Economic Forecast Conference

The Economic Forecast Conference brought 500 business leaders, entrepreneurs and professionals together to discuss the Economic outlook of the state. This event was hosted by Chico State University’s, Center for Economic Development, and held at Gold Country Casino in Oroville, CA. The event included speeches by top leaders including a university professor, CEO’s, consultants and entrepreneurs and gave those in attendance a very comprehensive look at where the economy is today and where it is likely to go in the future.

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) had the opportunity to host an information table at this event. The event was a great opportunity to network with business leaders, including discussing how Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) business services could help employers be more efficient and successful. AFWD was able to discuss recruitment services, including posting jobs through CalJOBS. Business leaders also enjoyed hearing how AFWD could provide Human Resource assistance and the On the Job Training (OJT) programs. Overall, it was a great way to meet new businesses and reconnect with others in the area.

AFWD was also asked to participate as part of a panel in a break out session titled, “Linking Industry to Education.” This break out session allowed AFWD the opportunity to highlight some of the ways we partner with those in education to help students prepare for the workforce. The session was a way to describe the synergistic relationship between AFWD and its partners in education and how this relationship helps students prepare for their future in key industries.
The Chico Chamber of Commerce celebrated their 77th Annual Dinner and Business Awards Ceremony honoring Chico's "Legends and Legacies" on January 15, 2015 at Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. The Chamber focused on their plans for 2015, but not without celebrating a few past accomplishments and highlights from 2014 first.

This was the first year the Chico Chamber of Commerce gave out the Legacy award. The Legacy award is the most prestigious award the chamber has ever awarded. The recipient of this award was the former and longtime City Manager Fred Davis. Davis served as the Director of Public Works for 6 years and the City Manager for 33 years. Although, the legacy award took center stage there were several other awards presented throughout the night honoring those who work hard every day to make our city a great place to call home. Some of these awards include the J. Pat Lappin Award, for Business Excellence, presented to Mark Sorensen (Mayor City of Chico), Jeanne Posey Business Woman of the Year Award, presented to Audrey Taylor (Chabin Concepts), and the Chairman's Award, presented to Mark Francis (Golden Valley Bank), for Exemplary Service to the Chico Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce also awarded its Young Professional of the Year award to Danie Schwartz LRT Graphics for Outstanding Service to the Chico Young Professionals Organization. The 77th Annual Dinner and Business Awards Ceremony was a great success as the Chamber was able to accomplish their goals of honoring individual accomplishments throughout the community, as well as layout its exciting and strategic plan for 2015.
On January 21, 2015 Chico Mayor, Mark Sorensen delivered the State of the City address held at City Council Chambers. With standing room only, a review of the year past was a focal point including the struggle with personnel cuts and the radical recovery efforts of the deficit. Interim Police Chief, Mike Dunbah, spoke about the rising concern of public safety and the efforts being made to increase community safety.

Chico Chamber of Commerce Chairman, Mark Francis, outlined signs of positive growth from the last fiscal quarter using the economic index. Although we are not yet out of the recession, Mark Francis notes that our retail sales taxes rose, indicating a step in the right direction. Mayor Sorensen then presented on the state of the economy, progress on business, climate issues, and information on business services. Mayor Sorensen fielded many questions in his open discussion time, ranging from budgetary to public awareness. Overall, the City is looking to the future and has set a positive tone by establishing priorities for 2015.
On Wednesday January 14, 2015, AFWD, Inc. business services staff had the opportunity to attend the Labor Law Update workshop hosted by Butte College, The Training Place. The workshop was instructed by Ann Wicks, JD.

Ann is a local Labor Law attorney, with experience in all aspects of employment law from employee hiring and discipline through the termination of the employment relationship, as well as the claims that sometimes follow. Ann has worked with technology start-ups, venture capital firms, large and small corporations, union and non-union employers, and a variety of public and private employers, as well as individuals. Her clients have included airline, trucking, insurance, food, retail, manufacturing, automotive, agricultural, high technology, biotechnology, venture capital, video game and hospitality companies.

The labor law workshop focused on the topics listed below. Approximately ten employers attended and asked many questions regarding the new sick leave and benefits laws. After the workshop AFWD business services staff had the opportunity to discuss current employer needs and set up times to meet with new employers.
Oroville DRC Job Readiness Update

It has been two years since AFWD started a three phase Job Readiness Workshop for the parolees of Butte County at the Daily Reporting Center, or DRC, in Oroville. It has been a successful partnership between the Butte County Sheriff’s Office (BCSO) and Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD). During this time AFWD has served over 150 clients that are part of the SWAP (Sheriff’s Work Alternative Program) and are on formal probation.

Reentering the workforce can be a challenge for anyone but more so for someone with a criminal history. These clients are not only faced with challenges reintegrating into society but also with finding employment. The three phase Job Readiness Workshops are specifically tailored to address the job search needs of these clients. AFWD’s Career Center Advisor’s (CCA’s) provide classroom instruction on various stages of the application process and applying for a job. Each client comes away with a completed application cheat sheet.

The workshop also provides information on the two most common types of resumes and assists them with getting one started. Completing a Career Assessment is another part of the Workshop that is offered during the class for each client including a review of their results and other assessments that are available to them. They are also provided in-depth information on how to interview successfully and even given the opportunity to practice in mock interview sessions with their classmates, hands-on!

Statistics have shown that 4 out of 10 adult offenders in the United States return to prison within three years of their release. This is not just significant for ex-offenders and their families but also for the communities in which they live¹. Recidivism rates in California were at 57.8%². When ex-offenders reintegrate into the community, they face a number of barriers to employment. By providing ex-offenders with the support and services they need to find and maintain employment, we are assisting in reducing recidivism³. Through the combined efforts of AFWD and the Butte County Sheriff’s Department, over 60% of the attending clients have entered employment after attending the Workshop and completing other DRC requirements.

We are happy to continue our partnership with the Butte County Sheriff’s office in the hopes that we may continue to aide these clients with their job search challenges and assist them in reentering the workforce successfully!

¹ Saferfoundation.org
² CSSP.org
³ Saferfoundation.org
Butte County Youth finds path through Job Corps

David Huston came to AFWD in April of 2014. At the time he was 17 years old and had dropped out of high school. He was living between his father’s and mother’s homes in Bangor and Oroville. He had last attended school in 11th grade, when he stopped attending school due to having little motivation to complete high school, and by his own admission, he was being lazy! Before reaching out to AFWD for assistance, David was also unable to find work. He had never worked before, and though he had experience working outdoors in the garden and helping his family, he had few job specific skills. His large family was living on a very restricted income and had no additional resources with which to help David when he decided to make a change in his life.

David enrolled in the AFWD youth program and immediately began attending workshops to enhance his employment and life skills. As part of this process David took the O*Net Interest Profiler. This generated an employment profile for David that indicated that he would be best suited looking for employment that was conventional and realistic, in nature. He showed high aptitude for hands on labor, working as a technician or a repairman. In August David began work on his GED tests.

He took the series of pretests to assess his readiness for the tests and scored well, needing the most help with Mathematics. Once he was ready to begin taking the tests, he went to a GED testing center at Butte College by the end of September, in turn, completing his GED.

Still unsure of what he wanted to do in his life, he was presented with the possibility of either going to Butte College or potentially attending Job Corps in Sacramento. In early October, David and his youth Career Center Advisor drove to Job Corps for orientation so he could learn more about the program and what it had to offer him. He was interested initially in being a masonry or facilities worker. A second trip to Job Corps included completing the enrollment paperwork for Job Corps. He was excited about the structured nature of the program and the fact that it would help him learn a trade that would enable him to start a career.

David was accepted into Job Corps and received word soon after that space had opened up in his desired program. He learned he would be flying out to the brand new campus in Clearfield, Utah, to start a new life as a Job Corps member learning, Facilities Maintenance. He loves the change of scenery and the facility and is really enjoying his training and the opportunities that it presented to him as he moves towards independence.

This Job Corps Center is exceptional for its recreational opportunities. With over 1000 students living in 16 dormitories, David enjoys a fantastic learning environment and spends his off time enjoying the amenities that this center, the third largest of its kind, has to offer.
In an effort to continue to provide our clients with exceptional services, over 21 Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD), Career Center Advisors (CCA) attended the Job & Career Transition Coach Certification (JCTC) training, instructed by Richard Knowdell, using the Career Development Network February 2015 in Chico, CA.

The Career Development Network was established in 1979 by career development expert, Richard Knowdell. The network is an association of career practitioners who work with youth and adults in job or career transition. The Network has trained and certified over 6,000 Job and Career Transition Coaches and Development Coaches.

In just three days, CCA’s became trained and certified as Job & Career Transition Coach’s and had hands on training with Richard Knowdell’s widely used career assessment instruments including, Career Values, Motivated Skills, Occupational Interests and Leisure/Retirement Activities card sorts. CCA’s also had the opportunity to learn the importance and impact of emotions for clients during job or career transitions, how to assist clients with job and career exploration, how to focus on an immediate job objective or a long-term career goal and being the ‘Coach’ and not the counselor with clients. Coaching and assessing, providing information, referring, guiding and even tutoring clients.

Not only did AFWD CCA’s receive valuable information and became certified during the three day seminar, but they also earned continuing education hours that are approved for National Certified Counselors (NCC) by the National Board for Certified Counselors, and the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. Just another way AFWD is staying on top of providing professional quality assistance to job seekers, needing employment, education, training and/or supportive services to succeed in the labor market.
Transfer Flow Tour

In February, Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) staff and partnering organizations participated in an Industry Tour at Transfer Flow, Inc., in Chico. The focus of the tour was to learn what types of equipment, software programs, and various skills, manufacturing companies are currently using in order to help bridge the skills gap between education and work readiness. Throughout the tour, key points included the need to learn pulse welding, not just MIG and TIG; the need for welders to learn how to program welding robots; the need for fabricators to learn CNC programming; the transition from Inventor and AutoCAD to SolidWorks programming in both schools and the manufacturing industry, and finally; the need to fill high paying jobs in Research and Development and Maintenance. During the tour, Transfer Flow employees guided small groups throughout their facility describing each stage of the manufacturing process with demonstrations at various machines, including the Haas CNC, Laser Cutter, Press Brake, Robotic Welder, and the 3-Axis Tube Bender.
Our friends at Dollar General really like to keep busy! In January and February of 2015, Dollar General opened two more stores in Butte County; a new location in Magalia including a third location in Oroville, CA. AFWD business services representatives have developed a good relationship with the Dollar General regional and local management and we’re happy to help assist with their hiring needs.

Paradise and Magalia are smaller communities with limited public transportation. In an effort to attract local job seekers the Paradise Ridge Senior Center was kind enough to provide interview space on Monday, January 12, 2015. The Senior Center was a good central location for resident job seekers to convene and be interviewed for possible employment opportunities with Dollar General.

Twenty two interviews were scheduled for January 12, 2015, consisting of sixteen Dollar General referrals and six America’s Job Center of California referrals. The Magalia, Dollar General store opened its doors on February 7, 2015 with eight newly hired staff members including a couple of transferred employees from one of the Paradise Dollar General Stores.

Dollar General News in Oroville .......

A third Dollar General Store in Oroville will be opening Saturday, March 14, 2015.

Oroville AFWD resource staff have helped in the process of calling selected candidates to schedule interviews, informing them of where the recruitment fair would be located and also how to prepare for this employment opportunity.

On February 20, 2015, twenty six applicants interviewed with Dollar General at the Oroville America’s Job Center of California. There was a mix of Dollar General referrals and AFWD referrals. Dollar General interviewed many candidates and made employment offers to seven Dollar General referrals and three AFWD recommendations.
Turning Point

Al Cancilla was first introduced to Alliance for Workforce Development services while attending a Job Readiness Workshop provided in partnership with the Butte County Probation office, (AB109 program). Al proved to be an engaged participant and upon completion, requested job search assistance. He met with a Career Center Advisor at America’s Job Center of California in Chico, CA, and was provided an orientation of WIA services, and was subsequently enrolled.

Al was laid off from his position as a Furniture Sales Associate, after three years, due to restructuring. His Unemployment Insurance benefits were exhausted. Not wanting to limit his options, he applied to more than 30 various jobs in an attempt to find employment, without success. His inability to gain employment may have been a result to several barriers of employment. Al was at a turning point. He began to question what occupational paths were open to him; and started working with a CCA conducting preliminary research into possible career transitions.

Al worked diligently to overcome his background; he received support with rebuilding his life through the services of the Salvation Army and subsequently completed volunteer work within the organization. Gaining a great appreciation and respect for this assistance; he was inspired by the thought of pursuing a career with similar attributes. Utilizing assessment tools, informational interviews, review of labor market information, and training provider research; Al discovered the field of Drug & Alcohol Counseling. But, in the final analysis, his immediate need to support himself was top priority, so he focused on finding full time employment.

Al turned his attention to applying his work history and background towards a job in non-profit, with a goal of helping others to overcome their barriers and improve their lives. He believes he has a unique perspective, and seeks to not only increase his job skills; but to also give back to the community. When invited to interview for a Retail Management position at Goodwill Industries Al did his homework. He researched the company, scheduled a mock interview, and determined the appropriate attire he would need to ace the interview. Although he was not selected, he requested feedback. It was suggested that he should consider the possibility of upgrading his skills as an Operations Manager. In partnership with AFWD’s Business Service Representative staff, Al worked persistently to establish an opportunity to take part in an On-the-Job Training (OJT) with Goodwill Industries. He possessed strong transferrable skills for the position, yet lacked those specifically related to non-profit retail operations, donor relations, and agency associations. After an extensive selection process Al completed the required pre-employment screening process. On February 2015 Al began his training with Goodwill and has a bright future as an Operations Manager for this worthwhile organization.
**Butte County Visitors**

48,599

**AFWD Business Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Served</td>
<td>1,345</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Provided</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positions Filled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training Assistance</td>
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**Program Services**

Total enrollments this quarter

<table>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dislocated Worker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
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**Unemployment Rate**

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<th>County</th>
<th>Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butte</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plumas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lassen</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modoc</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Chico Community Employment Center  
2445 Carmichael Drive  
Chico, CA 95928  
(530) 895-4364

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