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CT ECONOMIC DIGEST

The *Connecticut Economic Digest* is a joint publication of the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Department of Economic and Community Development. Its purpose is to regularly provide users with a comprehensive source for the most current, up-to-date data available on the workforce and economy of the state, within perspectives of the region and nation. *A brief monthly summary will constitute the major monthly topic of this newsletter.*

A Look at the Age Composition of Connecticut Industries

All industries in Connecticut are affected by population changes but some are facing particular challenges as a larger proportion of the work force is nearing retirement age. During a ten year period, the median age in Connecticut increased to 40.9 by 2017, the 6th highest in the country. As the age composition of the overall Connecticut population changes, so does the labor force.

Employment peaked in 2008. At that time, 13% of the Connecticut labor force was under age 25, 67% were between 25 and 54 (also known as prime age), and 20 % were over 54. By the year 2018Q3, the under age 25 fell to 11.5%, and prime age group dipped a bit to 62% and the share over 54 rose to 26.5%.

The increasing portion of older workers approaching retirement age heightens the need for replacement workers in coming decades. Though the aging of Connecticut's work force impacts every sector, some sectors have been more affected than others. Manufacturing, utilities, and Public Utilities have the largest share of workers over 54, while Accommodation & Food Services, Retail trade, and Arts & Entertainment have the smallest. Healthcare and Social assistance is the largest sector in the state overall, and employs most workers over 55. It is important to train incoming workers to eventually replace those who retire. See the website for tables from the U.S. Census Bureau and a more detailed analysis.

The Higher Education/Workforce Report

Most graduates of Connecticut's public colleges and universities work in Connecticut. Graduates from the wide range of programs are working in nearly every industry in our state. Shortly after leaving college, many graduates are employed in retail and food service. However, as time passes they are more likely to move to other industries such as manufacturing and health care. Average wages rise significantly in the years following graduation.

When looking at this information it is important to note that the Department of Labor has employment and wage information only for payroll employees in Connecticut. If a graduate does not appear in the wage records, it does not mean that graduate is unemployed. The graduate may be employed in another state, self-employed, employed by the federal government, in the military, or pursuing additional schooling either in Connecticut or another state. There are charts on pages 4 and 5 which indicate the number of employed community college graduates and their average wages in various sectors of employment.

In addition to the community colleges, the Higher Education/Workforce Legislative Report Card has employment and wage outcomes from graduates of UConn, the State Universities, and Connecticut residents who graduated from Charter Oak State College. This report shows that a majority of recent graduates of Connecticut's public colleges and universities are participating in the workforce. While the report does not include information regarding the self-employed, those working out of state, or federal employment, the information about the industry of employment and earnings of recent graduates can help inform program planning by institutions and career planning for current and potential students.