Chico has “recovered all of the jobs we lost in the recession” stated Mark Francis, Chair of the Chico Chamber of Commerce during his presentation at the annual State of the City address. The event was held on January 29, at the Community Center where local officials, businesses and Chico residents enjoyed a clear and hopeful message about the areas economic future. Optimism was the cohesive element across all presenters including City Manager Mark Orme, Vice Mayor Sean Morgan, Police Chief Mike O’Brien, Chico State University Police Chief John Feeney and City Administrative Service Director Frank Fields.

Encouraging information provided was that the City has experienced an uptick in building permits seeing as much as three times the amount from the low of our recession and that local tax revenues have been rising steadily for the past six years and looks to be growing stronger and stronger every year. The biggest news is that since 2011, Butte County has added 9,100 more jobs thus leading us to the road to recovery and economic stability. AFWD will continue to assist employers and job seekers so that those job numbers can continue to see growth.
The Chico Chamber of Commerce celebrated their 78th Annual Dinner and Business Awards on January 21, 2016 at Sierra Nevada Brewing Company honoring those in the business community who are “Moving Chico Forward.” The Chamber focused on plans for 2016, but not without celebrating a few past accomplishments and highlights from 2015 first.

Most notably, the J. Pat Lappin Award for Business Excellence was presented to Grandmaster Farshad Azad of Azad’s Martial Arts Family Center. Grandmaster Azad has been in business for 30 years at the same location in Chico. He is also a professor of business at Chico State and an active community advocate. Although the J. Pat Lappin award took center stage, other awards were also presented throughout the evening honoring those whose work has continued to make Chico a great city. These awards include the Community Service Award presented to Laurie Maloney, the Jeanne Posey Business Woman of the Year Award presented to Trish Dunlap, and the Young Professional of the Year Award presented to Ariann Cook with Allevity HR & Payroll.

The 78th 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 new plan of “Moving Chico Forward” in 2016.
Held on January 14, 2016, the always well attended Economic Forecast Conference was held at Gold Country Casino in Oroville, California. Northern California businesses were well represented at the ‘sold out’ Conference with many industries in attendance.

The keynote speakers were Dr. Robert Eyler, Dean of the School of Extended and International Education and Director of the Center for Regional Economic Analysis at Sonoma State University. Also presenting was Rohit Shukla, CEO of the Larta Institute, a respected practitioner on innovation, commercialization, enterprise and technology-led economic development. Prem Chand, President and CEO of Milestone Technologies also presented.

The conference provides an in-depth and candid look at where the national, state and north valley economies are heading in the short and long-term. This economic forecast presents detailed economic analysis by well-known economists.

As a premier business event, the North State Economic Forecast Conference gathers a diverse crowd that includes businesses, utility companies, non-profits, governments, universities, and elected officials from all over the North State region under one roof providing an excellent opportunity for private and public sector attendees to network. With this Trade Show representing 22 companies in the North state, AFWD had their own booth, which was well attended and informative.
On March 29th staff from Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc., NoRTEC and the Chico Chamber of Commerce attended the 25th Annual Spring Conference in San Diego, California. The theme of the conference this year was “Organize Regionally...Deliver Locally”. Speakers from both the state and the local level were there to provide information, new ideas and challenges to help forge regional partnerships and local integrated service delivery that is the foundation of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA). During the Opening Plenary on March 29th Mayor Cabaldon of West Sacramento spoke about his time as mayor and how he was able to serve the local needs of West Sacramento while also working regionally with and partnering with other cities agencies and how that benefited West Sacramento, as well as the other regions. Presenting after Mayor Cabaldon was David Sawyer, President of Context, Inc. and Partner at Converge For Impact. Mr. Sawyer specializes in networks, design and systems thinking. He has played key roles in a variety of fields including education reform, national service and social entrepreneurship. During his presentation at the CWA conference Mr. Sawyer facilitated several exercises with the audience to show how important relationships are to building stronger partnerships and collaborations that are key to the success for the current system design of WIOA. One of the exercises called for volunteers and Mr. Sawyer called up NoRTEC staff, AFWD’s Assistant Director, and Chico Chamber of Commerce CEO and AFWD Board Member to participate. Mr. Sawyer explained prior to the exercise that in order for partnerships to produce results and keep everyone engaged, as well as provide better strategies, is to ensure the partners share the same goals, have already built a relationship and everyone is able to contribute something to the other partners as well as receive something from the partnership in return. During the exercise each person had to state what they would contribute to achieving the goal and what they would need from the other partners. The exercise provided an excellent example of how the various partners come together, state specifically what they can provide and also what they need to get in return which ultimately leads to a more engaged and successful partnership for all.

From left to right: Presenter David Sawyer, Katie Simmons-President/CEO Chico Chamber of Commerce and AFWD Board Member, Michael Cross Executive Director NoRTEC, Luis Moreno Assistant Director AFWD, Anthony Tardiville Program Manager NoRTEC and Patrick Bradley MIS Administrator NoRTEC.
In January of this year, the Alliance for Workforce Development’s Business Services team was contacted by the General Manager at Panera Bread for assistance with recruitment for their new location in Chico, California. Panera Bread needed to hire an entire restaurant staff including professional bakers, staff managers and hourly workers in a short period of time. The Business Services team was excited to work with such a reputable company which overall needed to hire 75 new employees. Business Services Representatives sprang into action and posted flyers and job ads. The efforts paid off and the Alliance for Workforce Development was able to recruit 150 job seekers scheduled for 3 days of interviews.

On the days of the events Panera Bread was only able to bring 3 Managers for interviews, which was not enough to assist with the amount of job seekers. Business Services Representatives were more than happy to help rotate shifts at a front table they set up to coordinate these job seekers. The Business Services team assisted with greeting and signing in job seekers as well as coordinating and escorting them back to the interview room. The efforts of the team allowed the entire process to run smoothly.

At the end of the recruitment Panera Bread was ecstatic about the results. They felt confident that they had hired a strong team and were ready for their opening in January. After Panera Bread’s, Grand Opening the Business Services team received a thank you card from the General Manager. She wanted to express her gratitude for the assistance and mentioned that they could not have been successful without our help. She also mentioned that she would spread our information to other businesses in the area about our services. Not only was this a successful recruitment for a great employer but it also created a partnership that will last as long as Panera Bread is in Chico.
In February 2016, Alliance for Workforce Development Inc. (AFWD) staff were able to attend a tour of Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI). SPI, which is a third generation family owned company has headquarters based out of Anderson, California. They also have a lumber mill located in Oroville, California which is where the tour took place. Between California and Washington SPI owns almost 2 million acres on timberland and takes pride in managing their land in a sustainable manner. SPI is the second largest lumber producer in the United States.

The tour was to provide an opportunity to network and get valuable insight into the careers they offer. Currently the Oroville location produces cedar fencing to distribute throughout the country. They use the scrap wood for pencils which is under 7% of their business. SPI was able to walk AFWD staff through the mill and follow the path of a log from the log pile to the shipping yard.

An entry level position at the mill is considered a clean-up laborer. As more advanced positions are open and available, the laborers are encouraged to apply. Some of the hard to fill positions include engineers and mechanics. Overall it was a great experience to see all the different positions inside and outside the mill and how there is a lot of room for advancement with SPI.
In February, Comcast held a hiring fair at the Chico, America’s Job Center of California (AJCC). Comcast asked the assistance of the Business Service Representatives (BSR) in Chico to facilitate a hiring event for the position of ComTech Installers. In this position, technicians install, reconnect, add and/or change video products or services in compliance with National Electrical Code (NEC). Comcast was looking for people friendly candidates to work in customer homes and businesses. The BSR team went to work on Job Postings for Comcast and referring people to the job board and online postings. AFWD Resource staff assisted job seekers with resume development, online applications, writing cover letters, as well as interview help. Wages for these positions would increase after completing Comcast’s six week training program successfully. The AFWD team were extremely happy to see several candidates were selected and thus, began the Comcast training class in March.
The Partnership between Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD), and Butte County Probation Department in Chico California continues to grow strong. The Job Readiness Workshops are held at Butte County Probation and Community Services Office based in Chico. The workshops were specifically developed to address the hardships and barriers clients in this particular situation face when looking for employment.

The workshops consist of three phases. **Phase One** provides each participant with available programs that meet their individual basic needs i.e. emergency food, clothes and shelter. The eligibility requirement’s needed for job searching such as valid driver’s license, social security card and certified birth certificate. The basics of filling out an employment application, how to answer the dreaded “Do you have a Felony Conviction” question, creating a solid resume and the importance of a cover letter. **Phase Two** consists of setting goals, completing career assessments, how to look for employment, job search techniques and the importance of following up with an employer after submitting a Resume. In addition all the opportunities the CalJOBS site offers. **Phase Three**- Interviewing techniques, mock interview role play and proper dress attire, knowing their rights and most important Job Retention.

AFWD Career Center Advisors (CCA’s) facilitate the Job Readiness Workshops and in the past 19 months, there have been 299 participants, 191 completed all three (3) Phases of the workshops and received Certificates of Completion. The most impressive number is the employment number. At this time Butte County has reported there are approximately 41 participants who have become full time employed.

In addition, AFWD has the privilege to provide WIOA services to some of the participants through Career Counseling, Job Search, assisting with classroom training and OJT’s “On the Job Training”.

Shown here is Chris who attended the Job Readiness Workshops at Butte County Probation (Chico Office). He struggled with the barrier of securing full time employment because of his background issues. Chris utilized the tools provided to him for preparing his resume, cover letter and interview techniques. Chris stated “I had always fumbled when asked about my conviction”. He further states “I feel that attending the workshops prepared me for all aspects of job searching especially the infamous “Have you ever been convicted of a felony” question. Chris reports after completing all Three Phases of the Job Readiness Workshops he felt better prepared for job searching. Chris focused on his future employment goals not his past and worked hard to overcome his employment barriers. Chris used the information provided to him and is currently working in the construction industry with “Ferreira Construction” where he has been employed full time since November 2015.
Miranda Wallace came to us in July 2015 looking for assistance with training expenses associated with the Butte College Police Officer Standards and Training (POST Academy). She had been out of the workforce since 2009 while she took time to raise a family. Her only employment had been as a Production Partner for a Mortgage company. With the decline of the real estate market, and the increased regulations regarding home loans, the industry had continued to experience a contraction that made her return to this type of employment highly unlikely. Without an occupational skill, Miranda would have had a difficult time securing employment after being absent from the workforce for over 5 years, and would only qualify for entry level, minimum wage positions. Miranda self-initiated enrollment, and was accepted into the Butte POST Academy. Miranda qualified for a Board of Governor’s Fee Waiver (BOGFW) that paid her tuition expenses, and secured student loans to pay for the outstanding balance of training expenses. AFWD assisted Miranda in her remaining training required needs. She was hired on September 27th as a full time trainee by Chico Police Department. From July to December, Miranda maintained a straight “A” average in the program. She was sworn in as one of 5 new officers by Chico Police Department in a ceremony on December 15, 2015, that was held at the Fire Training Center in Chico. Miranda will work full time earning $26 per hour as a Chico PD Officer. She is extremely excited about her new career and thankful we were able to assist her so she could successfully complete her training and obtain her life-long goal of becoming a law enforcement officer.
The established partnership with CSU Chico, and the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act enables Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. the ability to assist students with completion of their BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) Program as well as others listed on the ETPL (Eligible Training Provider List). AFWD provides assistance with required training needs such as: Registration and fees, textbooks, uniforms, equipment, and the cost of licensure fees. After eligible students are enrolled into the WIOA program, they can possibly receive necessary assistance to continue their education as well as career counseling. Once the training ends, Career Center Advisors assist the participants with the job search process providing opportunities for successful employment.

Val heard about AFWD through fellow classmates and contacted AFWD when he determined the possibility of delaying his training due to financial challenges. Val invested over a year into the BSN program and when the expense became overwhelming, he requested assistance from AFWD. As an immigrant from Russia, Val had many obstacles to overcome including the lack of close family support in a country far from his homeland. He made many sacrifices and overcame these obstacles to maintain an excellent academic record, earning the “Outstanding Student Leadership Award” from Chico States College of Natural Sciences, serving as lead organizer for the Enloe “Make the Most of Midnight” Event, as well as acting Legislative Director for the Board of Directors for the California Nursing Students Association. Val is passionate about healthcare, grateful for AFWD assistance, and looking forward to his new career working for the UCLA, Ronald Reagan Emergency Department, in Los Angeles, California.
The 64th Butte Fire Academy celebrated their graduation on December 17, 2015 at Butte College main campus in Oroville. Firefighting occupations are considered to have a bright outlook by O*Net with projected openings nationally in the next 10 years of 104,000 and a median wage of $22.10 per hour with California being moderately higher at $27.50/hour. O*Net also classifies firefighting as a Top Industry.

Reece Maddox came to us in August of 2015 after he had been laid off from his part time, minimum wage, employment at Taco Bell. Reece’s only employment has been as a crew member for Taco Bell, he had no occupational skills that would allow him to obtain self-sufficiency. Reece had completed the EMT-Paramedic program at Butte College and had self-initiated and was accepted into the Butte Fire Academy with a graduation date of December 17, 2015. Reece inquired about the possibility of supportive services in order to assist in his training efforts. Reece was enrolled as a DW and assessed for need. Services were provided, enabling him to successfully complete the Butte College 64th Fire Academy on December 17, 2015. Reece has been applying to Cal Fire, and Federal Government positions. He graduated at the top of his class, and is sure to find employment quickly.

Derek Longoria came to us after his self-employment as a personal trainer came to an end. Derek had no measurable occupational skill. His past employment had consisted of personal trainer, climbing instructor, assistant painter, and food service. Without an occupational skill, Derek will not be able to secure full time self-sufficient employment. Derek’s interest had been piqued firefighting and two independent assessments showed him to be a good match for this type of training with respect to interest as well as transferrable skills. Derek self-initiated enrollment and was accepted into the 64th Academy beginning in August and running through December 2015. The rental equipment for the academy is quite costly and Derek asked for assistance with this expense. Derek was awarded a BOGFW that paid his tuition, but did not qualify for any other financial aid. Over the course of his training, AFWD assisted Derek with textbooks and his required uniform. On December 17th Derek joined his fellow students and graduated the 64th Butte College Firefighter Academy. AFWD will be assisting Derek with his EMT certification as well so he can become employed as a firefighter in California. Derek has also applied to Cal Fire and the Federal Government, and in the meantime, has a contact that engages in contract wildland firefighting, for the state of California, that has agreed to hire him if he does not secure full time employment elsewhere before the 2016 fire season begins.

Both Reece and Derek now have successfully completed occupational skills training that will provide them with a self-sufficient wage, a portable career they can take anywhere, and a more secure future.
On a cold Thursday night, December 17, 2015, graduating RN Students gathered to make an oath in fulfilling their responsibilities as Registered Nurses. This pinning ceremony was held in a large cafeteria hall on the Butte College Main Campus. Many friends and family members of each graduate attended the ceremony to witness the accomplishments of these future nurses. The Associate Degree of Nursing at Butte College is a two year program which demands intense dedication. This dedication comes as a sacrifice for many students in this program. There is often a financial sacrifice, sacrifice of family commitments and sacrifice of relationships due to strenuous academic obligations. Each student was allowed to write a few sentences of appreciation and were read by a moderator. The graduates thanked their spouses, partners, parents and children for their support during the last two years. Each student was pinned as their statements were read. When Career Center Advisors meet with their RN Clients they appear to be haggard with dark circles under their eyes, somewhat confused about which calendar day it is and sharing how they can’t wait for the program to end. At their pinning ceremony, these clients were barely recognizable due to their elation having a positive impact on their outward appearances. Their hair was styled, the dark circles were gone and they knew it was December 17, 2015.

After the students were pinned, they were reminded about the career they were on the verge of beginning. They were reminded how a young woman named Florence Nightingale once organized nurses to tend to wounded soldiers during the Crimean War. She was known as “The Lady with the Lamp” during the Crimean War due to her dedication in tending to wounded soldiers. At night she used candlelight to tend to the soldiers. Her dedication to nursing led to her establishing the first secular nursing school in the world. Each student was given a candle to recreate the dedication of Florence Nightingale, “The Lady with the Lamp.” After each graduate had a lit candle, the lights were turned off in the hall. Soft candlelight glowed across the faces of each graduate. Tears could be seen glistening down the cheeks of some graduates. Camera flash bulbs added additional light as if this was a red carpet event. The standing room only crowd was quiet as the moderator retold the true story of Florence Nightingale. It was such an emotional retelling of the Nursing life of Florence Nightingale. The moderator explained the tradition of reciting the Nightingale Pledge by all nursing graduates. She asked the graduates to recite the pledge. The hall remained quiet except for a few voices of young children looking at their mothers and fathers on stage. The following pledge was read and a new journey had begun for these graduates.

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**Fall 2015 RN Students Pledge to Fulfill Their Responsibilities**

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I solemnly pledge myself before God and presence of this assembly; To pass my life in purity and to practice my profession faithfully. I will abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous and will not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug. I will do all in my power to maintain and elevate the standard of my profession and will hold in confidence all personal matters committed to my keeping and family affairs coming to my knowledge in the practice of my calling. With loyalty will I endeavor to aid the physician in his work, and devote myself to the welfare of those committed to my care.
Lucy Caudillo came to Alliance for Workforce Development in September of 2015. She was looking for assistance with the CNA program so she could support herself and her three year old daughter. Living at home, with no real work experience, she struggled to make ends meet. After helping Lucy confirm that a career as a CNA was a good pathway for Lucy, Alliance for Workforce Development staff assisted Lucy with enrollment into Oroville Adult School’s CNA training. Lucy enrolled and began to take classes, moving towards her career goal of helping people.

In addition to assisting Lucy with enrollment into Oroville Adult School, AFWD assisted Lucy by helping her purchase the necessary tools of the trade. Together we obtained a stethoscope and blood pressure cuff, as well as scrubs and comfortable shoes so she would be able to finish training and get started in the medical field.

Lucy graduated happily from the Oroville Adult School CNA program on December 17th of 2015. In addition to obtaining her CNA certification and her BLS CPR card, Lucy met with our tutor and raised her basic skills in math to a high level. Shortly after graduation from the CNA class, Lucy obtained full time employment with Gridley Hospital.
It's a great time of year to be a part of the Workforce Accelerator program. We have two graduates from Table Mountain School!

Bradley Morales worked very hard to complete his high school diploma requirements early, including taking college courses at Butte College during his last semester with Table Mountain School. Bradley has decided to pursue an occupational certificate in Recording Arts. He is attending Butte College and is enjoying all of courses and professors!

Mario Estrada was motivated to become a high school graduate from day one at Table Mountain School, at his graduation he was described as diligent and intelligent. Mario has a bright future ahead of him. He will be attending Butte College’s Chico Beauty College in hopes of becoming a Barber.

We are so proud of both of our youth, congratulations Bradley and Mario!
**Improving Life, One Step at a Time**

Garrett came into the Chico, America’s Job Center of California (AJCC), back in July, 2015. He wanted information on where he could get help to obtain his GED. He was referred to AFWD’s youth program. At 21 years old, a high school dropout, homeless, and having a misdemeanor offense, he didn’t think he would be accepted into the program. Upon hearing he was eligible, his motivation became very evident. When told about workshops that would help him job search and complete interviews, Garrett couldn’t wait to get started. He attended the Job Search Boot Camp, attending every day and receiving the top award in the Boot Camp – a white board and monthly planner. Garrett’s comment was no one had ever given him anything like this before.

Garrett shared he was tired of being homeless and wanted to make a better life for himself. He started working on his goals by completing the GED practice tests, which confirmed he was in need of tutoring. After working with the tutor for three months, he took the GED test. In February, 2016, he received his GED Certificate.

Garrett also expressed an interest in wanting to learn to operate heavy equipment. He attended a Butte College Forklift training class for one week and is now a Certified Forklift Operator. His future plans include working and attending Butte College’s Heavy Equipment Certificate program.

When asked how Alliance for Workforce Development has helped him, Garrett responded, “A case manager was provided to push me to get it done and without that, I don’t think I would have finished. If it weren’t for this program, I would not have been able to get my GED or the Forklift Certificate because I didn’t have the money to pay for it. This program provided the encouragement I needed and helped me to build up my self-confidence. By participating in the youth program, it has helped me shape my future to be better! THANK YOU!”
Cindy Castaneda-Sanchez was enrolled in the Alliance for Workforce Development Inc. Youth program in August of 2015. Wanting a better future for her two year old daughter, and herself, Cindy enrolled in the youth program seeking vocational training services. She knew it was going to be a challenge and that she was going to struggle with transportation and child care. Since enrolled, she has completed the Certified Nurse Assistant program through Oroville Adult Education. Cindy successfully completed 176 hours of course and clinical work. Cindy traveled to a facility in Oroville, where she received hands on experience and training from employed CNA’s and learned what it takes to be a CNA.

Cindy plans on continuing with her education in the medical field while balancing her work life and being a mom. Cindy is very eager to be begin working in the medical field. Even when faced with barriers that could have prevented her from graduating, her motivation and dedication allowed her to persevere and with help from the youth program, she was able to accomplish her goal. We are all very proud of her accomplishments!
### Butte County Visitors

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>48,097</td>
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### AFWD Business Services

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<td>Positions Filled</td>
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<td>Training Assistance</td>
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### Program Services

Total enrollments

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<tr>
<td>Dislocated Worker</td>
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<td>Youth</td>
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### Unemployment Rate

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<tr>
<td>Butte</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plumas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lassen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modoc</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
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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