



Submitted by Terri Hiser-Haynes

*July 1, 2009 through September 30, 2009*

Lassen Career Network

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## **NEW FACES AND SMILES TO WELCOME AT AFWD**

July was a time for greeting new faces at Lassen Career Network. Jennifer Lindblom accepted the position of Computer Lab Coordinator on July 1, 2009 then quickly promoted to Career Center Advisor on August 16, 2009.

"Twenty years ago I started out in the JTPA Summer Youth Program, which was instrumental in helping me develop my positive work ethic and encouraged me to get two college degrees in Accounting and Business Administration. I believe education is vitally important in reaching ones goals, especially in todays economic climate. I am highly dedicated and motivated in assisting others in realizing their potential. I feel grateful to AFWD for enabling me to develop my career by starting out in the youth program, then as a client, and now as a Career Center Advisor".



## Career Center Advisor, Smile, Take #1!

In July Debbie Jones joined the AFWD team at Lassen Career Network as a Career Center Advisor. She is a long time resident of Janesville. Debbie experienced a major career change when her position as Health Educator and Outreach Coordinator for Northeastern Rural Health Clinics was eliminated after 21 years of service. Her family moved to Janesville from the Monterey Bay area 22 years ago to build their home and electrical contracting business. She began her career working at Northeastern Rural Health Clinics in the WIC Program for 14 years until promoting to the NRHC Health Educator and Outreach Coordinator. Debbie also keeps the books, invoice billing and payroll for her husband's electrical contracting business. You can often see her on the weekends holding the ladder, sweeping up or delivering materials to her husband job sites. In her spare time she enjoys her wonderful grandchildren and loves to swim at Antelope Lake. Debbie's excited to help individuals on their education and career journey.



## Frontline Receptionist, Smile, Take#2!

Julianne Macie has joined the AFWD team at Lassen Career Network as One Stop Receptionist. Juli comes to AFWD with over 20 years of office administrative and customer service experience. After going back to college in 1996, she received an Associate of Science degree with emphasis in Geology from Northern New Mexico Community College. In 1998, Juli went to the Colorado University in Boulder and graduated in 2002 with a Bachelor of Arts in Geology. At CU Boulder she was on the Dean's List and was awarded the RMAG Outstanding Student Award in 2000. Recently relocating to Susanville, Juli has been working in the Elder Care field for the last year. Working with people is what she enjoys doing the most. After attending the Annual Career Expo at the end of March 2009, Juli came into the Lassen Career Network for job seeker services. She understands firsthand the successful benefits that can be received from AFWD's services.



## Rapid Response Project Coordinator, Smile, Take#3!

Nick Ceaglio has joined the AFWD team as a Rapid Response Project Coordinator for Lassen County. He comes to us with a background in Public Relations and Engineering. Previously working for the US Air Force as a Systems Engineer (15 Years), Nick moved back to his hometown of Westwood in 2000 and became Director of Relations for Dyer Mountain Associates and the proposed Four Season Resort. After 9 years of work with DMA, the company filed for Bankruptcy, leaving workers displaced and the hopes of a new sustainable resort economy in limbo. After more than a year displaced, he knows firsthand the valued resources the AFWD team, and the One Stop Center bring to the Lassen County community and surrounding areas. "To work for an organization that has personally affected my life so much, is tremendous. I can only hope I bring the skills and value to compliment the continued success of the AFWD mission."



## Business and Job Seeker Services Assistant, Smile and Action!

Shannon Sanders joined the Lassen AFWD team in July in the capacity of Assistant to Business and Job Seeker services. Her position is multifaceted, assisting business services, job seekers services, Summer Youth Jobs program and Internships. Shannon comes to us with a vast knowledge of customer service having worked in the financial field and as a long term employee of Amerigas.

When she is not changing the many hats she wears here at AFWD, Shannon returns to the “hardest job she’s ever had” that of mother to 2 beautiful young ladies and wife to a very hard working man. Shannon enjoys all family activities and has a passion for running, running, running.



Lassen Community College - Business Advisory Board

Congratulations to Chris Sullivan, AFWD Program Manager who has recently been accepted to sit on the newly created Business Advisory Board at Lassen Community College. As part of the committee she will serve as an informational body for the program faculty, the Curriculum Committee, the Instructional Office, the President and the Board of Trustees as requested. As a committee member Chris will be able to offer her professional expertise and to offer recommendations for creating new and inventive services for programs and students. The first meeting was held on September 24, 2009.



## Sierra Army Depot Job Fair

By Debbie Jones

Job seekers stood in line for 2-3 hours in the hot August sun to drop off their resume at the Sierra Army Depot Job Fair held at the fairgrounds in Susanville on August 26th. The line of job seekers snaked around the building to wait in the shade. Sierra Army Depot will be hiring for 250-300 positions. This hire will allow them to train and run two shifts in preparation for the draw down in Iraq which is expected around the first of the year. These are temporary positions expecting to last 1 year and 1 day, which may be extended if funding and workload allow. A job fair was also held in Reno on August 24th, and Sparks on August 25th. 2,000 resumes were collected from all three locations for this quick hire. A quick hire speeds up the normal hire process by 2-3 months. The first round of hires have already been notified. Work is expected to begin by October 13, 2009. Lassen Career Network was the hub-bub of activity in July and August. Many Lassen County job seekers used our facility to prepare resumes for this job fair. Jennifer Lindblom, Computer Lab Coordinator at Lassen Career Network helped hundreds of job seekers with their resumes. She had someone at every computer almost every minute of the day for several weeks. Her calm, caring attention to each person shows her dedication to job seekers and her job. She deserves a huge pat on the back and recognition of a job well done! Thanks, Jennifer!



## 2009 SUMMER YOUTH JOBS PROGRAM



The Summer Youth Jobs Program which was funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 came to a close on August 7, 2009. What a successful program! Eighty six young men and women were placed into summer employment in Lassen County at 41 businesses and organizations. 80% of these employees successfully completing the Summer Youth Jobs program. The youth learned invaluable skills, such as cooperation, self-confidence, being dependable, and communicating appropriately. The response from the businesses was positive; as we had 41 businesses participate in the program and benefit from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding. Many employers wished the program could have gone on longer.



With the youth in many different job fields, they were able to see what jobs were available. Some may follow down these career paths in the future, while several of our participants already know the careers they do not want to investigate any further. We had youth placed in jobs from bank tellers, labors, medical records, administrative assistants, park rangers, archeology assistants, customer service clerks, to food services and much more.



\$180,752.35 in wages was put back into our local economy as a direct result of this program. The youth also

received incentives at the end of each pay period in the amount of \$25.00 for attendance which came in the form of gift certificates purchased from businesses within the local communities. We had many success stories in which the youth excelled at their place of employment. As a result, there were a handful of employers that have hired these employees back into regular employment.

## CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

By Sue Vivilacqua

David Sullivan came to Lassen Career Network in February 2009 seeking help with upgrading his skills to become more employable. He had been working as a cook in the restaurant industry. Due to economic conditions the restaurant was closed leaving David without a job. He sought other jobs as a cook and other types of part time, minimum wage jobs but these were not enough to support him and his family. David worked with his Career Center Advisor, Sue Vivilacqua at Lassen Career Network doing assessments to determine what type of work he wanted to do that would give him a decent standard of living. David expressed an interest in business management but did not have the skills necessary for this field. After doing several assessments and research, the results showed that Business Management would be a good career choice for David to train in. David was then signed up for training with CSUS online courses in their Job Readiness Training Program. David has completed his first 12 week online course with great success and is starting his 2nd course. These courses will provide David with the necessary skills and education to work in the Business Management field. David will receive certificates from the CSUS accredited courses. David has worked very hard completing his online courses while working temporary part time jobs at the same time. He says he felt the online courses were the best fit for him as it allowed him to work part time and was able to do the training on his own schedule. David has since gained employment at a local company and has been promoted to Assistant Manager. David says he has learned a great deal about running a business and managing employees as well as gaining customer service skills through this training. He believes the training he is receiving, provided by Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc., has been a big part of him getting a promotion as Assistant Manager and he loves his new job!

Congratulations Dave!





## ABOVE AND BEYOND!

By Terri Hiser-Haynes

Lassen County's community of Westwood has some remarkable people who take volunteering to a new level. Bud Coleman is very active in the local Westwood/Lake Almanor Rotary and when he was presented with an outline of the Summer Youth Jobs Program, he went right to his fellow Rotarians and devised a plan to create a Community Work Crew. Bud has spent much of the summer overseeing this crew; he volunteered his time 5 days a week for 7 weeks to help the community, but more importantly to offer invaluable job skills to 3 young gentlemen. Bud went out into the community of Westwood to gather suggestions for projects that needed to be done. With the information in hand Bud then approached each project, evaluating the materials needed, man hours required to complete the tasks and most importantly all safety precautions and protocols.

The Westwood Rotary Community Crew started their multi project list at the George Young Rotary Park location. Ninety wooded acres with developed recreation areas of picnic tables, barbeque pits and several out buildings where food and entertainment are served up. They raked, dug, painted, rebuilt, cleaned and organized for days. All was complete and in place in time for the Rotary to host numerous outdoor functions pertaining to the Rotarian society.

Tools in hand, these gentlemen canvassed the community of Westwood demolishing, reconstructing and beautifying the Westwood area. Bud stated "These kids are pretty good workers and they work well together". After his crew received their first paycheck they returned to work the next day with a totally different outlook. All in all everyone walked away with a great experience, local businesses, 3 young gentlemen, the town, and a volunteer who took his role above and beyond.



## Business Boot Camp Follow-Up

By Nick Ceaglio

The Sierra Economic Development Corp (SEDCorp) invited the participants from the Lassen County Business Boot Camp, held in February 2009, to return for a follow-up workshop to discuss their progress since the Boot Camp. The workshop was held as a roundtable discussion where participants were asked their expectations prior to attending the Boot Camp and how they have utilized the information since February. Most came to the Boot Camp for Marketing Strategies, wanting to create a business plan, learn from the professionals and Search

Engine Optimization. They still refer to their Boot Camp binder and their notes they took during the Boot Camp in February. All of the participants learned more than they expected and said the Boot Camp was worth the 3 days away from their businesses.

Several participants equipped with the knowledge of the services AFWD has to offer were able to participate in the Summer Youth Jobs Program and are looking forward to the 2009 Internships program in the future. It was requested by the participants that SEDCorp bring single-subject classes to Lassen County, such as; QuickBooks, Search Engine Optimization, How to Build a Website, and How to Create a Newsletter. SEDCorp is already conducting the first two classes (QuickBooks and Search Engine Optimization for Beginners and Intermediates) in Auburn, Grass Valley, and Placer County utilizing BC Consultants. They are currently developing the course for How to Build a Website. Brent Smith and Sandy Sindt facilitated the Boot Camp Follow-up.

## NEW BUSINESS OPENS IN SUSANVILLE

By Sue Vivilacqua

Anytime Fitness opened for business on September 10, 2009 with a Grand Opening scheduled for October 7, 2009. Manager Jacob Huckeba invites everyone to the Grand Opening which will be between the hours of 7am to 7pm. The new facility is located at 2635 Main Street next to Round Table Pizza. They currently have 3 employees and the facility is available to members 24 hours a day. Jacob says they have many membership plans and prices vary according to which plan. They also have corporate memberships available. Anytime Fitness has the latest work out equipment by Precor. The facility is freshly remodeled and painted and has plenty of room to work out with lots of different types of workout machines. You can check out their website at [www.anytimefitness.com](http://www.anytimefitness.com). All of us at Alliance for Workforce Development Inc. look forward to working with Anytime Fitness to help them with their future employment and HR business needs and wish them the best of luck!



## CLEAN ENERGY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

By Nick Ceaglio

The California Energy Commission (CEC), the California Employment Development Department (EDD), and the California Workforce Investment Boards (WIB)s, are leading a statewide partnership of state agencies, educational institutions, local workforce investment boards, community organizations, and employers to deliver

21st century training programs for workers with all levels of experience.

The goal is to promote use of industry sector strategies to address need for skilled workers in: Energy Efficiency, Water Efficiency, Renewable energy (distributed generation and utility-scale), Clean and Renewable Transportation, Vehicles and Fuels.

Almost \$23 million will be invested in the Clean Energy Workforce Training Program Statewide to create a well-trained workforce capable of filling the jobs necessary to promote renewable energy development, climate change strategies, vehicle fuel technology, and green buildings. The effort combines funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the State Energy Program (SEP), the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program established by AB 118, Workforce Investment Act Governor's Discretionary funds, and private and local funds to create what is believed to be the nation's largest green jobs workforce development program.

On a local level, AFWD is working with NoRTEC in applying for this funding. We will also partner with our local Community Colleges giving them the opportunity to offer training services and curriculum development in green building, energy and water efficiency related fields.

NoRTEC will be submitting two grant applications. Their choices include; Category 1-Green Energy or Clean Energy Retraining Program consisting of classroom and hands-on training that provides green building principles, building science fundamentals and state energy code licensure laws for either the residential or commercial construction sector and Category 2-Green Building or Clean Energy Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program consisting of classroom and hands-on training in basic construction practices with a solid grounding in green building and energy and water efficiency to prepare individuals for work in the building retrofit field.

## **“LOCAL PEOPLE SERVING LOCAL NEEDS”**

By Terri-Hiser Haynes

Plumas Bank in Susanville certainly follows their motto of “Local people serving local needs”. Maria Nye, Vice- President and Branch Manager, stepped up to the plate when it came to participating in the 2009 Summer Youth Jobs Program. Maria stated “When Holly Schirmer, AFWD Business Service Manager, presented me with this program opportunity I just had to request positions for the bank and get involved with helping the local youth”.

Natalie Cook had just returned from New Mexico after attending 2 years of college and playing softball for New Mexico Highlands. She really needed employment and was looking forward to finishing her career goals of becoming a Registered Nurse. Her first focus was employment and job skills so she could become financially stable to continue on with her schooling. AFWD's summer jobs program was a perfect fit for her.

Samantha McIntosh was looking for work to help with expenses that she would incur while going to Lassen College and beginning her pre-requisites to follow her career path of becoming a Registered Nurse also. She was excited and nervous at the same time.

Both of these young ladies were selected to work for Plumas Bank and when asked what the best part of their jobs were they responded “The people we work with. It's like family here, everyone encourages you not to be afraid, to try different jobs, ask questions and understand that you will get it and just be patient”.

Natalie was placed in New Accounts where she learned how to open checking & savings accounts and CD's. She provided customer service and research services along with the important responsibilities of confidentiality, privacy laws and regulations for this financial institute. She felt the most important skills she learned were responsibility, confidence and counting back change.

Samantha was placed in a teller position. She handled cash, provided customer service, balanced her drawer, made deposits and maintained confidentiality. She also learned about privacy laws and regulations for the banking trade. Samantha learned not to give up. Her greatest fear was counting back change and within just a few days she had achieved this skill and smiles now when thinking how scared she was of this task. “It's easy once you get it down that you start with the cents first then the dollars”.

These young ladies had 2 very dedicated supervisors who helped guide them when needed and encouraged them all the way through this program. Kathleen Vanmeter, Branch Services Officer and Fran Oberg, Branch Services Officer Assistant. Kathleen had this to say about the Summer Youth Jobs Program, "This was a big benefit to the community. I encourage all businesses and organizations to participate if given an opportunity. These ladies are good employees”.

Fran Oberg agreed with Kathleen and commented on how the ladies selected for this business was a very good

fit and that all aspects of this program from start to finish was very successful. Maria Nye's response to the program is to be an ongoing training site for all future programs. She stated "With the willingness of the individuals we have the willingness to help them with valuable job and life skills for future job choices and career opportunities".

Thank you Plumas Bank for your commitment and involvement in your local community.



From left to right:  
Maria Nye, Samantha McIntosh, Natalie Cook, Fran Oberg, Kathleen Vanmeter



Natalie Cook, drive-up tellers window----- Samantha McIntosh, tellers counter

## Business Revitalization and Business Retention Workshops

By Nick Ceaglio

Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) and the Lassen County Chamber of Commerce hosted these workshops on September 21st and 22nd. Presenters included Sierra Economic Development Corporation (SEDCorp), MODgroup, and the Lassen County Economic Development Department.

The workshop started with a summary spreadsheet of business transactions in Lassen County as compared to the statewide transactions over a 2 year period. As examples, under the general heading of "Apparel Stores", on average the CA Per Capita taxable amount spent (per quarter) is \$128.45. The Lassen County amount spent is \$15.33. Basically Lassen County "captured" only 11.94 % of the potential transactions available, showing a "loss of" or "leakage" in the amount of over \$2.5 million dollars. These figures were prepared by Lassen County Economic Development staff. Due to the high percentage of inmates (~10,000) that make up a large % of the county population, they were excluded (statewide) from these calculations.

The bottom line, over \$100 Million is lost locally through "leakage" or buying out of the area or online.

Brent Smith, CEO of SEDCorp provided an interactive presentation on the "7 most common excuses" for not buying locally. They included; They never have what I want, their hours are so inconsistent/inconvenient, I can get the same stuff cheaper elsewhere, local stores are dirty/run down not well lit, I can never find anyone to help me, their staff is rude/surly/unknowledgeable, I go to Reno daily/weekly, and It's convenient to shop while I'm there, and finally the tourists support the local businesses. Workshop participants were then presented with options (5 steps) to reduce or eliminate the excuses. Starting with a friendly greeting or even a smile and asking "Have you found what you are looking for?", make sure they get what they want-if you can't find a resolution to their problem offer to order the item, provide an alternative item, or even refer them to another store, follow through-but don't make promises you cannot keep, and finally thank them-by name if possible.

One point brought out by Mr. Smith was the misconception that it really does not end up costing less in Reno. When fuel costs and personal time are taken into account, the "deal" seems to become less of a "deal". In fact, the local and state taxes lost by out of area purchases take away significantly from public services that we rely on daily (Fire, Police, Ambulance, etc.) within our communities.

Don Olsen of MODgroup provided a presentation on Marketing and Communication. It starts with a process called Customer Resource Management (CRM). The goal is to be able to identify your customers so you can reach out to them for marketing or when advertising. Other factors include; 1) Utilizing the 4 Ps of Marketing (Price, Product, Placement, and Promotion). You need to identify from these elements what it is that you do today to market your business. What's working? What could be done better? 2) Unique Selling Proposition (USP). What is the most unique element that is your business? What makes you different and why? Your USP will help you communicate what your business is and does to others rapidly. 3) Features and Benefits of your business. You sell products/services or both. Those elements you sell are the features and benefits of your business that ultimately lead the customer into doing business/buying from you. 4) Incentives and Affinity Programs. Incentives couples with promotions drive customers to your business. Think about what you can offer to your customers that are low cost. 5) Promoting Your Business. There are a variety of free or low/no cost steps you can follow to promote your business (Electronic newsletters, word of mouth, chamber of commerce, internet, etc.) 6) Internet your Business. Your business needs an internet presence. Using the internet as a marketing tool can bring customers to you at minimal expense. Make sure you keep it updated and link your site to other businesses to drive customers to you.

The "Buy Local" campaign in Lassen County is only as successful as those who participate. Businesses, Local Government, Individuals, and most important "the customer" all need to work together in maintaining our economy while providing quality services and products within our community.

## Plumas Bank Features AFWD in August

Alliance for Workforce Development was the featured non-profit organization for the month of August at the Susanville Branch of Plumas Bank. The branch displayed AFWD posters and made available our brochures throughout the bank. Plumas Bank demonstrates goodwill to its customers by supporting local organizations that provide valuable services to the local community.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

October 7th - Financing Options for Your Small Business 10:30am-12:00pm

October 21st - Sexual Harassment Prevention Training 9:00am-12:00pm

October 27th - Introduction to Federal Contracting 1:00pm-4:00pm