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CITY OF RACINE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE RECORDS LARGEST DROP IN STATE

New data comes on the heels of City-, County-led workforce initiatives

Racine – New data released from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) shows the City of Racine experienced the state’s largest net reduction in the unemployment rate between July 2017 and July 2018.

Racine’s unemployment rate dropped from 5.6 percent in July 2017 to 4.9 percent in July 2018, according to DWD data. The 0.7 percent drop represents the biggest net reduction among the 32 most populous Wisconsin municipalities — those cities, villages, and towns with populations of more than 25,000. The net reduction in the City of Racine’s unemployment rate was more than twice the statewide decline of 0.3 percent over the same timeframe. This decline comes on the heels of Racine County and City of Racine leaders redoubling efforts to reduce unemployment in City of Racine neighborhoods through several major initiatives.

“The numbers show we are making progress on our goal to lift people out of poverty and make Racine a place where all residents have the opportunity for family-sustaining jobs,” County Executive Jonathan Delagrave said. “We are encouraged our initiatives are showing success, but we know we still have a lot of work to do and will need everyone if we want to fully maximize the incredible opportunities on the horizon.”

“We are encouraged by the progress we have made to connect our residents with the resources and training they need to attain family supporting jobs,” Mayor Cory Mason said. “We know the opportunities exist, but it is our job, as a community, to make sure the residents of Racine are able to seize them. We still have a lot of work to do, but I am proud of the partnerships we have in place and the initiatives we have put forth to help get people back to work.”

Earlier this year, Racine County launched its Uplift 900 initiative with a goal of bringing down the city’s unemployment rate to match the state rate. Uplift 900 targets residents who have faced barriers to enter or stay in the workforce and connects them with resources to remove those barriers.

The City of Racine and DWD in June announced the Racine Works program, a workforce program to prepare City of Racine residents for public and private sector construction job opportunities tied to the influx of new development throughout Racine County.

The City and County have also forged new partnerships with organizations including Gateway Technical College, WRTP/Big Step, HADC’s First Choice Pre-Apprenticeship Program, Manpower and others to help ensure local residents are in position to take advantage of the thousands of new jobs on the way to the community.

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