



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 19, 2016

CONTACT:

Nina Pande
401-263-6143
401-663-2502

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, October 19, 2016

Governor Raimondo Launches Talent Sourcing Solution That's the 'Missing Link' to Connect Unemployed Job Seekers and Employers

Employers Have Already Committed to Hire 150 Unemployed Workers through Skills for RI's Future, Which Is the First Statewide Launch of an Initiative That's Modeled after a Successful Program Started in Chicago

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Governor Gina M. Raimondo, joined by Congressman David N. Cicilline, Providence Mayor Jorge O. Elorza, state workforce development officials, and business leaders, today launched [Skills for Rhode Island's Future](#), a public-private partnership that meets the hiring needs of employers by offering customized talent sourcing solutions to place qualified long-term unemployed and underemployed candidates into available positions.

Raimondo credited the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, which along with the Department of Labor and Training (DLT), is collaborating with Skills for RI's Future. She thanked employers that have already committed to consider, recruit, and hire applicants who have been unemployed longer than six months including event host Bank of America, CVS Health, and General Dynamics Electric Boat — and she encouraged other employers to join them in making this commitment. The more employers that sign up, the more unemployed Rhode Islanders will get back to work and onto promising career pathways at quality companies.

The importance of "buy in" was made clear when Skills for Rhode Island's Future announced that already, RI employers have committed to hire 150 long-term unemployed workers through this new sourcing connection.

"The best words I can hear are 'I got the job!' — I want every Rhode Islander to be able to say that," Raimondo said. "And the best way to make this a reality is to prepare job seekers for work that actually exists. This is the essence of 'demand-driven' programs like [Real Jobs RI](#), TechHire RI, and P-TECH. Now, with the launch of Skills for Rhode Island's Future, we will have that missing link to make the direct connection between the workers we are training and the businesses that are hiring. I'm excited to keep the momentum going, and want to thank the Congressional Delegation for their support in securing funding to bring this initiative to Rhode Island."

(MORE)



SKILLS FOR RI'S FUTURE PRESS RELEASE, PAGE 2 OF 3

Skills for RI's Future (SRIF) is based after the successful model created by [Skills for Chicagoland's Future](#), a nationally recognized workforce intermediary that has shown great success in getting the unemployed back to work. Rhode Island is the first statewide launch of this model, and the first expansion of the initiative outside of Chicago. The Congressional Delegation helped obtain a \$5.25-million Sector Partnership-National Emergency Grant, of which \$1.25 million is funding Skills for RI's Future. The US Department of Labor announced this award in June 2015.

"We want to attract, grow, and keep businesses across the state and that means better aligning our education, job-training, and workforce development programs to meet the needs of today's workers and employers. I am pleased to have helped secure federal funds for this demand-driven and targeted workforce development initiative," said U.S. Senator Jack Reed.

"Even as our economy has gained momentum, too many Rhode Islanders have struggled to get a foothold in a good-paying job in the years since the Great Recession," said Senator Sheldon Whitehouse. "Skills for Rhode Island's Future will ensure hiring managers are giving long-term unemployed and underemployed job seekers a fresh look. I applaud Governor Raimondo for her sharp focus on growing our economy, and I'm grateful to the companies that have stepped up to help get Rhode Islanders back to work."

"Governor Raimondo has said that our state needs programming to provide 'skills that matter for jobs that pay,' and that statement really resonated with me. There are employers in need of talented workers, and Rhode Islanders in need of work opportunities, and Skills for Rhode Island's future is the type of bridge we need to close the divide," said Congressman Jim Langevin, who co-chairs the bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus in Congress.

"Our state's economy is going to rely on our ability to train workers for the skills employers need in the 21st Century economy," said Congressman David Cicilline, who advocated for the \$5.25 million federal grant that is funding this initiative. "Skills for Rhode Island's Future will allow employers to find, train and hire qualified workers to allow them to grow their businesses and create more jobs in our state. This is a great use of federal funds and will help put Rhode Islanders back to work."

"Understanding the needs of employers and creating pipelines of skilled workers to meet this demand is central to the work of our city and state," said Mayor Jorge Elorza. "I applaud of the work of programs like Skills for Rhode Island's Future and look forward to continuing to support their work in our capital city."

"It is important that Rhode Island businesses play a role in energizing our state's economy and investing in local talent," said William F. Hatfield, Rhode Island President of Bank of America and Skills' Chairman of the Board. "Skills for Rhode Island's Future is the perfect workforce intermediary to help Rhode Island employers achieve these goals. My fellow Skills for Rhode Island's Future board members and I are excited about leading this new organization and continuing the national dialogue on creating inclusive hiring practices and addressing barriers that prevent qualified Rhode Islanders from gaining employment."

(MORE)



SKILLS FOR RI'S FUTURE PRESS RELEASE, PAGE 3 OF 3

"I am truly honored and excited to lead Skills for Rhode Island's Future," said Skills Executive Director Nina Pande. "Throughout my career, I have worked with many hardworking families that have struggled to find work, or work two or three low-wage jobs just to make ends meet. I have also heard from personal friends who share a similar narrative that they too struggle to find meaningful, stable employment. Witnessing these struggles inspired me to take this position, where I can connect employers with hardworking, motivated, and qualified unemployed and underemployed Rhode Islanders."

"I am thrilled to see the official launch of Skills for Rhode Island's Future," said Marie Trzupke Lynch, founding President and CEO of Skills for Chicagoland's Future. "National expansion of the Skills model has been a key goal since our launch in 2012, and Rhode Island is perfectly positioned to replicate the strong impact we've seen in Chicago. In our past year of collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, Bank of America, and other partners from Rhode Island's business community, we have witnessed an impressive level of shared commitment. Nina's and Bill's leadership will play a critical role in leading SRIF to change the lives of Rhode Island's unemployed and underemployed job seekers."

"As the White House said in 2014, a 'stubborn legacy' of the economic recovery since the recession has been helping long-term unemployed people overcome the barriers preventing them from getting back to work," said DLT Director Scott Jensen. "Governor Raimondo has made this a priority of her administration and of the skills policy agenda that DLT is pursuing. We talk a lot about skills pipelines in workforce development but that's exactly what Skills for Rhode Island's Future is — it's a human resources pipeline for employers looking to expand in or come to Rhode Island and a resource for small businesses that may not have a recruiting capacity in house."

Skills for RI's Future will work with Rhode Island employers and workforce partners. We will do this by:

1. Identifying the hiring needs of employers and/or identify candidate profiles for job training candidates;
2. Sourcing motivated unemployed/underemployed candidates that are qualified by matching their relevant skills with employer demands;
3. Offering valuable, business-to-business services, from targeted recruitment to customized train-to-hire programs, at no cost to employers.
4. Delivering services with the speed and agility employers and training partners need to connect with skill-ready talent.

###