

# Community Coordinator

## Report

Butte County

JULY – SEPTEMBER

2014



On September 3, 2014, the League of California Cities announced that the City of Chico is the recipient of their Helen Putnam Award for Excellence in economic development and community services for the Team Chico concept. The award will be presented to the City Council in Chico in the next few months. A small delegation comprised of City staff, a Council member, and AFDW and Chamber staff attended the conference and Expo in Los Angeles, CA. League delegates were provided with copies of Team Chico Annual Report, Business Services Guides, and other data on our successful business outreach, retention, expansion, and attraction collaboration in Chico.

The Helen Putnam Award for Excellence recognizes outstanding cities that deliver the highest quality and level of service in the most effective manner possible. The City of Chico, Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc., Chico Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Chico Business Association, and 3CORE leveraged their resources and expertise to form Team Chico. Team Chico reached out to over 500 businesses, resulting in 10 expansions, 3 new locations, 1,315 new jobs, four seed-funded projects, \$2.35 million in grants/loans, and an economic impact of \$31.3 million, as well as initiated campaigns to address Clean and Safe issues with businesses, the University, and residents.



***Congratulations to the City of Chico and Team Chico for this prestigious award!***

# Drought 2014



This spring the California Governor's Drought Relief Task Force sought assistance from the Workforce Development community in order to gain real time drought related information on how the local businesses are being affected by the dry conditions. To do so, a survey was provided to AFWD. Inc. Business Service Representatives to conduct one-on-one with business owners. This tool allowed staff to open the conversations on what happened and how they expect to be impacted.

Initially, the State was in search of the impact on workers being laid off or businesses closing fortunately, AFWD did not uncover many of these incidences. The majority of the feedback from our region included but were not limited to: increased produce prices, increased energy costs, lack of natural water sources, lack of grassland for grazing, high cost of installing low flow water lines, decrease of seeding crops, lack of tourism, lack of sales, wells drying up, and some layoffs. A handful of owners who mentioned that if things did not turn around they might be forced to close.

AFWD staff discussed with local industries across the board ranging from the obvious; agriculture and recreation to florists and restaurants. Each had their own take on the situation but the real concern was what's to come if the state has another dry winter. One local resource, which was uncovered was a food bank where workers displaced by the drought could come and receive food for their families. This was dispersed by Community Action Agency and was wide spread throughout the counties.

Unfortunately, the drought continues to become more and more of a strain on not only business but residents. According to Chico Enterprise record, Chico customers of California Water Service cut water use by 14 percent in July vs. a year ago and Northern California continues to be the state leader in water conservation. As our situation becomes increasingly dire, look for restrictions and direction from your local City or water supplier.



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## *State Contact Information*

Conservation resources go to <http://saveourwater.com/>

State drought hotline: (916) 341-5342

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# Job Seeker Success

Taylor, a recent High School graduate had a few odd jobs under his belt, but was interested in a career path. Since he had acquired some experience in welding while in High School and really enjoyed it, he thought it would be a good trade for him. Taylor had dreamed of attending the Welding Certification program at Butte College but had limited funds and resources. After attending an orientation about WIA services became excited, followed up and applied. During the application process, Taylor completed several occupational assessments confirming that welding was an excellent fit for his interests, skills and abilities. With assistance from AFWD, Taylor was able to begin the Butte College Welding Certification Program. While in school, Taylor's training was monitored by his AFWD Career Center Advisor (CCA). He proudly maintained a "B" average

during the two semester training and received his certification in June 2014. With the assistance of his Career Center Advisor, Taylor then created a resume highlighting his new certification and attended the Interview Workshop where he learned how to prepare for interviews. He reported the most valuable aspect of this workshop was formulating answers to specific questions such as "So, tell me about yourself . . ." He also enjoyed participating in a mock interview, as a chance to rehearse what for most people is a stressful, high pressure situation. Prompted by his CCA, Taylor attained three written letters of recommendation to keep in his job hunting tool kit. These activities prepared Taylor for his job search of a full-time self-sufficient position as an entry level certified welder.

Taylor not only applied to several listed openings between Redding and Sacramento, but also contacted local companies in the industry directly. These were identified through research with his Career Center Advisor. Taylor soon realized that his best chances for becoming employed rested on his willingness to relocate. Taylor applied, interviewed, and was tendered a job offer as a Welding Technician at Hudson Mechanical Corp. in Anderson, CA. He enthusiastically accepted the full time benefited position. When contacted to follow up on his new employment, Taylor stated he was extremely grateful for the help from AFWD. He said he wouldn't have been able to complete his training or obtain his employment without AFWD's assistance. When asked if he enjoys his new career in welding Taylor enthusiastically replied, "Yep I do"!



# On The Job Training Program

**M**arilyn had been unsuccessful in obtaining full-time employment until she came to AFWD as a Dislocated Worker in March 2013. Once enrolled into the program, she received staff-assisted job search, resume assistance, in-depth mock interviews and career guidance. Unfortunately her knowledge in an industry as unusual as digital forensics made it difficult for her to obtain similar employment opportunities in Butte County. Although, with the continuous and proactive efforts of the Business Service Representatives to create and maintain strong working partnerships in the community with local businesses, an opportunity presented itself. This unique business sought out AFWD to help them find a great candidate for their growing business. Since Marilyn had some transferrable skills for this new occupation, yet needed skills in a new industry; she was the perfect candidate for this opportunity. After meeting with the employer and exchanging information about an On-the-Job Training (OJT) possibility, Marilyn re-entered the workforce as an Accounting and Weighmaster Clerk. She has since successfully completed the five month OJT contract with Sierra Silica in Oroville and has been retained as a full time employee. As stated by Marilyn, she is extremely excited to be working again and is thankful for all the assistance provided to her through AFWD, Inc. staff.



## AFWD's

## Support

## Helps

## Student

## Remain

## in

## School

Joel had been working part time for Butte County Behavioral Health when he came to AFWD in November of 2013. He had also self-initiated enrollment and was accepted into the RN program at Butte College with an estimated graduation date of December 2014.

Joel had invested a full year into the RN program when he realized that he may have to drop out because he was not able to make ends meet working part-time and continuing to go to school. Staff met with Joel to discuss how AFWD might be able to assist him in continuing his training. After assessing Joel with two independent tests, it was determined that he had the necessary knowledge and transferrable skills for RN training partially due to his past work in the mental health area. Registered Nurses are considered to have a "Bright Outlook" according to O\*Net with the median income in California to be over three times what he was making as a mental health worker. After reviewing Joel's expenses, AFWD was able to help him with supportive services, so that he could remain enrolled in the RN program. AFWD will continue to assist Joel through his graduation and successful passage of his State boards. From there, AFWD will assist him in his job search until he secures full-time employment.



**Butte College**





**AFWD** partners with Butte College to provide WIA orientations to their unemployed students every semester.

Over 200 Butte College students in nine different programs; Law Enforcement and Fire Academy, Registered Nursing 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> semester, Licensed Vocational Nursing, Certified Nursing Assistants, Respiratory Therapy, Computer Science, Heavy Equipment and Welding attended AFWD's WIA orientations. From there students can determine the necessity of financial assistance and job search services upon completion of their Certificates.

**92% success rate for those enrolled in training programs**

This semester AFWD received 164 referral forms from interested students and enrolled 137 for AFWD assistance. Students were supported with a variety of necessary requirements associated with their particular career program.

Students who have committed to these occupational skills programs are capable of entering gainful employment upon completion. Some programs require costly testing and Licensure where fees are not covered by financial aid and often pose a hardship for students during their last semester. AFWD sponsored eligible candidates with WIA Training funds assisting students in completing their trainings and obtaining the necessary licensures required to work in their new professions. AFWD, Inc. Career Center Advisors are pleased to report a 92% success rate for those enrolled in training programs.



On September 3, 2014 the Alliance for Workforce Development, NoRTEC, and Butte College presented at the Meeting of the Minds California Workforce Association Conference in Monterey. The presentation titled, Business Services: Expanding the Playing Field and the Service Offerings with Economic Development and Education Partners, featured Team Chico.

The emphasis for the presentation was business engagement via regional teams, in which Butte College and the Team Chico strategy is a perfect example of. The panel offered insight on the strategies of the team, such as meeting the market needs of business and industry through collaboration. The audience included workforce, economic development, and community college representatives. Individuals asked several questions and we identified collaboration, communication, and positive relationships as the key to the multi award winning Team Chico approach.



# Free Monthly Workshops

The staff at AFWD provides many different workshops for job seekers to help them with the skills they need to find employment. Some customers come in to learn new information and some come to refine their existing skills. One customer stated “I go to the same workshop many times. It’s like watching a movie, then watching it again. You see and hear different things that you didn’t catch the first time”. Workshops are held twice a week at the Oroville and Chico America’s Job Center of California offices. Customers attend to learn how to write a winning resume, learn how to interview with confidence and job search using technology and social media. Other workshops focus on how to network to increase job opportunities and how to complete a paper application as well as completing on-line applications. Attendee’s leave the workshops with increased skills and a renewed sense of direction.

To AFWD staff members’ surprise, many of the customers expressed a need to learn basic computer skills. AFWD began brainstorming to create an efficient curriculum. Thus, a new workshop was specially designed to help people learn the basics of using a computer, using the internet for job search and using e-mail. The workshop begins with teaching customers how to use the mouse by doing “Mousercize” exercises then progress to keyboarding practice. From there, customers learn about surfing the internet and tricks to finding websites for job search. Furthermore, they learn how to set up an email account, which includes skills such as attaching and sending documents. Individual’s that attended felt it was a great workshop. In order to keep up with demand, the Computer Skills workshop will be held monthly in both the Oroville and Chico offices. For an up dated listing, please look for the workshop flyers in the resource center or ask one of our friendly staff members!

*Providing Pathways  
to Success...*



## Workshops

### Topics:

\* *Resume Writing*

\* *Interviewing*

\* *Networking*

\* *Jumpstart Your  
Future*

\* *Successful  
Applications*

\* *Job Search*

\* *Basic Computer Skills*



# AFWD America's Job Center of California

## Statistics

### Butte County Visitors

16,701

### AFWD Business Services

Business Served	613
Service Provided	2,014
Positions Filled	59
Training Assistance	302

### Program Services

#### Total enrollments this quarter

Adult	159
Dislocated Worker	143
Youth	28
Employed	122

### Unemployment Rate

Butte 8.1%	Plumas 7.5%
Lassen 8.6%	Sierra 8.3%
Modoc 8.2%	



Alliance For  
Workforce Development, Inc.  
Providing pathways to success

A proud partner of

America's **JobCenter**  
of California<sup>SM</sup>

Chico Community Employment Center  
2445 Carmichael Drive  
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(530) 895-4364

Oroville Community Employment Center  
78 Table Mountain Blvd  
Oroville, CA 95965  
(530) 538-7301