinary growth of the cybersecurity industry—now outpacing national job trends, generating high-wage employment opportunities, and serving as a pillar of economic resilience—Georgia stands at a critical juncture. Georgia has the talent, the innovation, and the infrastructure to lead. But maintaining and expanding this momentum requires intentional investment. By allocating state resources to strengthen and expand cybersecurity programs at our universities, Georgia can position itself as a national hub for cybersecurity education and innovation. This strategic investment will not only prepare our workforce for the demands of a digital economy but will also ensure that Georgia remains competitive, secure, and prosperous in the years to come. The data suggests that the legislature has the opportunity to seize this opportunity to propel Georgia forward—through education, through innovation, and through bold leadership.

DISCLOSURES

This study was conducted at the request of Columbus State University's Turner College of Business and Technology. The Total System Services (TSYS) Center of Cybersecurity and the TSYS School of Computer Science did not provide financial compensation and had no involvement in the design, execution, analysis, or interpretation of this research. The study was carried out independently to ensure objectivity, integrity, and the absence of institutional or external bias.