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Media contacts:

Laura Hart (401) 462-8090 lhart@dlt.ri.gov
Nicole Romeo (401) 462-8744 nromeo@dlt.ri.gov

Unemployment Rate Drops to 8.8 percent in April

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state’s **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for April 2013 dropped to 8.8 percent, down three-tenths of a percentage point from the March 2013 rate and 1.8 percentage points from the April 2012 rate. This represents the 10th consecutive over-the-month drop in the state’s unemployment rate, and is the lowest unemployment rate for Rhode Island since October 2008.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 7.5 percent in April 2013, down one-tenth of a percentage point from the previous month and down six-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 49,400, down 1,700 from the March figure of 51,100. This represents the 10th consecutive over-the-month decrease and the lowest unemployment level since September 2008. Over the year, the number of unemployed dropped by 9,700.

The number of **employed RI residents** was up 1,200 over the March figure, increasing to 508,900 in April. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents increased 9,100 from April 2012.

The RI labor force totaled 558,200 in April 2013, down 700 from March 2013 and down 700 from April 2012.

JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND: Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 467,400 in April, reflecting a gain of 500 jobs from the March revised employment estimate of 466,900 and marking the fifth month of job gains in the last six months.

The Accommodation & Food Services sector employment count increased by 500 from March, as job gains were reported in full-service restaurants. Manufacturing employment rose by 400 over the month, mainly due to reported gains among durable goods manufacturing workers.

Job gains in landscaping services and employment services provided a boost to the Professional & Business Services sector which added 300 jobs over the month. In addition, both Health Care & Social Assistance and Educational Services grew by 300 jobs since March. Job gains were also reported in the Other Services (+200) and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+100) sectors.

Employment in three sectors—Government, Information and Mining & Logging—was unchanged.

(continued)

	<u>Apr 13</u>	<u>Mar 13</u>	<u>Apr 12</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	8.8%	9.1%	10.6%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	7.5%	7.6%	8.1%
RI Job Count (<i>in thousands</i>)	467.4	466.9	464.7
Highlights:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RI unemployment rate dropped to 8.8 percent, its lowest level since October 2008. • The number of unemployed RI residents declined by 1,700 from March 2013 and 9,700 from April 2012. • The number of employed RI residents rose by 1,200 over the month and 9,100 over the year. • RI-based jobs increased 500 over the month, due in part to gains in the Accommodation & Food Services and Manufacturing sectors. 			

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Offsetting some of the April gains was a reported loss of 500 jobs in the Construction sector, as the sector failed to meet the expected job growth typically experienced in April. In addition, Retail Trade employment dropped 400 from March, as retailers were reluctant to add employment to their April payrolls. Job losses were also reported in the Financial Activities (-300), Transportation & Utilities (-200) and Wholesale Trade (-200) sectors.

Over the year, total nonfarm employment was up by 2,700, as job gains appeared in six economic sectors, including Professional & Business Services (+2,600), Health Care & Social Assistance (+1,300), Financial Activities (+1,200), Manufacturing (+1,100), Other Services (+400) and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (+300).

Employment in eight sectors—Construction (-1,400), Retail Trade (-800), Government (-500), Information (-500), Educational Services (-400), Wholesale Trade (-200), Transportation & Utilities (-200) and Accommodation & Food Services (-200)—was down over the year. Employment in Logging & Mining was unchanged over the year.

MANUFACTURING: In April 2013, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$18.89 per hour, down 8 cents from March 2013 and up 75 cents from April 2012. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 39.6 hours per week in April, down three-tenths over the month and down four-tenths of an hour from a year ago.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND					
<i>(in thousands)</i>					
	<u>Apr-13</u>	<u>Mar-13</u>	<u>Apr-12</u>	Net Change From	
				<u>Mar-13</u>	<u>Apr-12</u>
Total Nonfarm	467.4	466.9	464.7	0.5	2.7
Total Private	407.8	407.3	404.6	0.5	3.2
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Construction	14.8	15.3	16.2	-0.5	-1.4
Manufacturing	40.6	40.2	39.5	0.4	1.1
Wholesale Trade	16.6	16.8	16.8	-0.2	-0.2
Retail Trade	46.1	46.5	46.9	-0.4	-0.8
Transportation & Utilities	10.6	10.8	10.8	-0.2	-0.2
Information	9.2	9.2	9.7	0.0	-0.5
Financial Activities	32.6	32.9	31.4	-0.3	1.2
Professional & Business Services	58.5	58.2	55.9	0.3	2.6
Educational Services	24.8	24.5	25.2	0.3	-0.4
Health Care & Social Assistance	79.4	79.1	78.1	0.3	1.3
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.9	7.8	7.6	0.1	0.3
Accommodation & Food Services	43.7	43.2	43.9	0.5	-0.2
Other Services	22.8	22.6	22.4	0.2	0.4
Government	59.6	59.6	60.1	0.0	-0.5

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 employment figures are 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 CES estimates is available on the BLS web site at <http://www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm>. The May labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Thursday, June 20, 2013 at 2:00 P.M.

ABOUT DLT: The RI Department of Labor and Training offers employment services, educational services and economic opportunity 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.