

## **Low Unemployment Fuels Strong Company Turnout for March 24 Career Day**

### **Companies from 9 States with 200 Job Openings Will Attend Career Day in Newport**

Newport (R.I.) March 15, 2018 — A strong jobs report earlier this month that holds employment at a low 4.1% is fueling a high company turnout for Career Day on March 24 in Newport. A large field of 50 companies with 200 job openings will be at this one-day event to connect with job seekers.

Career Day will take place at the IYRS School of Technology & Trades on Saturday, March 24, from 9 am to 1 pm. The event is free. Companies attending from nine states do business in the marine, composites or manufacturing industries. The marine and composites industries have a strong presence in Rhode Island, as well as educational programs that train workers for these businesses.

“For the first time in a long time, we have shifted to a candidate-driven job market,” says Neal Harrell, president and founder of Brooks Marine Group, a leading recruiting firm based in Newport that focuses on the marine trades.

According to Harrell, job seekers are in a strong position right now. The recession of 2008/09 caused many marine and composites companies to downsize, putting workers out of jobs; but the tide has turned. According to the latest statistics from the National Marine Manufacturers Association, the U.S. recreational boating industry has seen six consecutive years of growth. According to the American Composites Manufacturers Association, the composites industry is projected to grow an average of 6.5% between now and 2020.

According to Harrell, with low unemployment many companies are willing to train individuals who do not yet have the requisite skills but have strong “soft skills” such as a willingness to learn, strong work ethic, or good communication skills. Individuals with professional experience in areas such as sales & marketing, finance, information technology, and engineering can also use Career Day to network and explore career opportunities.

Companies attending Career Day include marine businesses such as boat builders, boat yards, marinas, and companies that specialize in onboard marine systems. Composites manufacturers attending the event produce light, strong structures for a wide range of industries--such as automotive/transportation,

architecture, marine, renewable energy, and others. Career Day also includes schools and training organizations offering programs that are proven paths to jobs.

According to Holly Ashton of IYRS School of Technology & Trades--which hosts Career Day with the Rhode Island Marine Trades Association (RIMTA), Composites Alliance of Rhode Island, and Polaris MEP--Career Day is designed to be more than a career fair. While job seekers are encouraged to bring their resumes and be prepared to speak with prospective employers, the event is also for individuals who are employed but exploring future career options.

“Career Day is a prime opportunity for all levels of career seekers,” says Ashton. “Companies set the day aside to speak with individuals who are interested in working in their industry, so whether you are looking for a job or building your career, this event is a great way to learn about these industries and make the kind face-to-face connections that can prove valuable as you plot your next career move.”

Career Day begins at 9 AM with a seminar with Neal Harrell on “Navigating Your Job Search.” Harrell’s talk will cover information career seekers can use throughout the day, such as tips on networking and how to present yourself to prospective employers. Tours of the IYRS facility also begin at 9 AM.

Starting at 9:30 AM, attendees can speak with prospective employers. Five-minute “Flash Talks” on topics of interest to career seekers and employers take place throughout the day. The event runs until 1 PM at IYRS in Newport (449 Thames Street, Newport, R.I.)

More information, in addition to Career Day Tips on how to get the most out of this one-day event, can be found at the event website at [www.iyrscareerday.com](http://www.iyrscareerday.com). Pre-registration for this free event is not required but will save attendees time upon arrival; a form can be found at the event website.