

## *EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*

While housing has been a major issue in the neighborhood for some time, another issue is the lack of jobs for neighborhood residents. According to the 1990 census, 23% of the families in Asylum Hill were below the poverty level, and 12% were on public assistance, while City wide 26% of families were below the poverty level and 22% were on public assistance. The recession for much of this decade, combined with the loss of population, undoubtedly has increased these figures. The insurance industry, a major employer in the City, and particularly in Asylum Hill, has had major layoffs throughout the decade.

The decline in manufacturing in the Hartford region is another reason for the high jobless rate. According to Labor Department statistics, there was a loss of 18,350 manufacturing jobs in the Hartford Labor market from 1983 to 1992. In the City of Hartford, the loss has been more dramatic. There were approximately 25,000 manufacturing jobs in the city in 1963, and by 1993 there were only 5,020 manufacturing jobs left. The region's reliance on the aero space industry plays a large part in this dramatic shift in the region's economy. The loss in manufacturing jobs in Hartford is responsible for the drop in income in Hartford's households. Manufacturing jobs are the second highest paying jobs in the economy behind Finance/Insurance/Real Estate. As manufacturing jobs often require less formal education than the FIRE sector the decline in manufacturing represents a major setback in job opportunities for many area residents, since residents' skills no longer match those skills and qualifications currently required by employers in Asylum Hill. Also, as Connecticut has adopted some of the most severe regulations regarding welfare reform there is a need for a Jobs Bank file to facilitate connection with employers and help identify training needs.