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CELEBRATING 55 YEARS

Connecting Quonset businesses with Rhode Island's workforce

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If there is one thing that the 2015 Blizzard "Juno" has taught us, it is that the state of Rhode Island is a close-knit community. In a region so small, we are all each other's neighbors. We support and look out for one another because that is what neighbors do. As an integral component of Rhode Island, Quonset Business Park is no different. Home to almost 200 companies with more than 10,000 jobs, Quonset is a key driver of job creation and economic growth in Rhode Island. We are always looking for ways to help our tenants succeed, and we are committed to help grow more job opportunities for our fellow Rhode Islanders.

With that in mind, Governor Raimondo recently announced the launch of a new radio campaign from the Quonset Development Corporation to promote our online initiative, QuonsetJobs.com. This website provides Rhode Island job seekers with easy access to view and apply for available positions at the Business Park and at the Port of Davisville. Now in its fifth year, the site includes listings of the individual companies that are hiring, job descriptions, application requirements, contact information and web links to assist potential employees with the application process.

Thanks to the addition of several new businesses and the growth of existing industries within the park, there are a wide variety of positions available with openings ranging from engineering to mechanics to marketing. The 30 second radio advertisements, which can be heard here: http://www.quonset.com/news/multimedia/ will air on a variety of stations across Rhode Island for four weeks, and help direct those who may be unaware of the opportunities at Quonset to the website.

"Attracting more companies to our state to help us grow jobs for Rhode Islanders is one of my top priorities," said Governor Raimondo in the announcement. "This radio campaign will help us raise awareness about the open positions at the Quonset Business Park companies as part of an effort to connect the unemployed or underemployed with new opportunities for success."

In another sign of Quonset's continuing economic momentum, Governor Raimondo also recently announced that 2014 marked the Port of Davisville's fifth consecutive record-breaking year for auto imports. The Port imported more than 178,000 automobiles last year, with another 34,000 autos arriving by rail and 3,000 coming by truck. North Atlantic Distribution, Inc. (NORAD), a long-time Quonset tenant, was responsible for processing, finishing and distributing the vehicles that arrived to the Port.

"This milestone is a tremendous example of the private sector working together with the state to make us a leader on the global stage," Governor Raimondo said at the time. "The priorities of my administration are to attract more entrepreneurs and to support our existing business, all while fostering innovation in government. The Port of Davisville has become one of North America's leading auto importers because we've modernized its infrastructure and marketed our strengths and

because NORAD has grown to more than 300 people since it began operations here more than 25 years ago."

The 2014 figures reflected a 2.8% increase of close to 5,000 more automobiles arriving, compared to the 2013 record-breaking numbers. The Port of Davisville has been one of the Top Ten auto-importers in North America for the past several years, and the Port is a key component of the Quonset Business Park. We are so pleased to have reached another incredible milestone alongside NORAD, and we look forward to another exciting year ahead with them.

Quonset Development Corporation is committed to helping companies succeed, and seeing Rhode Island reach its fullest potential. Today, more than 10,000 Rhode Islanders come to work each day at Quonset Business Park, and that figure will climb as we add more companies to the almost 200 businesses already here that are also growing. Our community is important to us, and QuonsetJobs.com is a unique way for us to connect our businesses with Rhode Island's skilled workforce. In addition to the 2014 auto import figures, there is much to be proud of at Quonset these days, and we want more Rhode Islanders to join in ours and our tenants' success.

Steven King, PE, is the managing director of the Quonset Development Corp., North Kingstown.