Growing Rhode Island’s Economy by Investing in the Forgotten Middle

Middle-skill jobs, which require more than high-school, but not a four-year degree, make up the largest part of America’s and Rhode Island’s labor market. All too often, key industries in Rhode Island are unable to find enough sufficiently trained workers to fill these jobs.

Demand for Middle-Skill Jobs is Strong, Will Remain Strong in Rhode Island

Rhode Island Jobs by Skill Level, 2008

- Middle-Skill, 46%
- Low-Skill, 23%
- High-Skill, 31%

Rhode Island Jobs by Skill Level, 2018

- Middle-Skill, 43%
- Low-Skill, 24%
- High-Skill, 32%

Source: Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

Rhode Island’s Skills Mismatch: A Middle-Skills Gap

In 2009, about 46 percent of Rhode Island’s jobs were in middle-skill occupations. But only 40 percent of the state’s workers likely have the appropriate training for these jobs.

Rhode Island Jobs and Workers by Skill Level, 2009

- High-Skill Jobs: 36%, Workers: 31%
- Middle-Skill Jobs: 46%, Workers: 40%
- Low-Skill Jobs: 24%, Workers: 23%

Sources: U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Bureau of the Census