

Biennial Employment and Training Plan FY 14 – 15
Quarterly Report: Quarter 3 FY 14

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
Increase employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three Employer Advisory Group meetings held. The most recent meeting focused on how employers hire and retain talent. ▪ 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
Market EmployRI and solicit feedback to improve usability and increase participation by employers and jobseekers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EmployRI demonstration at Employer Advisory Group ▪ Employer focus groups convened regarding EmployRI ▪ Commerce RI (formerly the EDC) and DLT exploring joint marketing of EmployRI ▪ All Workforce On-Ramps participants become EmployRI enrollees ▪ Based on job seeker, employers and staff feedback, the EmployRI and <i>neWORKri</i> websites were redesigned to allow for easier navigation and improved service features
Increase Employer Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GWB Innovative Partnership RFP developed partnerships between education & training providers and 193 RI employers ▪ 100 employers participating in Incumbent Worker Training Grants and Express Grants ▪ FY2014-Round 2 IWTG resulted in 34 additional companies receiving annual grants between April 1, 2014–March 31, 2015 ▪ AMAC/Tunstall partnered with Commerce RI, DLT, GWB, and CCRI PACE program to train and hire approximately 250 unemployed Rhode Islanders
Exempt the JDF from the State's 10 percent cost recovery in order to increase available funds to address employer workforce needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legislation introduced in RI Senate and House to exempt JDF from 10 percent cost recovery
Analyze requirements of current job vacancies and the skills of job seekers in order to accelerate hiring, identify skills gaps, and prioritize skills training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Through EmployRI, by the end of June, DLT will have capability to produce aggregate skills gap reports. On an individual level, DLT can do this now through staff assistance, or job seekers can do this on their own through self-service.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tunstall, Electric Boat, and more than 200 summer youth employer sponsors ▪ Innovative Partnership grants are providing work experiences for 240 unemployed adults in partnership with 193 RI businesses ▪ Workforce On-Ramps is increasing its number of employer partners providing work experiences ▪ Work Immersion Program: GWB launched work immersion for unemployed adults, expanding upon existing work immersion program for college students ▪ Non-trade apprenticeships: Two proposals under development ▪ Back to Work RI: DLT is doing extensive promotion

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
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).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workforce On-Ramps program provides work readiness services to TANF and long-term unemployed, among others ▪ Adult education programs serve these groups ▪ GWB has developed partnerships with FedCap and Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) to collaborate on workforce development and child care ▪ Target Innovative Partnership Grantees (e.g., Open Doors, Amos House) explicitly support hard-to-serve populations
Expand access to career pathways through contextualized adult education, work-readiness, career exploration, internships, case management, and job placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ten GWB Innovative Partnership Grants underway. Emphasis is on work readiness, work experience, and career pathways for unemployed and underemployed. ▪ On-Ramps Career Pathways subcommittee bringing together diverse state and local partners to map out pathways including all services
Establish a statewide, employer-recognized work-readiness credential to be incorporated into workforce education and training programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work-readiness credential vetted by GWB employer advisory committee, employer focus groups, CPSTF, and Industry Partners ▪ NCRC training and testing underway as part of On-Ramps program ▪ Work experience credential developed and aligned with NCRC written test ▪ Work-readiness activity is being tracked among other state partners ▪ 374 participants in Innovative Partnerships Grants have received work readiness training, as have more than 1,000 youth summer participants
Expand subsidized summer youth employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$1.5M in JDF funds will again be allocated to summer youth programs in FY2015 ▪ GWB bonus funding in Incumbent Worker Training Grants has increased summer youth employment opportunities

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
Promote dual enrollment academic programs (i.e., secondary / post-secondary) linked to growth sectors of the economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encouraged by the GWB Innovative Partnership RFP ▪ GWB supported YouthCareerConnect proposal to USDOL from Mt. Pleasant High School for IT career path
Expand the use of CTE high school facilities to train adults and out-of-school youth for career pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encouraged by the GWB Innovative Partnership RFP ▪ Partnerships have been built between several Industry Partners and CTE programs
Promote a statewide internship campaign to identify and develop talent <i>for</i> employers, and provide work experience and connections <i>to</i> employers for high school students, college students, recent graduates, out-of-school youth, and unemployed adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ bRIdge.jobs consortium funded by RI Foundation to promote internships to businesses statewide through surveys, mailings, social media, seminars, and employer resources. Hundreds of RI businesses have attended seminars and posted internships. ▪ Work Immersion up and running for college students and unemployed adults.
Establish seamless career pathways linking K-12 to higher education, and higher education to employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GWB is supporting Workforce On-Ramps by enlisting Industry Partners in development of on-line career pathways resources ▪ Ten career pathways are under development by GWB Industry Partners, and career overviews for several sectors are now available online. ▪ GWB has partnered with NEIT and CCRI in developing USDOL TAACCCT grants to support career pathways for unemployed workers.

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
Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the public workforce system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ November 2013 UEP included greater detail of state workforce development programs so that stakeholders understood results better ▪ November 2014 UEP will include report on employer partners and work readiness, and will include reports from additional workforce system partners ▪ Improved tracking and reporting of JDF investments. Most grantees have negotiated targets and increased monitoring of performance ▪ RI Senate's Rhode to Work report called for GWB to have increased role in coordinating and improving the public workforce system ▪ Longitudinal data system funding has produced powerful new data tools to help inform the workforce system of the impact of investment strategies.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GWB representative will serve on Commerce RI (formerly EDC) Board as of January 2014 ▪ Secretary of Commerce will serve as vice-chair of GWB as of February 2015 ▪ Six Commerce RI Board members attended GWB Board Retreat to focus on mutual interest in aligning workforce and economic development ▪ RhodeMap RI and Commerce RI have enlisted GWB in formation of economic development plan. GWB has enlisted RhodeMap consultant in evaluation of GWB Industry Partner program ▪ Evaluation of GWB Industry Partnerships has been completed. FY 15 RFP for Industry Partnerships will seek a new industry sector that reflects economic development opportunity.
Expand inter-agency participation and resource support for netWORKri One-Stops	<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.
Convene regularly scheduled meetings of cabinet-level directors on workforce development matters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>No activity during this reporting period.</i> ▪ Legislation enacted to create a Commerce and Coordination Cabinet to be co-chaired by Directors of Labor and Commerce

STATEWIDE RELATED PROGRESS: March 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