



Double Whammy Hits East Lansing Business Hard

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EL double whammy



The sidewalks are free of students, and Sparty is standing alone.

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School's out for the summer, not bad for aspiring graduates, but terrible for East Lansing business.

"They're always buying books, they're always buying food, and I understand that they go out and have a drink or two," Patrick Anderson of the Anderson Economic Group says.

But not having students on campus during the summer months obviously isn't anything new, what is...is the recession in addition to that low, and it's running businesses dry.

"So when students aren't here, sales wise, it's cut in half," Manager of American Apparel, Mark Knight says.

Eric Skusa, the manager of The Peanut Barrel says that's because the students who are still actually in town don't have money to spend.

"The people out of work are taking the seasonal jobs that students would take," Skusa explains.

Leaving his restaurant and other shops empty, and making this one of the worst summers on record.

"We're not going to do great, you know when there is 15% unemployment," he says.

Patrick Anderson of the Anderson Economic Group has studied business in college towns and says it's certainly not out of the ordinary to see businesses take a 50% hit in the summer months, but with the recession on top of that, 50% may seem like nothing.

"Certainly if you're barely making it in the spring, and lots of businesses are just holding on, a summer lull like this makes it harder," Anderson explains.

So for now businesses are just trying to hold on, and hoping for the next few weeks to go by fast.

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