



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **BankRI Awards Grant to Clinica Esperanza/Hope Clinic to Fund BankRI Pre-Employment Physical Clinic**

*As demand increases, volunteer medical providers perform physical exams for low-income Rhode Islanders re-entering the workforce*

**PROVIDENCE, R.I.** – During the past year, Clinica Esperanza/Hope Clinic, a free health clinic serving uninsured Rhode Islanders, has experienced a 70 percent increase in the number of people requesting pre-employment physicals. To help meet this growing demand, **Bank Rhode Island (BankRI)** has awarded the organization a \$4,250 grant to expand the BankRI Pre-Employment Physical Clinic to twice monthly, which now also serves Year Up students training for employment.

The BankRI Pre-Employment Physical Clinic at Clinica Esperanza/Hope Clinic is staffed by a Clinical Nurse Manager, Clinics Operations Coordinator, and reception desk staff. Volunteer medical providers perform each physical exam and complete documentation patients require for job applications. If lab tests are needed, they are obtained through Clinica Esperanza/Hope Clinic’s network of free-care sites or are paid out-of-pocket by patients at reduced rates. Additionally, BankRI’s support will help provide vaccinations once per month during the organization’s “CHEER” clinic hours.

“The fact that Clinica Esperanza/Hope Clinic has seen an increase in the number of individuals needing physicals before starting a new job is a positive sign for the ongoing recovery of our state’s economy,” said Mark J. Meiklejohn, President and CEO of BankRI. “For Rhode Island to be prosperous, we need to put as many of our neighbors back to work as possible, and this is a program that works towards that goal by reducing the financial burden of healthcare for those struggling to make ends meet.”

Along with delivering pre-employment physicals, Clinica Esperanza/Hope Clinic providers also work to educate clients about their diet, the importance of exercise, and other preventative health issues. And because the clinic provides continuity of care and assistance with chronic conditions, those entering the workforce can be seen for these health issues if they desire.

Many of Rhode Island’s uninsured are productive, working members of our community who are not able to afford, or are not yet eligible for health insurance provided under the Affordable Care Act, and who struggle to navigate the complex health care system,” said Dr. Anne DeGroot, Founder, Clinica Esperanza/Hope Clinic. “Not only does this lack of care have financial implications, it carries a high cost in terms of the impact of poor health for our neighbors—we are grateful to BankRI for their support to help us expand this critical resource.”

### **About Bank Rhode Island**

Bank Rhode Island, a wholly owned subsidiary of Brookline Bancorp, Inc. (NASDAQ:BRKL), is a full-service, FDIC-insured financial institution headquartered in Providence, Rhode Island. The bank operates 19 branches and more than 55 ATMs throughout Providence, Kent and Washington Counties. For more information, visit [www.BANKRHODEISLAND.com](http://www.BANKRHODEISLAND.com).

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