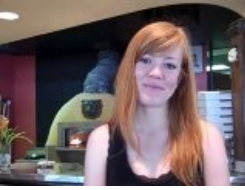


TEENS ARE STRUGGLING TO FIND PART-WORK



The economic turmoil that has left a lot of Americans out of work is having a disproportionate effect on all of the teenage job-seekers, who goal for the entry-level positions often pits them against the more experienced older workers who are willing to take any job just to they can have some extra money. The U.S. labor figures show the 2011 unemployment rate nationwide averaged at just a little below 9 percent, but for job-seekers from the ages 16 to 19, it was almost 25 percent-which is the third consecutive year in that range, and with come of the cities reporting rates even higher. Automation has also eliminated many of the after-school, weekend and summer jobs that have been what most of the teenagers go to when they first start out. Participates are all talking about the trend at the forum on Tuesday in Hartford, they says that it is very alarming and that the society is suffering because the entire generation's chance to learn valuable workplace skills are being denied. On a more personal level, it is also the source of the growing stress for the teenagers who need jobs for experience, pocket money, or to help out their families. "My mom doesn't have a lot of money and what she does have, she spends on me and on my brother, so I really want to work and be able to help and take care of some things myself," says Trisana Spence, age 16, who move from New York's City's Brooklyn borough to Hartford last year, and hopes that she may one day become a lawyer. Spence, who is just a junior at the Hartford Culinary Arts Academy high school, may end up with just a slight advantage. She has been in a paid internship through her school at the city's Blue Hills Civic Association to learn job skills and is going to be placed at a yet-undetermined job this summer. She says that she is going to work extra hard in hopes that the employer is going to keep her on board even after the summer so she can help pay for all of the household expenses and some extras, such as her 4-year-old brother's karate lessons. Participates at the forum on Tuesday said that the partnerships between government and civic groups, businesses, nonprofit agencies and other organizations may be a big factor to helping all of the teens who are out there trying to get a job, but that those groups are facing some financial hurdles to keep their internships and job-training programs going, too. The White House and the U.S. Department of Labor this month started off their campaign by appealing to the private sector to create 250,000 more summer jobs in the businesses, nonprofits and government agencies, with at least 100,000 of them being paid spots. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, who is a Connecticut Democrat who also attended Tuesday's forum, said that the initiative and others are critical to ensure teens get a chance to learn some new job skills and to help to prepare for careers.

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