

PRESS RELEASE - For Immediate Release

ACCRA COST OF LIVING INDEX

Among the 309 urban areas that participated in the third quarter 2011 *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 Harlingen, TX.** 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)

Third Quarter 2011

National Average for 309 Urban Areas = 100

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index	Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index
1	New York (Manhattan) NY	223.9	1	Harlingen TX	81.7
2	New York (Brooklyn) NY	185.5	2	Memphis TN	84.0
3	Honolulu HI	167.1	3	Ardmore OK	84.1
4	San Francisco CA	161.3	4	McAllen TX	84.5
5	New York (Queens) NY	154.4	5	Waco TX	84.7
6	San Jose CA	152.4	6	Pryor Creek OK	84.9
7	Stamford CT	148.4	7	Richmond IN	85.8
8	Washington DC	147.5	8	Fayetteville AR	86.1
9	Truckee-Nevada County CA	145.3	9	Cookeville TN	86.1
10	Orange County CA	143.5	10	Temple TX	86.1

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 90,000 prices covering 60 different items for which prices are collected quarterly by chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and 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 component categories – housing, utilities, grocery items, transportation, health care and miscellaneous goods and services.

What Do Groceries Cost?

Each quarter, C2ER collects more than 90,000 prices from communities across the US for the Cost of Living Index. Given the erratic nature of food prices recently, C2ER decided to feature the communities with the most and least expensive food costs as measured by the grocery item index number. C2ER collects data on twenty-six items from a variety of categories to represent the grocery item component of the index.

**The Five Most and Least Expensive Places for Grocery Items by Index Number
in the ACCRA Cost of Living Index (COLI)
Third Quarter 2011
Average for 309 Urban Areas = 100**

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	Index	Ranking	Urban Areas	Index
1	Honolulu HI	152.9	1	Richmond IN	78.7
2	Kodiak AK	149.5	2	McAllen TX	78.9
3	New York (Manhattan) NY	148.9	3	Houston TX	79.5
4	Truckee-Nevada County CA	136.9	4	Harlingen TX	80.3
5	Anchorage AK	133.5	5	Corpus Christi TX	80.3

Coffee Prices Up

Each quarter, C2ER collects price data from communities across the US for the Cost of Living Index. Doing the data analysis this quarter we expected wide price fluctuations in several food items, but found that the price of coffee had wide regional variations. As a result, we decided to focus a portion of this quarter's media release on coffee. Below is a list of the five most expensive and five least expensive places to buy our favorite beverage among 309 urban areas.

**The Five Most and Least Expensive Places for 11oz. to 11.5 oz. Can of Coffee
Third Quarter 2011
National Average for 309 Urban Areas = 4.82**

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	Avg. Price	Ranking	Urban Areas	Avg. Price
1	Juneau AK	7.29	1	Waco TX	2.79
2	Honolulu HI	7.22	2	McAllen TX	3.44
3	Kodiak AK	7.14	3	Richmond IN	3.50
4	Fairbanks AK	6.73	4	Martinsburg WV	3.50
5	Anchorage AK	6.66	5	Salina KS	3.59

The quarterly ACCRA Cost of Living Index is available by subscription for \$165 per year for the print version and \$150 per year for the PDF. The electronic version is available for \$250 per year. Be sure and ask about our new Expanded Excel version which covers more household and income types. 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.