

Low-income jobs program meets goals in R.I.

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PROVIDENCE — Thirty low-income city residents have been placed into union apprenticeships this year, meeting an early goal of a partnership between the city and state building trade organizations, [Mayor David N. Cicilline](#) and labor union leaders said Monday.

The majority are being employed on Brown University projects on College Hill and the Jewelry District, according to Andrew Cortes, executive director at Building Futures, an Olneyville-based program that prepares low-skilled and unemployed city residents for union apprenticeships through basic construction training and individual tutoring for the union apprenticeship exam.

The apprentices are working as carpenters, laborers, ironworkers, plumbers and bricklayers on the university's new creative arts building, the aquatics and fitness center, the cognitive and linguistic sciences building and the student center, he said.

Seven are also working on the university's \$45-million planned medical school on Richmond Street, the site where the mayor and labor officials held a news conference to mark meeting their early goal.

Cicilline mentioned the goal in his State of the City address in February as part of a plan to boost job opportunities for city residents.

Among the newly minted union apprentices working on the medical school site was Marlo Jackson, who graduated from Building Futures. He is now a member of Local 51 of the plumbers and pipefitters union and works for Sarra Engineering, of Cranston.

Jackson, speaking at Monday's news conference, said the program allowed him to go from being unemployed and sleeping on his aunt's couch to a new career and having his own place.

Michael F. Sabitoni, president of the Rhode Island Building Trades Council, said the city partnership is allowing the unions to "return to their urban roots" by providing job training, job placement and sustainable careers in the construction industries for low-skilled minority residents.

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