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As RI Latino Labor Force Grows, More Education and Training is Needed to Help Workers Compete in Local Workforce

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“It is critical to the success of our economy that we create opportunities for all Rhode Islanders to build job skills that matter so they can access the jobs that pay,” said Governor Gina Raimondo. “Today, we walk away with one poignant realization: we need to do better. We need to work harder to increase employment opportunities for all Rhode Islanders so they can support their families. When our workforce is diverse and inclusive, our economy will thrive.”

The data shows that the unemployment rate among Rhode Island Latinos is the highest in the nation at 16.2 percent in 2014, more than double the national rate of 7.4 percent. A loss in local manufacturing jobs – which decreased by 19 percent from 2007 to 2014 – has left many Latinos unemployed, underemployed or working part-time positions. Also adding to the scarcity of jobs is the state’s job deficit in which the state would need to create approximately 12,700 jobs to regain the positions lost during the recession and to meet the demands of this population growth.

“Latinos are the fastest growing demographic in the state and will continue to make up a larger piece of Rhode Island’s labor force. We often celebrate progress in our workforce climate; for example, unemployment rates continue to go down in Rhode Island. However, when we put a magnifying glass to communities of color, the unemployment rates and wage gaps are unacceptably high. We need to create a climate that not only meets the needs of businesses but also meets the needs of our workers to access higher wage jobs as well as gaining access to emerging industries that offer upward mobility,” said LPI Director Anna Cano Morales. “Our economy depends on our workforce. It’s critical that all workers and potential workers have the education, skillset and tools they need to compete.”

The Latino Policy Institute created the infographic with data from the Economic Progress Institute report, “The State of Working Rhode Island 2015: Workers of Color,” to shine a spotlight on Rhode Island Latino workers. The infographic shows Latino workers earn significantly less when comparing hourly wage rates and household income to other race and ethnic groups. In 2014, the median hourly wage for Latinos was \$12.45 as compared to \$19.99 for White workers. The median household income for Latinos was approximately half of the median White household income in 2014 — \$30,797 for the Latino household and \$61,406 for the White household. Just 12 percent of Rhode Island Latinos have a bachelor’s degree and 1 out of 3 Latino workers do not have a high school credential.

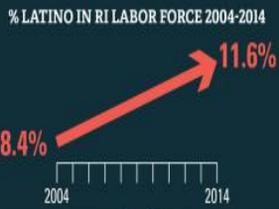
“What drives us most in designing and delivering programs to train workers with 21st century skills is lifting up all Rhode Islanders and helping to make Rhode Island a better, fairer and more prosperous state for everyone,” said Scott Jensen, Director of the Department of Labor and Training. “This infographic vividly shows the challenge that’s before us to help Latinos and other workers of color gain access to, compete in and succeed in our ever-changing economy. It challenges us to do better and that’s what we’ll do.”

LPI revealed the infographic today at an event held at the Rhode Island State House in partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (DLT), which gathered elected officials, members of Governor Raimondo’s Cabinet, local education, policy and community leaders.



STATE OF WORKING RHODE ISLAND: THE LATINO LABOR FORCE

A GROWING LABOR FORCE



BETWEEN 2004 & 2014:
THE LATINO LABOR FORCE IN RI INCREASED FROM 8.4% TO 11.6%

38% INCREASE This was the largest growth among workers of color as the number of Black and Asian workers has remained relatively stable.

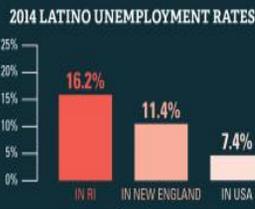
BY THE YEAR 2040 The Latino labor force in RI is expected to more than double to 24% of the total Rhode Island labor force.

MOST WORKING LATINOS ARE IN MANUFACTURING:
RI LATINOS ARE VULNERABLE TO GLOBAL TRADING SHIFTS DUE TO THE MAJORITY OF THEIR JOBS BEING IN MANUFACTURING

DECLINE IN MANUFACTURING JOB SECTOR 2007-2014



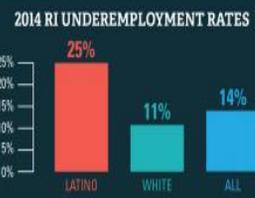
UNEMPLOYMENT



IN 2014:
THE RI LATINO UNEMPLOYMENT RATE SIGNIFICANTLY EXCEEDED BOTH THE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL RATES

However, labor force participation of Latinos in RI is similar to that of other ethnic groups.

26% Youth (16-24) unemployment for Rhode Island is also higher than the national rates with 26% facing long-term unemployment.



RHODE ISLAND'S JOB DEFICIT

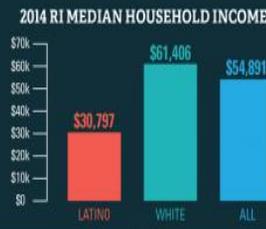
12,700 JOBS

Rhode Island needs 12,700 additional jobs to regain jobs lost during the recession & keep up with population growth.

WAGES & INCOME



IN 2014:
SIGNIFICANT HOURLY WAGE AND MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISPARITIES CAN BE SEEN BETWEEN LATINOS AND WHITES

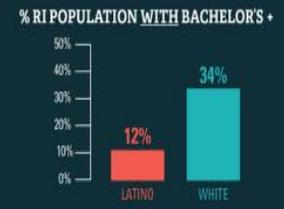


2014 median household income disparities contributed to a continuing downward trend that had started well before the onset of the Great Recession:

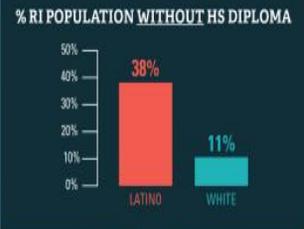
RI MEDIAN YEARLY WAGE 2008-2012



EDUCATION



EDUCATION MATTERS:
A BACHELOR'S DEGREE ALMOST DOUBLES YOUR WAGE WHEN COMPARED TO A HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE



ABOUT THAT 38%:
THIS IS THE HIGHEST % OF PEOPLE LACKING A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA ACROSS ALL RACIAL GROUPS IN ALL OF NEW ENGLAND

The largest concentration of Latinos in New England is in the southern New England States of MA, CT and RI. RI is 2nd only to CT in terms of % of the labor force that is Latino.