



Submitted by Janelle Hardig

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Alliance For
Workforce Development, Inc.
Providing pathways to success

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2009 Summer Youth Program



Visit www.afwdsummerjobs.com for more information.

The 2009 Summer Youth Program is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Participants were eager to find work for the summer and learn new skills while having a mentor train them in various industries. Throughout Plumas County businesses were eager to take on a participant in the program to mentor and train. The 7 week program will provide several participants with new skills and a pay check.

June 16th & 17th kicked off the Youth Work Readiness Event preparing the participating youth, well, for work readiness. The participants learned life skills from several workshops conducted in these 2 days. They benefited from preparing their work readiness documentation and were quickly informed, after signing the dotted line, we at Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD), Inc. were now their co-workers.

Jan Prichard, Summer Youth Program Coordinator for AFWD in Plumas County facilitated the two day event. She covered many topics with regards to entering the workforce. For some of the youth, the SYP is their first experience with entering the workforce. Plumas Bank provided a workshop covering money skills and bank accounts. When the dust settled the youth were ready to establish their personal bank accounts.

Thank You Plumas County Businesses and Youth that are participating in the 2009 SYP. This program is both economically stimulating and meaningful to the communities. Not to mention the benefits of training and mentoring the youth are receiving that will shape their lives going forward.



Congressmen Wally Herger and Tom McClintock

Visit Quincy, CA

Responding to the small log closure at Sierra Pacific Industries, both Congressmen Herger and McClintock visited the Quincy CA area on May 11th. The community forum was conducted in the Tulsa E. Scott Pavilion at the Plumas County Fairgrounds. Also attending the community forum was Congressman Rob Bishop from Utah, whose state shares the same difficulty as California's timber industry. Eight individuals representing local agencies; USFS, Plumas Unified School District, Plumas Corp, Quincy Library Group, a former SPI employee and Sierra Pacific Industries provided their testimonies to the 3 congressmen and an audience that packed the pavilion. Their testimony gave insight on state of our forests, lack of forest management, sound forest management practices, economic impact, environmental litigations and personal loss.



The former SPI employee asked why litigations have gone on so long with no results and echoed what many former SPI employees have to go through. He will finish college and move his family out of the area to make ends meet. The economic loss to Plumas County will be devastating, not to mention the personal dilemma of each employee affected by the lay-offs.

An environmentalist on the testimony panel now agrees something needs to be done to keep our forests from becoming fuel attributing to the devastating fires that have occurred over the last couple of years in Northern California. Now he sees that thinning and management of the forests is necessary and keeps the forests healthy at the same time. Also stated; it has been found the once thought to be endangered species of the forests are now habituating in the managed forests and the need for the mills to be involved in future forest management.

The USFS was questioned about the litigations in process and why there have been no results to the HOQLG Pilot Project only extensions applied for. The 9th Circuit Court where the litigations are tied up has not responded to the USFS in months despite repeated requests for updates.

Towards the end of the forum, it was summed up by the congressmen in that something has to happen now to save the forests of Northern California and the jobs left in the timber industry. It was also agreed upon that the forests could be management in an eco friendly manner and still accommodate harvesting. No one giving testimonies objected to the eco friendly policies when asked by Congressman Bishop, "is it my understanding that none of you object to harvesting the forests and keeping the eco systems in tact?"



Workshops for Dislocated Workers

In a follow up to the mass layoff at Sierra Pacific Industries in Quincy, the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. team at the Plumas Work Connection has begun a series of group training workshops. The workshops will be covering a variety of topics to help Sierra Pacific laid off employees return to the workforce.

To date, Brent Cunningham and Kelly Clifford, have held two workshops at the Plumas Work Connection. The first on June 16th, "Forget About Growing Up, What Do I Like to Do?" involved Dick Knowdell's card sort assessments to help us, and the clients, sort out their values, career interests and motivated skills. On June 18th, we presented "Resumes Only a Mother Could Love!" discussing purposes of a resume, resume layout, necessary content and of course, resume blunders, and including "Objective: To have my skills and ethics challenged on a daily basis" and "I worked as a Corporate Lesion."



Our first goal of the workshops are to introduce ideas on resumes, job searching, interviews, green and alternative energy jobs and training possibilities. Our second goal is to create a casual support group for not only Sierra Pacific Industries and Collins Pine Co. dislocated workers, but all Plumas Work Connection clients to network, discuss ideas and socialize with former coworkers. We have had good attendance and positive feedback from the first two workshops.

Our next two scheduled workshops are on June 30th, “Tune In & Turn On to Online Job Search!”, and on July 7th, “How to Blow an Interview in the First Five Minutes?”



Permanent Lay-off date: May 4, 2009 for 127

Sierra Pacific Industries’ Employees

May 4th marked the final date that 127 Sierra Pacific Industries’ (SPI) employees working in the small log mill. The closure of the small log mill at SPI is both devastating to those affected by the lay-off and the community of Quincy, CA. There has been much in the news nationwide citing the economic conditions and environmental litigation as responsible the closure and the economic impact this will bring to our small town nestled in Northern California.



Plumas Work Connection has been working with those affected by this permanent lay-off by developing training plans. Most employees we have assisted would like to be retrained due to the dying timber industry. Some would like to adventure into health care, heavy equipment repair, heavy equipment operation and business management/administration. For those not interested in being retrained, we are assisting in job searches, resume building and other supportive services.



Rapid Response to SPI Lay-offs

Plumas Work Connection responded to the small mill closure news within 24 hours. Numerous Rapid Response orientations were conducted with the employees affected by the lay-offs at Sierra Pacific Industries. The Orientations started on March 6th, continued through to dates March 10th, 12th, 18th, 23rd and ended on 25th.

During this time we were able to reach many of the workers affected by the small mill closure. During the orientations the employees of SPI were informed of the services that Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. offers. Job search assistance, job hunting strategies, resume and interviewing assistance, supportive services, re-training and out of the area job searches were among the services relayed to the workers. Also, referrals were made to Plumas County agencies if more assistance was needed.



Sierra Pacific Industries Rapid Response

On April 29th, an on-site Rapid Response Orientation was attended by Sierra Pacific Industries employees affected by the May 4th permanent lay-off date. Wayne Bienkowski from the Employment Development Department (EDD), Shirley Kossow from Feather River College, Financial Aid Department (FRC), Janelle Hardig and Kelly Clifford from Plumas Work Connection (PWC) all donned our SPI issued hard hats and earplugs on and walked into the mill for our orientations. Two orientations were conducted in two different locations at the mill.

Wayne from EDD answered questions from affected employees about Unemployment Insurance.

Shirley explained the benefits of training and education with a twist on completing the 2009/2010 FASFA for dislocated workers. Shirley explained the new feature on the FASFA and how it can benefit workers that experience job losses due to no fault of their own.

Janelle and Kelly from PWC handed out packets for the workers and explained the services that Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. offers to dislocated workers. They explained the importance of making appointments with PWC's Career Center Advisors and finding out what we can do for them. Job searches, out of the area job searches, skills upgrades, resume writing, interview skills and other supportive services are just a few of the services PWC offers.



Collins Pine Company

Lay-off date: May 4, 2009

May 4th was the date 36 Collins Pine Company employees were temporarily affected by a lay-off. This lay-off comes after a reduction of the 60 hour work week to a 40 hour work week. The reduction in work week hours equates to an entire shift elimination. According to the mill, after the economy picks up again the employees will have the opportunity to be rehired. This lay-off was announced after some employees returned on April 15, 2009 from another lay-off that occurred in March '09 lasting more than 30 days.

The employees of Collins Pine Company affected by the lay-off have been served through Lassen Career Network and Plumas Work Connection. Both Alliance for Workforce Development offices are assisting the employees with creating training plans, job searches and other supportive services.

The previous lay-off occurred on April 15th, at the Collins Pine Lumber Mill in Chester, California announced a temporary layoff of approximately thirty-six employees. On April 29th, Brent Cunningham from Plumas Work Connection and Terri Hayes from the Lassen Career Network conducted a Rapid Response Orientation on site at Collins Pine. We met with approximately a dozen Collins Pine employees and presented them with information regarding Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc.'s benefits and services.

Also in attendance were Janice White, human resources for Collins Pine and Kandi Whitley from Feather River College, Financial Aid Department. Kandi gave a brief presentation of FRC programs and an overview and explanation of financial aid. We also gave the employees a contact name and phone number for the local Employment Development Department representative to answer their unemployment questions.

The employees were very thankful and appreciative of our time and effort to meet with them on site. To follow up, we used the Almanor Basin Community Resource Center in Chester to meet with Collins Pine layoff employees once a week for the month of May. They also appreciated the effort Lassen Career Network and the Plumas Work Connection extended to them. We will continue to work with them to reach their employment goals.



The picture shown above is of Brent Cunningham and a Collins Pine employee affected by the temporary lay-off, who will hopefully be a success story in the next Community Coordinator Report.



BUSINESS BOOT CAMP

Facilitated by: Sierra Economic Development Corporation

Brent Smith and Sandy Sindt facilitated the Business Boot Camp on April 28-30, 2009 at the Plumas Work Connection. It is hard to believe a topic like business could be interesting, but 12 business experts kept the attention of 16 registered participants for the 3 day Boot Camp. The event was from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM for the first 2 days and 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM on the third day.

Plumas Work Connection would like to express a special 'Thank You' to both Brent and Sandy for their hard work in planning the event and dedication to the Business Boot Camp.



Sandy Sindt, Operations Manager and Economic Planner for SEDCorp, coordinated the Business Boot Camp. Paying special attention to detail, Sandy makes sure the caterer and menus are planned. She also organizes the course materials and has every set up for each participant prior to their arrival on the first day.



Brent Smith, CEO of SEDCorp, facilitated the event. and intelligence, a rare combination that keeps participants and hanging on his every word.

The Business Boot Camp covered many topics for the entrepreneurial participants, here are a few:

- Business & Market Analysis
- Marketing Plans
- Financial Management
- Optimize Your Website
- Business Law for Small Business
- Challenges/Pitfalls
- And Much More



The participants gave a rating of 'EXCELLENT' for the Business Boot Camp.

One participant commented "I am leaving a Business Boot Champ!"



Graduation Day!

This Business Boot Camp was brought to Plumas County and funded through Workforce Innovations in Regional Economic Development (WIRED).



Plumas Work Connection Misses DSS

May 1st the Department of Social Services (DSS) moved to Plumas County's Annex building and out of the building they shared with Plumas Work Connection (PWC). DSS is missed by the staff at PWC and the 'One-Stop' connection we had together. Still, work needs to be done and communication through email and phone keep the connection together.



Back to Work

The CWA Annual Spring Workforce Practitioner's Conference

April 8 – 10, 2009

The annual 2009 California Workforce Association (CWA) Conference in San Diego, CA was very meaningful. The focus was BACK TO WORK & SPEND IT FAST, SPEND IT WELL. With so many Training job seekers in greener, more sustainable jobs of the future is spending the funds received from the 'American Reinvestment Recovery Act (ARRA)'.

One of the many topics the conference focused on was Southern California's partnerships and strategies for getting job seekers employed in greener jobs. Southern California has a network of city, county and state resources that work together to train job seekers in green industries. This training makes the job seekers more marketable and assists in gaining employment in greener, and more sustainable jobs. Northern California can learn, gain insight and apply what Southern California has accomplished, to become successful in creating a similar network of resources for training and employment for our job seekers.



Working with our enthusiastic eligible youth, getting them enrolled in our year round Youth Program or the 2009 Summer Youth Program was a hot

topic as well. Teaching soft skills to the summer youth while giving them a positive work experience is what the Summer Youth Program is promoting. Not to mention the economic benefits of having youth both working and spending in their local economies. Again, with emphasis on greener jobs, the youth can get an early start on exploring the sustainable jobs of their future. The Summer Youth Program was created to stimulate local economies through the American Reinvestment and recovery Act.



Plumas Work Connection -JOB BOARD-

Recently, Plumas Work Connection made some improvements to our job board making it both easier for job seekers to use and for us to assist them. The front wall now consists of three separate boards each with 25 slots available in each board, which provides much more space for employment postings. Behind each flyer are copies with a more extensive job description. We have also come up with our own user-friendly way of organizing the board by categorizing all jobs by location and then again by trade. Each location is defined by a color making it simpler for clients to view.



Since the improvement of the job board we have had several existing clients and new employment seekers comment on “how nice” the job board looks and “how easy” it is to understand. We do our best to keep all job postings updated and to better assist job seekers when they come in.



Plumas County 13th Annual Job Fairs

**A special “*Thanks*” extended to the
Workforce Development Team for their hard work in
coordinating the job fair events!**

*Terri Oestreich, Regional Occupational Program (R.O.P.) Director for Plumas Unified
School District*

*Jodi Beynon, Coordinator, Transition Services, Transfer, Career, Job Placement, CARE.
CalWorks and Academic Advisor for Feather River College*

*Janelle Hardig, Business Services Coordinator for Alliance for Workforce
Development, Inc. Plumas Work Connection*

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. staff

******Chester******

Each year the Workforce Development Team (WDT) coordinates and prepares the annual Plumas Sierra job fair to assist both job seekers and employers, alike. This year WDT hosted three separate fairs throughout Plumas County; the first being in Chester on March 31st, then in Quincy on April 1st, and finally finishing in Graeagle on April 2nd. Even with today's economy, there were a good number of both employers and hopeful job seekers that participated at each event. The Workforce Development Team, Feather River College, Plumas County Regional Occupational Program and AFWD staff put a lot of effort and preparation into these events which helped to make for a fun, encouraging, and overall, successful job fair.



The first job fair was held in Chester at the Memorial Hall on March 31st from 3:00 PM-5:00 PM. There were over ten local businesses who attended offering potential employment for job-seekers, including: Plumas Pines Resort, High Sierra Insurance Services, Plumas County Sheriff's Office, Best Western Quartz Inn, Knotty Pine Resort, Bidwell House and Red Onion Grill, Child's Meadow, Seneca Healthcare, and Drakesbad Guest Ranch. The Workforce Development Team, Department of Social Services, and a few AFWD employees, staffed the Chester job fair.

After the Chester 2009 job fair wrapped up we asked the employer's to complete a survey expressing their feelings on the day's events. These employer surveys revealed that the large majority felt that it was all very organized and offered them a "high level" of applicants to choose from for their businesses. One employer stated that Janelle Hardig, our very own Business Services Coordinator at Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD), "is awesome".

The feedback from the employers was positive and also offered many great suggestions for how to improve in the future. Next year we will provide more cookies and water! The Workforce Development Team and AFWD staff worked very hard to make the 2009 Plumas Sierra job fair different by decorating in the theme of spring. Over one-hundred and thirty eager applicants lined up at the door ready to "spring into their career" at the Chester, Quincy, and Graeagle job fairs.

*****Quincy*****

Quincy's job fair was well attended at the Feather River College gymnasium on April 1st, from 3:00-5:00 PM. This job fair had several other local businesses that attended. The employers that attended were: Greenhorn Ranch, Plumas National Forest, Plumas Sierra Co-Op, Plumas County Sheriff's Department, California Highway Patrol, Seneca Healthcare District, United States Army, Bucks Lake Lodge, and Feather River College. FRC had many different representatives to offer various programs provided by the college, these included: the AOM Program, ECE, Allied Health, Agriculture program, and Financial Aid. The Workforce Development Team, the Department of Social Services, and AFWD staff, staffed the Quincy job fair.

The Quincy employer survey's completed after the job fair was just as positive as the Chester's. Employers, they seemed to all agree that again, it was "very organized", "open", and "set up great for the flow of people". Others went on to say that there was "ample time to recruit (job-seekers)" and there was "a good response". One employer participant stated "more folks talked to me...than any other job fair or career fair that I have attended".

