

Biennial Employment and Training Plan FY 14 – 15
Quarterly Report: Quarter 1 FY 15

EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS

The public workforce system must engage employers as full partners to ensure that training and education are responsive to, and aligned with, employer needs.

Action Steps	Related Activities
<p>Action Step 1. Market the EmployRI website, and solicit feedback to improve usability and increase participation by employers and job seekers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EmployRI was marketed through billboards, bus panels, and other outreach efforts (including RI Resource Hub and Adult Lifelong Learning (ALL) Access Learning Lounge through Providence Public Library). • Improvements were made to EmployRI, making it easier to register, post a resume or job, and match job seekers to jobs. • Employer focus groups were conducted regarding usability and satisfaction. These groups included several employers from the GWB’s Employer Advisory Committee. • Job seekers and One-Stop staff were surveyed regarding usability and satisfaction with EmployRI. • The DLT used focus group, survey results, and the 2013 Job Match Bill recommendation to undertake improvements to the system that improve functionality for matching skills required by employers, to compare training programs, and to find training based on skills checklist, as well as updating the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).
<p>Action Step 2. Analyze the requirements of current job vacancies and the skills of job seekers in order to accelerate hiring, identify skills gaps and prioritize skills training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EmployRI analyzes the skills of individual job seekers for job matching and will provide an aggregate skills gap report in the winter of 2015. • LMI analyzes requirements of job vacancies and skills of job seekers on the aggregate level (labor supply and demand report). • Industry Partnerships wrote or updated Skills Gap studies to identify sector specific gaps and training needs. • Unemployment Insurance claimants are now required to post their resumes on EmployRI.
<p>Action Step 3. Exempt the Job Development Fund (JDF) from the State’s 10% cost recovery in order to increase available funds to address employer workforce needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FY2015 budget, passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor, exempts the JDF from the 10% indirect cost recovery.
<p>Action Step 4. Leverage employer support for internships, on-the-job training, summer youth employment, and other experiential learning opportunities through the use of grants, tax credits and/or other incentives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 1,000 RI businesses per year were engaged in public-private efforts to promote workforce development. • A new RI Work Immersion Program was created to provide partial wage reimbursements to RI employers providing internships to unemployed adults, college student, and recent college graduates • Unified Workforce Development Expenditure & Program Report (UEP) has begun to track and report employer partnerships. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Innovative partnership grants and industry partner grants were established, requiring employer partner-driven training.
<p>Action Step 5. Enlist a team of private sector champions to promote, challenge, and engage business leaders to participate actively in the workforce system to ensure that workforce development efforts are informed by, and responsive to, employer workforce needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GWB formed Employer Advisory Committee which has met several times per year to discuss critical workforce issues. • GWB Industry Partners are more closely aligned with the DLT Business Workforce Center. • Expanded outreach to RI business through GWB eNews, Business Workforce Center, and bRIdge.jobs internship promotion campaign • Employers enlisted to assist with National Career Readiness Credential (NCRC), TAACCCT grants, and economic development planning

WORK READINESS

All youth and adults must have the opportunity to acquire core literacy, numeracy, and work-readiness skills necessary to succeed in the workplace.

Action Steps	Related Activities
<p>Action Step 1. Expand resources for target populations with low skills and additional employment barriers (e.g., veterans, ex-offenders, out-of-school and at-risk youth, TANF recipients, long-term unemployed, homeless, and disabled individuals).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-Ramps work readiness program was launched, including a pilot of the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), to assist people with low literacy and the long-term unemployed or never employed. • RI received a National Emergency Grant for dislocated workers; local WIBs worked toward a contextualized model for work based learning (including digital literacy). • Broadband RI has implemented new digital literacy efforts to expand work readiness skills. • The Employment First Initiative was launched to provide increased job placements for adults with developmental disabilities. • Adult Basic Education services have been improved; as a result, the level of academic achievement has been climbing steadily, and more students are making gains on post-tests. • The ALL Access Learning Lounge (Providence Public Library) provides ABE and workforce services to underserved populations. • RI Family Literacy Initiative (RIFLI) provides services 3 days per week at One-Stops. • Child care support for individuals in training programs was enacted into law, which allows eligible individuals to access child care assistance while training. • Numerous grants and programs across RI's workforce system were expanded to include and/or require work readiness programs.
<p>Action Step 2. Expand access to career pathways through contextualized adult education, work-readiness, career exploration, internships, case management and job placement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GWB established Innovative Partnership grants to support business-education partnerships that increase the employability of unemployed and under-employed workers through work readiness, occupational skills training, and experiential learning aligned with career pathways. • RIDE established contextualized adult education contracts. • Career maps were created to support career exploration. • The RI Work Immersion program was established to expand opportunities for college students and unemployed adults to obtain paid internships leading to jobs and careers. • CCRI PACE provided training to trade-eligible dislocated workers, returning military veterans, and Rhode Island's unemployed with a USDOL TAACCCT grant.

<p>Action Step 3. Establish a statewide, employer-recognized work-readiness credential to be incorporated into workforce education and training programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-Ramps work readiness program launched National Career Readiness Certificates as a pilot; a work experience credential was created to align with NCRC to assist the long-term unemployed and those with low-literacy levels. • Northstar Digital Literacy Assessment program was piloted at public libraries.
<p>Action Step 4. Expand subsidized summer youth employment opportunities.</p>	<p>Summer youth programs were expanded through increased investment of JDF funds by the GWB in the summer of 2013 and 2014, as well as by allocation of unexpended TANF funds by DHS in summer of 2013.</p>

CAREER PATHWAYS

The public workforce system, in partnership with employers, must provide youth and adults with a continuum of training, education, work experience, and supportive services that lead to good jobs and careers in high-growth, high-demand, strategically important sectors of the Rhode Island economy.

Action Steps	Related Activities
<p>Action Step 1. Promote dual enrollment academic programs (i.e., secondary / post-secondary) linked to growth sectors of the economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dual Enrollment programs were expanded at CCRI to include several high school technical programs.
<p>Action Step 2. Expand the use of Career and Technical High School facilities to train adults and out-of-school youth for career pathways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A team was formed to address this step; they are still in the planning stage. • CTE facilities were leveraged for adult programming in culinary arts and boat building (including programs at Providence CTE, Woonsocket CTE, Davies CTE, and the MET school).
<p>Action Step 3. Promote a statewide internship campaign to identify and develop talent for employers, and provide work experience and connections to employers for high school students, college students, recent graduates, out-of-school youth and unemployed adults.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge.jobs, a statewide web portal to facilitate internships between students and Rhode Island businesses, conducted a statewide campaign to increase awareness and participation of businesses in internship programs with funding from the RI Foundation. • The Work Immersion program was implemented to target college students, recent college grads, and unemployed adults. • Work Immersion and Back to Work RI were established to increase opportunities for college students and unemployed adults to obtain work experience.
<p>Action Step 4. Expand the use of on-the-job training, pre-employment occupational skills training and targeted hiring subsidies to prepare the workforce for career pathways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-trade apprenticeship programs were approved for CNC Machinists, construction managers, cost estimators, and marine trades. • Workforce Solutions of Providence-Cranston administered an On-the-Job Training program for TANF recipients with funding from the Department of Human Services. • DLT and the local WIBs have initiated an effort to improve the alignment of the Eligible Training Provider List with in-demand jobs and career pathways, as well as to increase accountability for outcomes. • GWB Jobs Initiatives, Work Immersion, and Innovative Partnerships have increased support for pre-employment training, experiential learning, and hiring subsidies.
<p>Action Step 5. Establish seamless career pathways linking K-12 to higher education, and higher education to employers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCRI established a manufacturing boot camp for youth, veterans, and the unemployed. • Industry Partnerships in eight key sectors have conducted skills gap studies, created on-line, career pathways tools for in-demand occupations, and provided career coaching to job seekers. • The Career Pathways Advisory Group was established by the General Assembly to help guide and implement statewide career pathways development under the leadership of the GWB and in alignment with the Workforce On-Ramps program.

Action Step 5 [CONTINUED]. Establish seamless career pathways linking K-12 to higher education, and higher education to employers.

- Several USDOL grants (TAACCCT, NEG, and H-1B) were obtained to expand career pathways capacity in manufacturing, shipbuilding, and information technology.
- Articulation agreements were developed and expanded between institutions of higher education.
- The Hospitality sector has developed articulation agreements with culinary arts and lodging programs (to offer college credit and scholarships).
- The Shipbuilding, Marine Trades/Advanced Manufacturing Institute (SAMI) was established at NEIT with funding from a USDOL TAACCCT grant.
- The IYRS marine tech program established an articulation agreement with Roger Williams.
- Legislation was passed allowing 16 and 17-year-olds to participate in pre-apprenticeships in manufacturing settings

PUBLIC WORKFORCE SYSTEM

The public workforce system must be fully integrated in order to coordinate planning, funding, and services; evaluate and report the effectiveness and efficiency of services; and align with state economic development strategies.

Action Steps	Related Activities
<p>Action Step 1. Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the public workforce system by directing existing inter-agency teams to:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RI Office of Management and Budget performance management office was created to refine and capture data across state agencies. • New legislation was passed that requires the GWB to develop a comprehensive system improvement plan in 2015. • Data collection processes were improved across agencies. • Improved methodology for performance measures have been established. • Network RI One-Stop centers have expanded their integration efforts and services. • The On-Ramps program was piloted using a “braided funding” model among partner state agencies. • Legislation passed to allow data sharing across Longitudinal Data System that measures K-12 to Higher Education. • SWIO and Local WIB plans were developed to align with the first Biennial Employment & Training Plan.
<p>Action Step 2: Appoint a representative of the Governor’s Workforce Board to the board of the Economic Development Corporation, and appoint a representative of the Economic Development Corporation to the Governor’s Workforce Board.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GWB Board Chair or member was added by statute to CommerceRI Board, Board of Education, and Career & Tech Board of Trustees. The Secretary of Commerce is to become Vice Chair of GWB. • As of February, 2015, local WIB Chairs will serve on the GWB. • As of February, 2015, the Secretary of Commerce will serve on the GWB. • In 2015, a GWB employer representative will serve on the new Career and Technical Education Board of Trustees. ▪ RhodeMap RI and the state economic development plan included workforce development data, strategy, and leadership.
<p>Action Step 3. Expand interagency participation and resource support for netWORKri Career One-Stop Centers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inter-agency leadership team of Workforce On-Ramps is developing collaborative approach to improving effectiveness of <i>netWORKri</i> One-Stops ▪ Braided funding from DLT, GWB, DHS, LWIBs, and RIDE for On-Ramps. A committee is investigating the use of common measures. ▪ Industry partners have increased their presence in One Stops to provide industry specific coaching.
<p>Action Step 4. Increase the frequency of cabinet-level meetings on workforce development matters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legislation enacted to create a Commerce and Coordination Cabinet to be co-chaired by Directors of Labor and Commerce

STATEWIDE RELATED PROGRESS: December 2014 v. December 2013

- Unemployment rate has declined to **8.7%** from 9.1%
- The number of unemployed RI residents has declined to **48,500** from 49,900
- The total number of RI-based jobs has increased to **475,800** from 469,200
- The total RI labor force has increased to **554,400** from 550,500
- The number of employed RI residents has increased to **506,000** from 500,700