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**Alliance For
Workforce Development, Inc.**
Providing pathways to success

Plumas Work Connection

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2011 Labor Laws Update Workshop

Plumas Bank and the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. co-sponsored the 2011 Labor Law Update Workshop. The workshop was held in Plumas County at the Plumas Work Connection on January 25, 2011. The room was packed with 25 people in attendance. AFWD's Executive Director Traci Holt, PHR facilitated the workshop. Ms. Holt shared her HR expertise and knowledge on current labor laws with local businesses to assist them with their business and HR needs. AFWD holds a Labor Law Update Workshop in each of the four service locations each year to keep local businesses abreast of recent changes that affect their business.

Topics included:

- Posting Requirements
- Pamphlet Requirements
- Which Laws Apply to You
- 2011 New Laws
- Common Mistakes

Some common questions that were covered:

- Is an Employee Handbook required by law?
- What is the minimum salary for an exempt employee?
- Are salaried employees entitled to overtime?

Other items worth noting:

- Social Media Policy: "Do you have one?"
- New EDD Reporting Requirements

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) provides workforce development and human resource services throughout Plumas, Lassen, Modoc and Sierra Counties. Through a team approach, and in collaboration with other organizations, AFWD is committed to meeting employers' workforce preparation needs. For further information on AFWD's business services please visit us at [AFWD Home Page](#).



Report on the Buy Local Campaign in Plumas County



During the Holiday Season of 2010 the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) partnered with Feather Publishing on the newspaper company's Buy Local Campaign in Plumas County.

The campaign opened with editorials, followed by advertisements which were published weekly in Feather Publishing's four local newspapers covering various areas of Plumas County.

The campaign highlighted the effect that would occur in the county if each of the newspapers' readers spent \$100 locally during the Holiday Season. (Please see advertisement below).

In addition to the advertising campaign in Plumas County, AFWD and Feather Publishing also co-sponsored the Plumas County Economic Recovery Committee's (PCERC) "Secret Shopper" Campaign. This was an effort to better understand consumers' impressions of their local shopping experiences during these challenging economic times. Thirty-two establishments were visited across the county and a report was compiled by the "Secret Shoppers". In an article by Mike Taborski, Publisher of Plumas County's four local newspapers and PCERC member, he made the following comments.

"The report showed that the majority of stores were well stocked, clean, well organized and departmentalized."
 "In the findings, each of the shoppers shared another positive impression from the majority of the stores visited. It had to do with how knowledgeable and proud the owners and/or representatives were with what they offered for sale in their store."

Some establishments also had "room for improvement" in how their stores were presented and the service that was provided to the customers. Each business "shopped" has now received its own report and AFWD will offer follow-up assistance to businesses that would like to enhance the shopping experience of their customers. Support will be given to help businesses that wish to improve their customer service skills along with other technical assistance that would promote business growth and retention.

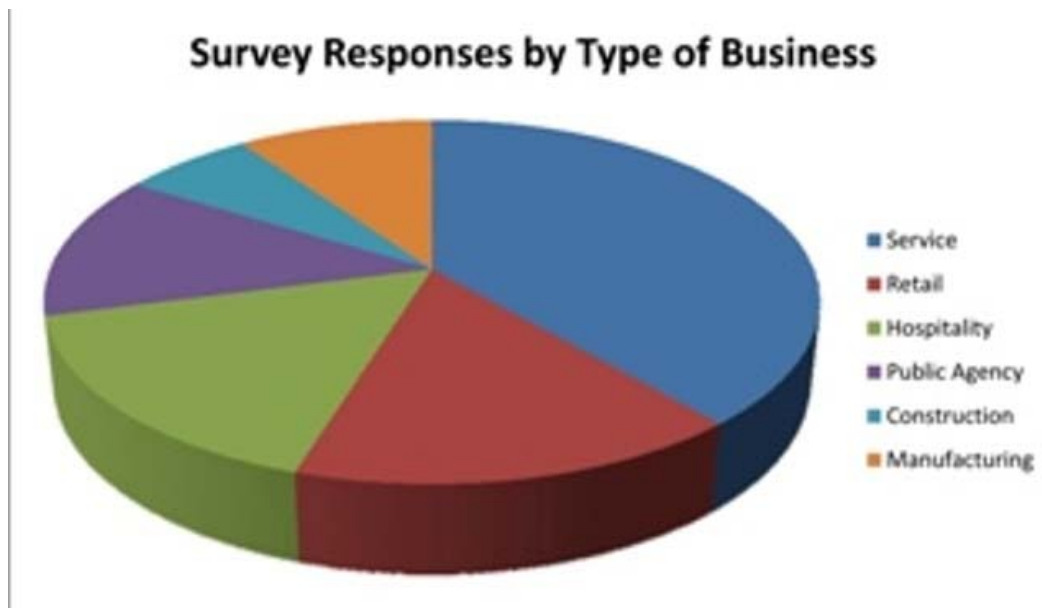
The Plumas County Economic Recovery Committee has also discussed its desire to conduct another "Secret Shopper" Campaign during the summer months to determine customer service in Plumas County during the busier tourist season.

Plumas County Business Survey – January 2011



In January of 2011, the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. conducted a county-wide survey of Plumas County businesses. From the 31 responses received from all areas of the county, the Business Activity Report highlighted that 77.5% of the Plumas County businesses surveyed are currently maintaining or growing their business.

Of the businesses surveyed, the highest percentages of responses, 41%, were in the service industry. The Retail and Hospitality industries followed, each with 19%. Eighteen of the thirty-one responses (58%) showed that those businesses were microenterprises with less than 5 employees.



Each of the businesses indicated the type of technical assistance that would benefit their individual needs and help to maintain or increase their current level of business activity. The Plumas Business Services Team is currently responding to the needs of these businesses in an individual and customized manner. All of the businesses will be invited to attend three workshops, presented by the Sierra Economic Development Corporation, during the months of April to June. These seven-hour-long workshops will cover the following topics:

- Marketing & Advertising

- Website Support & Development
- Business Planning & Cash Flow



Many of the businesses will also be given individual support in their specific areas of need such as job training assistance, Human Resource services and recruitment assistance. We also hope to offer a QuickBooks workshop as this was requested by several businesses in the January survey.

All contacts with these businesses will be tracked in the Executive Pulse Business Relation Management System. This will allow AFWD to respond to the immediate needs of the businesses, track their progress and support them in their business development and operations.

Youth Success Story – Shyanne Meza

Shyanne Meza came into the Plumas Work Connection seeking help with planning her future. Referred to AFWD’s Youth Program, she met several eligibility factors and was enrolled in the program. Shyanne’s goals included not only working, but earning enough to live independently on her own, and gaining better understanding of work/careers that would be a good fit for her. She also needed to complete high school and wanted to enroll in college. She participated in Youth Workshops that helped her improve job search, interviewing, and customer service skills. She completed activities to help her to understand a paycheck, employee benefits, maintaining a personal budget and positive credit, banking, finding housing, and finding/owning transportation. Shyanne completed her high school education and enrolled in classes at Feather River College. Completing a work experience job was one of the program activities suggested for Shyanne to meet her goals. Shyanne worked her thirteen week contract with The Roundhouse Council in Greenville, CA, assisting with younger students and office staff. Just days after the end of her work experience contract Shyanne

was hired by the Roundhouse Council to remain as a staff member. In less than a year Shyanne completed all of her goals and is now a full time college student with a fantastic part time job that she loves. Good Job Shyanne!!

Business Success Story



In February of 2010 Traci Downey opened the doors of her new storefront in downtown Quincy. Located at 503 Main Street, “Traci’s Sweet Surprises” is focused on providing high-quality service and customer satisfaction - they will do everything they can to meet your expectations. Visit Traci’s website to see her opening hours and a range of products. www.tracissweetsurprises.com

This bakery sells a variety of cakes, pies, dessert breads and pastries whilst specializing in celebration cakes of many flavors and designs. They let your imagination lead the way to your sweet surprise. They can create any specialty cake for your occasion, with fresh and kosher ingredients; whether you want simple and elegant or something a little out of the ordinary, if you provide them with a picture or just an idea they will work from there. No cake is too small or too big. Orders can be placed between 6am and 7pm or collected from the store during opening hours of 7:30am to 5pm Monday through Thursday, Friday 7:30am to 3pm. On Sunday the store is open for placing orders and pick-up from 8am to 2pm. The store is closed on Saturdays.



Each custom cake is a labor of love and a personal work of art, each cake has a base price and is then quoted with your finished cake in mind. The number of hours required to complete each cake depends on the amount of detail required; celebration cakes can have as much detail or more as a wedding cake. Traci's Sweet Surprises will create your cake with your budget in mind and will do everything they can to meet your expectations. This bakery is based on the belief that its customers' needs are of the utmost importance and it is committed to meeting those needs. As a result, a high percentage of its business is from repeat customers and referrals.



As this business has now developed a loyal clientele with many orders from new customers too, the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) is supporting this local entrepreneur and her growing business with an “On the Job” employee. Staff members at the Plumas Work Connection have worked with the business to develop a comprehensive training plan for David Savage as he learns the necessary skills to become a pastry chef under Traci's expert tutelage. David's monthly monitoring is already showing that his training is giving him valuable experience in this field and that Traci is also gaining an employee who understands her methods, work ethic and customer service values.

AFWD is able to reimburse 90% of the wages for this employee at 40 hours per week for 26 weeks with funds from the National Emergency Grant, with the expectation that David will remain an employee of the business at the end of the OJT period.

We wish this Plumas County business continued success and we congratulate Traci on completing the first year of business in her store.





Success Story - Linda Blum

Linda had worked for herself for nearly 20 years providing Environmental Planning Consultation services. Due to economic conditions, she closed her business in April of 2009. Linda had found temporary employment with the US Census Bureau to keep her going, but the work was not steady and came to an end in April of 2010. After nearly two years of job searching on her own, she came to us for assistance.

We had Linda meet with one of our Business Consultants, Brendan Norris to go over her current resume. He gave her some valuable advice, assisted her in updating it; and now she has a beautiful resume that any employer would be impressed with. Only days after coming to our office for assistance we received a job order for a full-time Receptionist at Schuyler Collision and Repair. This was good match for Linda, so we set up an interview for her.

Linda came by a week later and told us that she had gotten the job. She was very excited and even reported that she is very pleased with her position. Linda feels that it is a good match and thanked us for our help. We were very happy to serve Linda and wish her the best in her new position.

Job Seeker Workshop Series

Tune-In to North State Jobs Online Workshop

The Plumas Work Connection held the first workshop presenting the VOS (virtual one stop) on [North State Jobs](#) on January 19th 2011. The topics covered were on-line registration, resume builder, job search and basic

navigation of the website. Participants in the workshop shared that they enjoyed the convenience of being able to use the system anywhere and the multiple resources at their fingertips.

Other workshops coming up are “Avoiding the Pitfalls of Job Applications”, “Raising the Bar with Your Resume”, “Interviewing Skills” and “Strategies then the rotation will begin again”. The Team at Plumas Work Connection looks forward to providing these valuable services to our community.

Avoiding the Pitfalls of Job Applications

The Plumas Work Connection followed up with the second in a series of four job seeker workshops discussing the correct methods for completing an employment application. At the Work Connection, we see many employment applications along with many mistakes. Some of these mistakes will immediately eliminate a candidate from being considered for a position. We assist job seekers with putting their best foot forward. There are correct ways to complete an employment application and incorrect ways. An example would be listing ‘Friend or Uncle’ for relationship when asked for professional references. Many folks just do not have much experience completing the form.

Attendees of the workshop are thankful and appreciative of the free service. Attendees also ask many questions and are interested in attending additional workshops. We have flyers posted in the One Stop and advertisements in the local newspapers to promote the workshops.

Attendance is typically limited to a handful of job seekers with the benefit of more one on one type interaction. Attendees are also more comfortable voicing their issues and questions in this type of environment. We are scheduled to continue offering the workshops through to the end of the year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information on upcoming workshops, please visit: <http://www.afwdhr.org/id3.html>

Job Seeker Workshops - Every Wednesday afternnon at 3pm

Plumas/Sierra Job Fairs - locations listed below:

- ⌚ **April 11th - Chester Memorial Hall**
- ⌚ **April 12th - Quincy FRC**
- ⌚ **April 13th - Graeagle Fire Hall**

April 20th - Caltrans Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Certification workshop

May 10th - Marketing and Advertising workshop

May 24rd - Business Planning and Financial Analysis workshop

June 28th - Website Development workshop