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LABOR DAY MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR BROWN

"As Floridians enjoy the Labor Day weekend, the Agency for Workforce Innovation honors Florida's more than 9.2 million labor force participants. Our workforce system is poised to further align Florida's education, training and workforce programs with higher-paying, high-demand jobs that advance careers, build a more skilled workforce and enhance the state's efforts to attract, grow and expand job-creating businesses.

Florida's economy and job market are changing rapidly and in today's shifting labor market, employers place a premium on training and skills. The need to adapt to new technologies, materials, methods and skills confronts the entire workforce and training system with the challenge of better training and educating Florida's workers. There is a greater need to link training to the needs of the state and national labor markets as defined by national skill standards and the needs of employers.

Despite recent slowdowns in job growth, our workforce system is adapting to new technologies and new skills, while developing increased competitiveness. In fact, the Agency for Workforce Innovation is vigorously working with our business, economic development, education and workforce partners to create programs that workers and students have the educational and occupational skills required to succeed in the workforce.

Through programs like the Florida Career and Professional Academies, Ready to Work and Florida reBuilds we are making a difference. The Florida Career and Professional Academies is being designed to ensure that more students graduate from Florida high schools with both a high school diploma and an industry-recognized certification which allow them to either continue their education or to go directly into the workforce. By the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year, each school district must have in operation at least one career academy.

The Florida Ready to Work program is providing students and job seekers with skill assessments to identify jobs that they are capable of performing based on employer specific skill requirements. The program also offers remediation training to individuals who do not have identified employment skills. Regional Workforce Boards across Florida have established Ready to Work Assessment sites at many of the One-Stop Career Centers to conveniently provide skill assessment and remediation services to students and job seekers.

Additionally, Florida reBuilds is training workers in construction jobs throughout the state. Florida reBuilds, which has currently enrolled over 12,000 individuals, was initially created to help the state recover from two devastating hurricane seasons, but has continued to provide training to help address Florida's longer-term construction workforce needs. Even with recent economic declines in some areas of construction, the long-term demand for skilled workers remains strong. The success of Florida reBuilds demonstrates the ability of the state's workforce system to quickly fill "labor gaps" in response to natural disasters or economic downturns.

As we move forward, we remain committed to looking for ways to bolster our workforce and address the workforce needs of our labor force and Florida's most vital industries."

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Agency for Workforce Innovation

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Fast Facts on Florida's Job Market

- Florida's 8,134,700 jobholders make the Florida economy function and deliver the \$715.3 billion in goods and services the state produced in 2006.
- Florida's job growth rate, while slowing, exceeds the national job growth rate; 1.6 percent for the state and 1.4 percent for the nation in July 2007. Florida still generates almost 130,000 new jobs per year.
- Of the ten most populous states, Florida's unemployment rate was the lowest at 3.9 percent in July 2007. Florida's job growth was ranked third among the most populous states both in rate of increase and number of new jobs. Only California and Texas are gaining more jobs than Florida.
- Annual average wages in Florida have risen over the last three years from \$33,552 in 2003 to \$38,498 in 2006. Wages have increased on an average of 4.7 percent over the last three years.
- The 2007 average hourly wage for all occupations is \$17.76, up from \$17.07 (4.0 %) in 2006.
- All 22 major occupational groups had increases in their 2007 average hourly wage. Wage increases ranged from 2.2 percent (maintenance and repair) to 7.8 percent (agricultural) for these major occupational groups.
- The 2007 overall average hourly wage for occupations requiring postsecondary training below a bachelor's degree was \$20.83, up from \$20.08 (3.7 %) in 2006.

Fast Facts from the August 2007 Florida Workforce Estimating Conference (Projections for 2007 to 2015)

- Florida is projected to gain almost 1.36 million new jobs between 2007 and 2015 (1.89% annual growth).
- Major industry sectors growing the fastest and gaining the most new jobs: professional and business services; and education and health services.
- All major industry sectors will see employment gains, except agriculture and mining.
- Major sectors growing the slowest: manufacturing and construction.
- Current weakness in the housing market is impacting the outlook for many industries.
- Declines in construction for the short-term will result in fewer new jobs and slower growth for this industry in the long-term (42,000 jobs; 7% growth).
- Manufacturing will see the smallest number of new jobs: employment growth in pharmaceuticals, medical instruments, and some construction-related manufacturing industries are the primary reasons this industry is not forecasted to decline (1,550 jobs; 0.4% growth).
- Retail trade will see strong gains in general merchandise stores, motor vehicle dealers and building material stores as each continue to expand and steal market share from other sectors in trade.
- The information sector will be driven by gains in software publishing, wireless telecommunications and Internet-related service providers.

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- Financial services growth will be slowed by current weakness in mortgage lending, causing the industry to grow slower than the average for all industries.
- Growth in employment services, legal, engineering, computer design and consulting services will make professional and business services the fastest growing industry sector.
- Educational services, both private and public, will have 63 percent of its job growth occur in the elementary and secondary schools.
- Doctors' offices and other outpatient care services will account for more than 50 percent new jobs in health care.
- Food services and drinking places will account for two-thirds of the job growth in leisure and hospitality. Art, entertainment and recreation services will grow the fastest within leisure and hospitality.
- All sectors of government are projected to grow, but at slower rates. Almost 90 percent of the new jobs in government will be in local government.
- Nine of the top ten fastest growing jobs in Florida are in information technology or healthcare. The top three fastest-growing occupations are network systems analysts, computer software engineers and physician assistants. Four of the top ten fastest-growing jobs are in healthcare occupations.
- Growth in jobs as self-employed and unpaid family workers will be slower, comprising only 4 percent of the new jobs.
- All 22 major occupational groups are projected to grow, with 12 groups growing at a slower growth rate than previously forecasted.
- Almost half the new jobs in Florida will come from 5 occupational groups: clerical, sales, food service, health professionals, and education.
- Nearly all of the 10 fast-growing occupations are growing at a faster rate and adding greater numbers of new jobs than previously forecasted.
- Seven of the ten fastest-growing occupations earn more than \$26 per hour.
- Of the top 10 occupations expected to gain the most new jobs, most are the largest occupations in the state, have widespread demand among numerous industries, include a lot of part-time work, and have minimal requirements for entry into the occupation.
- Overall, more job openings will be due to replacement needs than due to economic growth.

Source: Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center

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