

**EMBARGOED until
Friday, May 20, 2011**

Media contacts:

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

	<u>Apr 11</u>	<u>Mar 11</u>	<u>Apr 10</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	10.9%	11.0%	11.7%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	9.0%	8.8%	9.8%
RI Job Count (<i>in thousands</i>)	462.2	460.4	458.2

Highlights:

- The April 2011 unemployment rate dropped one-tenth of a percentage point from March.
- The number of unemployed RI residents decreased by 900 over the month, while the number of employed RI residents increased by 100.
- RI-based jobs increased by 1,800 over the month, marking three consecutive months of job gains.

Unemployment Rate Falls Below 11.0 Percent

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for April 2011 was 10.9 percent, down one-tenth of a percentage point from the March rate of 11.0 percent. This is the first time in 21 months that the RI unemployment rate was below 11 percent.

The U.S. unemployment rate increased two-tenths of a percentage point over the month to 9.0 percent.

The number of **unemployed RI residents**—those residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment—decreased by 900 over the March figures,

falling to 62,100 in April. Over the year, the number of unemployed RI residents decreased by 5,500.

Due to numerous eligibility requirements, the number of unemployed RI residents differs from the number of **RI Unemployment Insurance recipients**. The average weekly claim load for RI Unemployment Insurance benefits in April was 35,930 down 3,411 (-8.7%) from the March average of 39,341, and down 4,767 (-11.7%) from the April 2010 average of 40,697.

The number of **employed RI residents** increased 100 over the March figures, totaling 509,000 in April. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents was up 400 from April 2010, the thirteenth consecutive over-the-year increase.

The Rhode Island labor force totaled 571,100 in April 2011, a decrease of 900 over the March figures and down 5,100 from April 2010 figures. The over-the-month decrease in the number of unemployed residents outweighed the increase in the number of employed residents, causing the April labor force to drop to its lowest level since December 2009.

JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:

Estimated nonfarm payroll in Rhode Island totaled 462,200 in April, reflecting a gain of 1,800 jobs from the revised March employment estimate of 460,400. Several economic sectors reported over-the-month gains with the largest occurring in Retail Trade (+1,400) and Health Care & Social Assistance (+1,100).

Job gains in the Retail Trade sector are attributed to increases in grocery stores, automotive vehicle & parts dealers and building material & garden equipment supplies dealers. All Health Care & Social Assistance subsectors added jobs over the month with the largest gains occurring in hospitals and ambulatory health services. Other sectors adding jobs included Accommodation & Food Services (+300), Financial Activities (+300), Educational Services (+300), Information (+200), Manufacturing (+100), Other Services (+100), and Transportation & Utilities (+100) sectors.

On the negative side, Professional & Business Services lost 800 jobs due to cutbacks in the Administrative & Waste Services sector. The Construction sector reported a loss of 600 jobs resulting from cutbacks among specialty trade contractors. A loss of 500 jobs in Government employment is attributed to declines in federal and local

(continued)

Monthly Employment April 2011, page 2 of 2

government employment. Wholesale Trade reported a loss of 200 jobs. Employment in Natural, Resources & Mining and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation was unchanged over the month.

Over the year, employment was up 4,000 (+0.9%) from April 2010, with job gains reported in eight economic sectors. Retail Trade (+3,100) Accommodation & Food Services (+2,600), Health Care & Social Assistance (+1,000), Manufacturing (+900), Information (+800) and Wholesale Trade (+600) all reported significant over-the-year gains. Transportation & Utilities reported an over-the-year gain of 100 jobs, while Natural Resources & Mining employment remained even.

Government employment was down 1,800 over the year due to cutbacks among municipal government workers and the termination of census workers. Construction employment was down 1,200 from April 2010, and can be attributed to less hiring of specialty trade contractors. Educational Services was down 900 over the year due to cutbacks at private colleges and universities. Professional & Business Services (-600), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-400), Financial Activities (-100), and Other Services (-100) all reported job declines over the year.

MANUFACTURING: In April 2011, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$15.42 per hour. The average hourly production wage was up 23 cents from March 2011 and up 73 cents from April 2010. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 39.6 hours per week in April, down three-tenths of an hour over the month, but up an hour and a half over the year.

	Apr-11	Mar-11	Apr-10	Net Change From	
				Mar-11	Apr-10
Total Nonfarm	462.2	460.4	458.2	1.8	4.0
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Construction	14.9	15.5	16.1	-0.6	-1.2
Manufacturing	40.9	40.8	40.0	0.1	0.9
Wholesale Trade	16.4	16.6	15.8	-0.2	0.6
Retail Trade	50.0	48.6	46.9	1.4	3.1
Transportation & Utilities	10.3	10.2	10.2	0.1	0.1
Information	10.6	10.4	9.8	0.2	0.8
Financial Activities	30.4	30.1	30.5	0.3	-0.1
Professional & Business Services	53.2	54.0	53.8	-0.8	-0.6
Educational Services	23.0	22.7	23.9	0.3	-0.9
Health Care & Social Assistance	78.9	77.8	77.9	1.1	1.0
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.1	7.1	7.5	0.0	-0.4
Accommodation & Food Services	44.3	44.0	41.7	0.3	2.6
Other Services	21.8	21.7	21.9	0.1	-0.1
Government	60.2	60.7	62.0	-0.5	-1.8

METHODOLOGY: Beginning the release of the March 2011 employment estimates, the production of State and metropolitan area estimates transferred from individual State Workforce Agencies to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Concurrent with the transition, the BLS implemented several methodological changes to standardize the estimation approach across states. While these changes will reduce the potential for statistical bias in state and metropolitan area estimates, they may increase the month-to-month variability of the estimates especially in smaller areas and states. The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training's Labor Market Information unit will continue to provide the BLS with information on local events that may affect the estimates, such as large layoffs or expansions at businesses not covered by the survey, and to disseminate and analyze the CES estimates for local data users. More detailed information on the changes to procedures for producing CES estimates is available on the BLS web site at <http://www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm>.

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. The May labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, June 17, 2011.

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 on the programs and services available to all Rhode Islanders, please call the RI Department of Labor and Training at (401) 462-8000 or visit the web site at www.dlt.ri.gov.