

EMBARGOED until 2:00 p.m.
on Thursday, April 14, 2016

Media contact:
Michael Healey (401) 462-8090

Rhode Island-Based Jobs Up 2,700 from February; March Unemployment Rate Unchanged at 5.4 Percent

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for March 2016 remained unchanged from the February rate of 5.4 percent. Over the year, the unemployment rate is down nine-tenths of a percentage point from the March 2015 rate. The state's unemployment rate held at 5.4 percent since December 2015, the lowest rate since August 2007.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 5.0 percent in March 2016, up one-tenth of a percentage point from the previous month and down five-tenths of a percentage point over the year.

The number of **unemployed RI residents**—those residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment—was 29,900, up 100 from the February figure of 29,800. Over the year, the number of unemployed dropped by 5,300.

A total of 12,887 individuals collected Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits in March 2016,* down from 15,298 a year ago. This month, UI claimants accounted for 39.3 percent of the total unemployed.

The number of **employed RI residents** was 522,900, up 600 from the February figure of 522,300. This is the highest employment level since August 2008. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents was up 2,500 from March 2015.

The RI labor force totaled 552,800 in March 2016, up 700 from February 2016 but down 2,800 from March 2015.

JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND: Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 490,900 in March, reflecting a gain of 2,700 jobs from the February estimate of 488,200. Through the first quarter of 2016, a total of 2,400 jobs were added to the local economy. In comparison, jobs were down by 700 during the same period in 2015. Over the year, employment is up 8,800 jobs.

The Accommodation & Food Services sector added 900 jobs in March, partially due to preparation for Providence's designation as a regional host for the NCAA college basketball tournament. Thousands of college basketball fans from across the country converged upon the capital city in March, occupying local hotels and restaurants.

The Professional & Business Services sector continues to serve as a bright spot in the state's economy, adding 800 jobs since February. This sector added 2,000 jobs through the first three months of 2016, and the number of jobs within this sector are up 3,400 from March 2015.

The Manufacturing sector added 500 jobs in March, highlighted by job growth reported in the non-durable component
(Continued)

	<u>Mar 16</u>	<u>Feb 16</u>	<u>Mar 15</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	5.4%	5.4%	6.3%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	5.0%	4.9%	5.5%
RI Job Count (<i>in thousands</i>)	490.9	488.2	482.1

Highlights:

- The RI unemployment rate was unchanged at 5.4%, remaining at its lowest level since August 2007.
- The number of RI-based jobs is up 2,700 from February and up 8,800 from a year ago.
- The number of employed RI residents increased by 600 over the month.
- There were 12,887 individuals collecting Unemployment Insurance benefits in March.*

Monthly Employment March 2016, page 2 of 2

of manufacturing. The number of Manufacturing jobs are up 800 from a year ago. Employment in the Other Services sector rose by 500 in March as the sector recouped the 400 jobs lost in February.

Jobs were up in the Financial Activities (+300) and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+200) sectors, while employment remained unchanged in the Information, Health Care & Social Assistance, Transportation & Utilities and Wholesale Trade sectors. Employment in Financial Activities is up 900 as compared to a year ago, employment in the Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+400) and Information (+100) sectors is also up over the year.

Five employment sectors reported minimal job losses in March with each sector reporting a loss of 100 jobs. Those sectors include: Construction, Educational Services, Government, Mining & Logging and Retail Trade. Over the year, employment in the Construction and Retail Trade sectors was up 2,200 and 100, respectively, while employment in the Educational Services (-800) and Government (-400) sectors was down from March 2015.

Employment in the Health Care & Social Assistance and Mining & Logging sectors were unchanged from a year ago.

MANUFACTURING: In March 2016, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$18.04 per hour, up forty-one cents from February 2016 and up seven cents from March 2015. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 38.3 hours per week in March, equal to the number of hours worked in February but down eight-tenths of an hour over the year.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND					
<i>(in thousands)</i>					
	Mar-16	Feb-16	Mar-15	Net Change From	
				Feb-16	Mar-15
Total Nonfarm	490.9	488.2	482.1	2.7	8.8
Total Private	430.9	428.1	421.7	2.8	9.2
Mining & Logging	0.2	0.3	0.2	-0.1	0.0
Construction	18.7	18.8	16.5	-0.1	2.2
Manufacturing	41.9	41.4 *	41.1	0.5	0.8
Wholesale Trade	16.3	16.3	16.9	0.0	-0.6
Retail Trade	47.8	47.9 *	47.7	-0.1	0.1
Transportation & Utilities	11.4	11.4	11.2	0.0	0.2
Information	8.6	8.6 *	8.5	0.0	0.1
Financial Activities	33.6	33.3	32.7	0.3	0.9
Professional & Business Services	66.3	65.5 *	62.9	0.8	3.4
Educational Services	24.0	24.1 *	24.8	-0.1	-0.8
Health Care & Social Assistance	80.6	80.6 *	80.6	0.0	0.0
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	9.5	9.3	9.1	0.2	0.4
Accommodation & Food Services	48.6	47.7 *	46.5	0.9	2.1
Other Services	23.4	22.9	23.0	0.5	0.4
Government	60.0	60.1	60.4	-0.1	-0.4

**Revised estimates*

METHODOLOGY: The unemployment figures are based largely on a survey of households in Rhode Island and measure the unemployment status of people who live in the state. Unemployment rates prior to 1976 are not recognized by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as official since the methodology used at that time is not comparable to today's methods. The establishment of employment figures is derived from a survey of businesses in Rhode Island and measure the number of jobs in the state. Rhode Island labor market information is available at www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi. Additional information on procedures for producing Current Employment Statistics (CES) estimates is available on the BLS web site at www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm. BLS will be releasing all states' March labor force data and job counts on April 15, 2016. DLT is scheduled to release the April 2016 labor force figures and job counts on Thursday, May 19, 2016, at 2:00 p.m.

ABOUT DLT: The RI Department of Labor and Training offers employment services, educational services and economic opportunities to both individuals and employers. DLT protects Rhode Island's workforce by enforcing labor laws, prevailing wage rates and workplace health and safety standards. The department also provides temporary income support to unemployed and temporarily disabled workers. For more information, please call the RI Department of Labor and Training at (401) 462-8000 or visit the web site at www.dlt.ri.gov.

* Refers to the number of new and reopened claims filed by UI beneficiaries and claims filed by those already collecting UI in the week that includes the 12th of the month.