



Submitted by Janelle Hardig

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## **Business Boot Camp Follow-Up**



As a service included with the Business Boot Camp, held on April 28th-30th and located here at the Plumas Work Connection, the Sierra Economic Development Corporation, (SEDCorp) was back conducting the Business Boot Camp Follow-up. Brent Smith, CEO of SEDCorp, and Sandy Sindt, Operations Manager and Economic Planner presented the Business Boot Camp Follow-Up for SEDCorp.

Sixteen Boot Camp participants were invited back to attend and share how they were able to use the information they learned, share their ideas and recap the education received during the three-day boot camp. The participants expressed gratitude and gave specific examples of how they have been able to use the information to improve different aspects of their current business or how they have progressed towards starting a business.

## 2009 Summer Youth Program Success

The 2009 Summer Youth Program ended with many successes. Many hours of mentoring and supervising made the program successful. The Plumas Work Connection would like to thank the many businesses that mentored and supervised Plumas County's young adults.

### THANKS TO ALL OF THE PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES FOR YOUR SUPERVISION AND DEDICATION TO THE 2009 SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM!

*American Valley Environmental, LLC  
American Valley Aviation, Inc.  
Camp in Common/Oakland Feather River Camp  
Chester/Lake Almanor Chamber of Commerce  
Donnell's  
DuPont Power Tool  
Feather Bed  
Feather River College  
Feather River Community Partnership, Feather Community Arts  
Healthy Bodies Fitness  
Litchfield Builders, Inc.  
Mountain Price Mechanical, Inc.  
Plumas Bank  
Plumas County Public Health Department  
Plumas County Senior Nutrition  
Plumas Rural Services  
Stoneleaf Promotions and Apparel  
Women's Mountain Passages*

Every business listed above participated in the 2009 Summer Youth Program and focused their time and energy on shaping our Plumas County youth. Without their support and caring efforts, the Summer Youth Program would not have been as successful as it was.

In addition, the program's Summer Youth Coordinator Jan Prichard spent many hours preparing for the program, visiting worksites, delivering paychecks and establishing new relationships with the young adults and their worksite supervisors. So: **THANKS SO MUCH JAN FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK!!!**

## Interfacing with the Plumas County Board of Supervisors

The Plumas County Board of Supervisors were updated by Traci Holt, Executive Director of Alliance for Workforce Development. Traci explained how Plumas County benefited from the 2009 Summer Youth Program.



1. Purpose: It is with pleasure that I take this opportunity to update you on the Summer Youth activities at Plumas Work Connection, your local One-Stop Employment Center. Our mission is to serve as a common point of access for job seekers, employers and community members for the purpose of education, training, employment, referral and supportive services.

2. Discussion: Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) through its contract with the Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC) received American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. A portion the ARRA funds were identified for a Summer Youth Jobs Program.

Upon availability of funds, staff at the Plumas Work Connection immediately went to work on the Summer Youth Jobs Program. An aggressive marketing campaign went in to place near the end of April. Included in this marketing campaign was an internet website for the on-line submission of worksite requests from Plumas County employers.

The requests from both the employer community and young adults looking for work were overwhelming. Twenty-two employers (22) and thirty four (34) young adults participated in the program. Employers were represented from the following areas: Portola, Chilcoot, Chester/Lake Almanor, Indian Valley, and Quincy.

Approximately \$82,138.00 in wages was pumped in to the local economy as a direct result of this project. In addition to the wages, \$10,635.38 was spent with businesses throughout Plumas County on supportive services (e.g. work appropriate clothing, safety materials, incentives). Participants earned incentives for perfect attendance and good work behavior. Staff at the Plumas Work Connection worked with employers from each of the areas to purchase incentives for the participants, with the overall goal of keeping the funds local. The participants could only spend their incentive dollars within the communities in which they live and work. Not only did the incentives benefit the participants, but local business as well.

## Summer Youth Program in Greenville, Plumas County, CA

Ken Donnell of Greenville in Plumas County, California supervised three of the youth in AFWD's Summer Jobs Program. He provided varied work experience for Michael Ontiveros and two brothers, Shane and Chris Preston.

Their first task was working together on restoring what is thought to be the old Greenville Jail which sits on Ken's property. This historic building had fallen into disrepair so Ken was delighted to have the extra help, allowing him to renovate the "jail" in its original style using a rare form of construction where all of the walls are made by laying full dimension 2x6 Doug Fir Timbers flat and stacked on top of each other. The footprint of the shed is 12 feet wide, by 16 feet long, and every 2x6 was the full length for each wall. The 2x6 boards were overlapped on the corners, and square nails, between 3 and 4 inches were driven down through each new board as it was added to the original wall. The "jail" before the restoration began, Michael, Chris and Shane working on the "jail".

The materials and construction methods are identical to the original Chester Jail which is a bit smaller than the one in Greenville. It has also been kept in much better

condition over the years. No-one is certain exactly when the Greenville Jail was constructed but the Chester Jail has a date of 1923. It may have been built after the one in Greenville as the use of only square nails indicates a date prior to 1905-10, when wire nails were introduced. However square nails were still being used, or re-used, until about 1920.

To try and stay with the original design, where only wood was used in the construction, thirty 156 ft. and eight 12 ft. boards were needed for the restoration. The new foundation consists of recently discarded, old railroad bridge timbers. Some modern improvements were added such as wiring, for future electric lights, and a new tongue & groove plywood floor. However, the outside and interior appearance preserves the original design and construction for the structure.

The corner of the "jail" before and after the restoration

The young men also learned joinery skills, whilst remodeling and updating a property ready for new renters, and they participated in the construction of a new children's playground in the town. Ken was delighted with the hard work and dedication these young men showed during their Work Experience and the increase in skill level that was evident in each of them by the end of the Summer Jobs Program.

## 2009 Summer Youth Program in Greenville, Plumas County, California

Litchfield Builders are based in the town of Greenville, Plumas County, California. The owners, Josie and Dan Litchfield, read about the Summer Jobs Program in their local newspaper and applied to be a worksite for the program, run by the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. using funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Mike Thomas and Stephen Harris of Greenville, both aged 18, were matched with Litchfield Builders and began working for seven weeks, with Dan as their supervisor, on June 22nd.



When asked how the program had benefited their business Dan replied, "Instructing the boys in carpentry skills was really valuable. In teaching them the trade, we were able to slow down and really enjoy the projects. Their work was especially valuable to our community; helping us to build a large children's playground and park in Greenville for a fraction of the normal cost. Their hard work on the park inspired others to get involved, and we soon had nearly ten other consistent volunteers."

Mike and Stephen take a break with their supervisor, Dan Litchfield, and other workers during the building of the Nuksa Té Playground in Greenville. Nuksa Té is California Indian Maidu for **Jolly Child**.





Dan explained the skills that the youth had gained during their work experience. "The boys learned how to read plans. The playground came with specific instructions for installation yet no-one on the crew had built a playground before. The crew spent several days studying the plans before the work began. The crew came across many challenges (missing parts or missing instructions) and the boys learned to solve these problems. They also learned basic carpentry and tool use; we feel confident that the boys now have skills to find work in the trades." Mike and Stephen learned valuable skills during their work experience.

Mike enjoyed his job, saying, "I was glad to be out working and making a difference in the community. This program has made a difference in my life. It's helped me to get on my feet financially and I've learned better communication skills and got into a routine. My friends have been asking me if the program will be running next summer and how they can get on it. I'd really like to do it again. There are so many more things that could be done to help the community and improve the area."



From building site - to playground; now children can now enjoy a purpose-built, safe, multi-activity facility in Greenville, CA.

After the success of building the playground the youth worked with Litchfield Builders on other projects in the area. Asked about the impact of the Summer Jobs Program on their business Dan and Josie commented, "As a family owned operation, we often can't afford to hire employees. Having two laborers for the summer allowed us to do more volunteer and discounted work for needy families and programs in the valley. It has also helped us to stay organized and be more efficient as a business."

The success of this work experience was clear when both the supervisors and the youth declared they would, "Absolutely!" and, "Definitely!" recommend this program in the future.



### QUINCY, PLUMAS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Owner, Bob Janowski, was delighted with the work carried out by James Posey during his work experience this summer at the Feather Bed in Quincy, Plumas County. Under the supervision of Valerie Nellor, James learned gardening and landscaping skills.

James learns the correct way to prune several trees around the Feather Bed Manager, Noreen Lee, noticed how much more attractive the planted areas were looking after James had followed Valerie's instructions on preparing the flower beds and planting appropriate flowers and shrubs for the conditions.

"James was great to work with," commented Valerie as the Summer Jobs Program was reaching an end.

## The Plumas Work Connection shares some: **SUCCESS STORIES**

In follow up to our Collins Pine Rapid Response CC Report for June 2009, we are pleased to report that Mark Thomas has started full time employment for JCPenney at their Distribution Center in Stead, Nevada. Mark started on August 24 as a Maintenance Mechanic and will be able to apply for Electrician positions, his area of expertise, upon completion of ninety days employment. Mark and his wife, Margaret, have diligently been searching and applying to online job postings all over the United States. They most recently focused their search on the West Coast. Mark worked at Collins Pine in Chester as an Industrial Electrician for five years and has worked in the timber industry since 1980. Mark lay-off date was April 30 as part of Collins Pine's layoffs. Mark immediately began his job search in a very competitive job-seeking environment. We met with him several times at the ABC Center in Chester. The Thomas' recently relocated from Westwood to Nevada. We have been very impressed with Mark and Margaret's spirit and determination to find employment. It is rare to see clients stay positive and focused amid such change and hardship. Mark and Margaret Thomas are a true, success story.

Charles Redman came in to the Plumas Work Connection the beginning of July having recently been released from disability. He came in interested in assistance job searching. He had recently begun the process of testing to add a Hazmat endorsement to his license. Charles worked hard with his limited resources and actively contacted partner agencies in the area to get him through this tough time. In repeated contacting local employers,



Charles has been offered and accepted a Management position at Feather River Materials, a concrete delivery company, overseeing both the Quincy and Graeagle batch plants. The position is full time with a company vehicle. Charles is to begin rebuilding the customer base while the owners are working on out of the area construction projects. Charles will also be attending the upcoming Introduction to Federal Contracting to search for any possible projects and work for Feather River Materials. Charles' hard work and determination have paid off. Charles is excited to be getting back to work. He is also very interested in this new direction of researching federal contracts.

## Plumas County Public Health Department Participates in AFWD's Summer Jobs Program

Tomi Potillor, of Quincy in California, had a very successful work experience with the Plumas County Public Health Department this summer. Under the supervision of her mentor, Lori Pini, she was assigned a variety of tasks that gave her the opportunity to learn about the many facets of this public department.

*Tomi Potillor*



Amongst the projects she was given was the preparation and organization of kits for new parents. These kits, giving information and support, are delivered to the homes of new parents all over Plumas County, CA getting families off to a great start.

Tomi (center) with Lori(left) and Dana(right) reading a "touch and feel" book for babies from the kit for new parents. This was Tomi's first job. As a young mother she had been at home taking care of her three children. She has thoroughly enjoyed the work and has gained a great deal of valuable experience. She has also impressed Lori so much that the health department wishes to offer her an internship through AFD. Tomi also worked at the reception desk. As the work experience was reaching an end Tomi commented, "Who wouldn't want to keep working after this? I feel very happy and blessed to have been given this opportunity."

## **'Providing Pathways to Success'**

Here at the Plumas Work Connection, we have been working with clients from Sierra Pacific Industries, Inc. and Collins Pine Company May 4th lay-off, as well other clients affected by lay-offs with other local businesses. We assess our client's skills, experience and employment interests. For some, we have determined that retraining is reasonable and necessary. We currently have five clients actively attending various training programs including Wyotech's ten month Diesel Technician training, Butte College's six-month Law Enforcement Academy, Butte College's eight month Building Inspector training, UTT's 45 week Diesel Technician training, FRC's one month Welding Program and MMI's 60 week Marine Engine Technician training in Orlando, Florida. Our clients have received supportive services to allow them to enter and, eventually, complete their various training programs. We referred our clients to our local community organizations including the Plumas Crisis Center, Department of Social Services, Plumas Rural Services and the Employment Development Department to help folks out with their immediate needs. We have found our clients to be responsible, organized, determined and thankful for the opportunity to continue their educations and become more employable.

We are currently assisting a client who needs to update and renew her Registered Dental Assistant license. She has already attained employment in the dental industry and will receive a \$5/hr raise upon renewing her license. We helped one of our clients in adding a hazmat endorsement to his CDL license. He also has attained employment. Our upcoming training clients include a Truck Driver, Paramedic, and several Linemen. We also have one client who will be starting Shasta College's six week Utility Scale Wind Technician Training the middle of September. There have been several clients decided to start classes at Feather River College.

It is exciting and rewarding to be able to assist clients in working towards their employment goals. Some are hesitant and upset in losing their jobs. Some are excited for a chance to improve their skills and enter into more rewarding employment. This has been an opportunity for the Plumas Work Connection to assist our local community. The services that we provide, along with our integrity, are 'Providing Pathways to Success'.

## **Plumas Work Connection Workshops**

Here at the Plumas Work Connection, we have continued to offer workshops for out of work adults and dislocated workers. We are offering the workshops roughly every two weeks titled, 'Resumes Only a Mother Could Love', 'How to Blow an Interview in the First Five Minutes', 'Forget About Growing Up, What Do I Like to Do', and 'Turn In and Turn On to Online Job Search'. The topics of the workshops include resume tips, strategies and transferrable skills, interview tips and techniques, Dick Knowdell's career values, motivated skills and occupational interest's card sorts, and online job search and networking. We are currently offering the workshops to new clients as well as existing and are having modest turnouts. The smaller groups offer more one on one interaction. We are able to answer specific questions and give information and advice to job seekers.