



PRESS RELEASE



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United Way's Power The Future Career Exploration Event Open to All Rhode Island Middle and High School Students, and Their Families

Using its power to convene, organization strives to develop state's workforce to support the next generation of jobs

Providence, Rhode Island (June 26, 2023) — Planned to be the state's premier youth and family career exploration and workforce development event, United Way of Rhode Island will host its first annual Power The Future on Saturday, Aug. 19, at the Rhode Island Convention Center. The empowering day is open to all local students and their families, at no cost, and aims to foster connections to the state's emerging career opportunities and industries, including blue and green economies and offshore wind. It will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and attendees can sign up at ptfri.org.

"This is all about the convening power of United Way and our commitment to removing barriers to help shape the future of our state," said Lanre Ajakaiye, United Way's chief development officer, who has conceived the effort. "Rhode Island has a workforce shortage and a talent pipeline gap, and if we don't address it, we will struggle to fill the jobs of tomorrow. But just as much as this event is for our young people, it will be for their families — We want to engage everyone."

Power The Future on Aug. 19 will introduce attendees to a broad range of industries, including bio and life sciences; offshore wind; labor; science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM); climate; civic engagement and public service; and finance. Admission is free and parking vouchers will be available to remove barriers to participation for families. Lunch will also be provided.

Additionally, the event will feature adult learning opportunities to benefit parents and guardians interested in furthering their own education, along with in-language sessions developed for Hispanic and Latino attendees. United Way will also have an in-depth presence of its wraparound services and programs, including 211, the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and more. The day is built to allow entire families to be immersed in similar experiences, programs, and resources.

"Ensuring we have the skilled people for the careers that will help Rhode Island thrive should be a priority for everyone, especially as 7% of our state's total jobs remain unfilled," added Ajakaiye. "This is a service United Way is bringing directly to our community and is the type of event, frankly, that our state cannot have enough of. And I'm ready to talk to anyone who wants to be a part of it."

Questions regarding the event may be directed to Marisa Luse at marisa.luse@unitedwayri.org. Anyone interested in becoming a sponsor or exhibitor may contact Lanre Ajakaiye at lanre.ajakaiye@unitedwayri.org.

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United Way of Rhode Island is uniting our community and resources to build racial equity and opportunities for all Rhode Islanders. A member of the world's largest nonprofit network, we bring together individuals, businesses, nonprofits, community leaders, and government to tackle the root causes of inequity and achieve specific, measurable goals. Our programs include 211, the statewide front door connecting Rhode Islanders with social services, resources, and vital programs. Both directly and through grants to nonprofits, we are investing to build economic opportunity, advance childhood learning, expand philanthropy, and drive policy and participation. To learn more, visit unitedwayri.org, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), or [Twitter](#).