Chico city leaders presented both an insightful financial view of the past year, and an outline for future endeavors and strategies for the future at the 2019 Chico Business Summit and State of the City Address. Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) staff from both the Butte County Business Service Team and the Camp Fire Recovery Team were in attendance of the event, at the CARD Event Center in Chico. The presentation was co-sponsored by the City of Chico, and the Chico Chamber of Commerce.

The presentation included:

- A Special Report from the Chico Chamber of Commerce Chair, Michelle Niven.
- A Downtown Chico Update presented by Melanie Basset, Executive Director of the DCBA.
- A State of the City Address from Mayor Randall Stone.
- A Q&A session, moderated by Kelsey Torres, interim president of the Chamber.

Topics of focus included:

- Addressing the housing shortage, a discussion of how housing availability affects the workforce, the economy, and public safety.
- Chico’s response to the Camp Fire and how this new reality might affect Chico business, housing and public safety issues.
A discussion on the progress the City has made on addressing fiscal issues this year, including sales tax, balancing development fees with encouragement of new permits, and mitigating the city’s pension deficit.

A vision for Chico’s bright future, with various viewpoints from presenters on how the City and its partners in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors can help the City shape change into growth and progress.

No discussion of the current state of affairs in Chico, could avoid mentioning the turmoil of the Camp Fire and its aftermath. As Mayor Stone said to one of our Business Service Representatives after the event, “I’m sorry it wasn’t more cheerful, but these are things we need to discuss”. The Camp Fire has created a host of new challenges for not only those directly affected, but also the community as a whole. Despite this new reality, the unifying theme from all the presenters was how admirably Chico has risen to the challenge, and been a good neighbor to our friends on the Paradise Ridge. AFWD is committed to playing a part in contributing to our service area’s success by developing new employment opportunities for area residents, cultivating new talent for growing area business, and providing insights and support to our government and private sector partners working to Move Chico Forward.

ROSS DRESS FOR LESS Grand Opening
March 9th, 2019

On February 8th, the Oroville One Stop hosted a hiring event for Ross Dress For Less. Job seekers were lined up outside at 7:30 a.m. in hopes of an obtaining an opportunity to work for the popular discount clothing store. Ross store managers from Oroville, Roseville and Red Bluff interviewed a total of 135 applicants by 2:30 that day! The Ross managers were very pleased and expressed their surprise with the number of applicants who attended the event and the applicant’s preparedness. Ross was able to fill the remainder of their 45 openings that day. One Stop staff had reached out extensively to share the event through both social media and in person to job seekers that came in to the One Stop offices. Job seekers were made aware of the requirement to fill out an on line application before the event and to bring their resumes in hand. Business Service Representatives were available to assist with the flow of the event, assuring an organized and smooth process.
Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) succeeds in its mission of providing pathways to success by collaborating with local businesses to create opportunity in our service areas. In the wake of the Camp Fire, these partnerships are critical in helping displaced workers find new jobs, and sometimes new career paths.

Jana Gilbert, Office Manager for Chico Eye Center (CEC), reached out to AFWD Business Services immediately after the Camp Fire. She stated that CEC had multiple openings, and would love to provide a re-employment opportunity to professionals displaced by the fire. At this time, AFWD staff was immersed in recovery efforts in support of our partners at the EDD and other government agencies, and had not yet begun the considerable work of enrolling jobseekers displaced by the fire. Instead, our efforts were focused on mitigating the immediate needs of the fire victims we had met: filing disaster unemployment claims, and referring them to other service agencies for immediate needs assistance. However, not wanting to miss this chance to provide an opportunity for displaced workers, our Business Service Staff began combing intake paperwork, and making phone calls to find out if any of the displaced Medical Assistants, Medical Receptionists, or Medical Office Technicians we had met were ready to re-enter the workforce. Through many phone calls, in-person interviews, and career-goal assessments, we were able to identify several potential candidates for Chico Eye Center, for the positions of Ophthalmic Technician, and Ophthalmic Scribe. To date, two former Medical Assistants displaced from Paradise Immediate Care, have been hired on at Chico Eye Center. In addition, several more are in the interview process.

In a demonstration of the ripple effect that our relationships with employers, job seekers, and our community partners can have, the search for medical professionals prompted by Chico Eye Center, also allowed AFWD to find candidates for referral to other medical providers in Butte County. Those providers included Northern Valley Indian Health, Windchime Assisted Living, and Orchard Hospital. AFWD is grateful to Chico Eye Center, and all of our employer partners, who assist us in exemplifying the #buttestrong mentality.

Chico Business Provides Opportunities to Camp Fire Victims, Gets Great Employees in the Process
Alliance for Workforce Development Inc., recently helped organize and facilitate a hiring event for Lulus, a prominent Chico Employer. Lulu’s is a large clothing distributor based in California and serves customers all over the world. Lulus has a fun and casual work environment that focuses on innovation and teamwork at all levels of the organization and is a coveted employer here in Butte County.

Working closely with Yvonne Zipf, Senior Recruiter for Lulus, AFWD staff helped plan, advertise, organize and staff a hiring event aimed at hiring seasonal warehouse workers to meet Lulus anticipated spring demand.

We helped Lulus get the word out by utilizing our Career Center, community partner job boards and our various social media accounts. Through these channels we were successful in attracting over 70 potential candidates in a fairly short amount of time. As each job seeker filtered in, they were met by a professional member of the AFWD staff. Staff were on hand to help them register, verify they had a resume in hand, and assist them if they didn’t. A brief questionnaire identifying what shifts they were available to work should they be hired was provided to all.

Candidates were asked take a seat until they were called back for an interview by one of the Lulus team members. At the conclusion of the interview any potential candidates the interviewers thought might be a good fit for one of the multiple positions they were hiring for were given a link to an online assessment and sent back out to us. AFWD directed the candidates to one of the computers on site, helped them get logged on and to the correct site to complete the evaluation.

Lulus was very pleased not just with the turnout and the quality candidates we helped connect them with but with the smooth flow of the entire day. We are proud to report, the interviews that day resulted in over 30 new job offers to Butte County residents. Although these candidates are initially hired as seasonal employees, the majority of these candidates return to Lulus season after season and many are retained and transferred into permanent positions.

“Thank you so much for all your help Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. What a great event and so many great candidates!” Yvonne Zipf, Senior Recruiter, Lulus.com
Alliance for Workforce Development has been ready and anxious to assist Butte County with Camp Fire recovery and clean up. We have been working with community partners to develop training plans and processes to ensure the safety of workers when they embark on these efforts. Everyone involved in the cleanup or rebuilding of Paradise will be required to have a Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) certification. This certification will allow them to obtain employment in this progression.

The potential health and safety risks are the greatest concerns for individuals working in the hazardous conditions, consequently the necessity of providing an opportunity for training was essential. Together, Butte College and AFWD partnered to begin the Hazwoper Training with the help of The Dawson professionals.

Originally from Chico, Derek Dawson has been the emergency response superintendent for an underground mining contractor in one of the most remote areas of northern Nevada for the past eight years. Tasked with training workers and emergency response personnel on proper safety operations during fires, mine cave-ins, and handling of hazardous materials, he has seen the result of inadequate safety training firsthand. He has made it his mission to ensure the safety of as many people as possible through his training programs, and is teaming up with his family at Dawson Landscaping to deliver those same classes in Chico through Hazmat Training and Consulting Associates, a Dawson and Sons Inc. company.

Approximately 450 community members have been eligible for National Dislocated Worker Grant assistance and have been certified since January, at the Butte College Training Place, Chico. They completed the 40 hour training and are equipped with skills, knowledge and appropriate Respirator Masks. They know how to properly protect themselves from toxic air, hazardous materials and other unseen dangers. In addition, many have completed the CPR as well as the OSHA10 courses, enabling them to know and understand codes and regulations related to occupational health and safety.

Debris clean up companies and building contractors are employing these individuals for Paradise recovery. Not only the town but people’s lives that have been severely affected by the devastation.

These courses will continue to provide the necessary safety skills to assist community members affected by the Camp Fire who have lost their homes and employment.
In December, the California Employment Development Department announced it has awarded the Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium Additional Assistance grant funds to help those affected by the Camp Fire devastation in Paradise and the surrounding areas. The grant was designated to assist employees who lost their jobs as a result of the disaster. The grant, authorized as a result of these mass layoffs, provides funding for an array of critical services for the laid-off workers, including increased training, basic skills training, advanced education, job search assistance and other relevant supportive services.

Butte County AFWD provided an orientation of our services at the FEMA Center as well as posting AA grant ‘Internship’ positions available to those interested in obtaining employment. Mellissa Barton responded with an interest in our Data Entry Internship program assisting Butte County with Right Of Entry (ROE) documents. She lost her home in Paradise as well as employment and felt ready to move forward knowing a huge part of the healing process was keeping busy assisting those in need.

AFWD utilized the AA grant to provide appropriate work clothing for Mellissa because everything was lost in the fire. Mellissa had some transferrable skills with her past work experience, however she needed additional training to be capable of transitioning into her desired career. The Internship provided her knowledge with maintaining and updating data entry requirements, organizational skills, enhancing her communication skills on the phone with clients and maintaining confidentiality. Having similar experiences as those she was assisting, enabled her to relate and understand various situations.

As a result of Mellissa’s Internship experience, working with Camp Fire affected individuals and diligently providing her excellent services, she has obtained full time employment and will begin her new position with Butte County in April. In addition, she and her family will move out of their trailer and into their new home.

Congratulations to Mellissa and happy new beginnings!
Marcus is a dislocated worker who was laid off and lost his home due to the Campfire disaster on November 8, 2018. The community he knew and loved was gone. Marcus came to Alliance for Workforce development, Inc. (AFWD) discouraged due to losing everything he owned and in need of job placement assistance. There were certain barriers that caused Marcus to lack confidence in obtaining employment. After realizing the potential in Marcus, He was enrolled in the NDWG program. He stated to his Career Center Advisor (CCA) his desire to assist in the cleanup of the campfires aftermath. Marcus took advantage of the opportunity to attend the HAZWOPER training given by Derek Dawson, of Dawson’s Landscaping at Butte College. After taking the class, Marcus had obtained 40 hour HAZMAT certification, OSHA 10 certification, CPR/First Aid and his respirator clearance.

Shortly thereafter, Marcus was chosen for an OJT with Collins General Contracting, Based out of the Sierra Nevada Brewery in Chico. He is obtaining required skills required for construction sites, along with techniques for removing existing structures and debris. The experience from this OJT, and all of his HAZWOPER certifications put together will assist Marcus in being a successful, employable candidate for most jobs in the construction industry specifically in the cleanup and debris removal of the Camp fire affected areas.

AFWD assisted in providing Marcus with these certified trainings, work attire, job experience and an updated, functional resume. He is well on his way to helping re build Butte County and achieving his goals. GO MARCUS!

Gina Maria Hume lost her home and her employment due to the devastating Camp Fire Disaster. She was unable to find employment and housing in the Butte County area and had to leave to stay in temporary housing. Her mother was enrolled and was hired as a supervisor Filtrexx. Gina Maria contacted AFWD after receiving a referral from her mother February 15th, 2019. Enrolled Gina Maria in NDWG. She was able to start a Work Experience position at Filtrexx with her mother Crystal Alcover on March 4th, 2019. Gina Maria lost everything. We were able to assist her in getting rain boots, rain gear, and necessary clothing for work. Due to this position she was able to return to Butte County to be near friends and family.

Gina Maria is gaining experience working as an Environmental Manufacturing Technician. Gina Maria is a very bright, and positive person. This position is enabling her to not only reunite with her family, but also to start a new career that will be more sustainable then her employment prior to the disaster.
New AFWD Team Member!

Business Service staff from Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) met Diana Moody at the AFWD table at the Local Assistance Center in Chico about one week after the most destructive wildfire in the state of California’s history hit residences and businesses in Paradise, Magalia, Concow and Yankee Hill. Diana and her family came to the Local Assistance Center seeking information and services after having just survived the nightmare of the Camp Fire. They made their way to the AFWD table after wending their way through the assistance center’s mass of people and the maze of services. Diana remained upbeat and positive through the process and completed the necessary steps to file for her husband’s unemployment benefits at the AFWD table. When she was able to check that item off of her to do list, AFWD staff shared with her the Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) program services that might benefit her. These services included job search assistance which Diana was in need of since her Paradise worksite had burned down leaving her unemployed. An AFWD staff person shared with Diana that AFWD had been hiring for a Data Entry Clerk, but the closing date was thought to have passed. Diana was enthusiastic about trying to apply anyway. She went right over to the AFWD Cohasset office in Chico with her resume and found that they were still accepting applications. Diana was hired by AFWD and was soon working side by side with the AFWD staff member who had initially helped her at the center. In a short time, Diana moved into a new position with AFWD as a Career Center Advisor. Welcome to the team, Diana!

Thriving After Disaster

Companions Animal Hospital was one of many Paradise businesses impacted by the Camp Fire. Although their building was still standing, the brick wall of the burned out building next door posed a danger that made it inhabitable. Owner Valerie Caruso began taking steps to relocate to Chico, and had to overcome many hurdles to find and secure a suitable location, and put in the improvements necessary to start treating her furry clientele.

During the transition, Dr. Caruso decided to expand her services when she reopens to include ultrasonography, and to bring back one of her former employees, Rebecca Manninen, promoting her to Hospital Manager and sending her to specialized training in Texas to learn how to use and read results from their new ultrasound machine. Alliance for Workforce Development was able to assist Companions with an On-the-Job Training (OJT) reimbursement for Ms. Manninen, as well as providing training in Microsoft Office, a management course, and new scrubs since hers were lost in the fire. This support helped Ms. Manninen decide to stay in Butte County rather than try to re-start her life in another state.

Companions just signed a second OJT contract for Kendra Ritchey, who has taken over Ms. Manninen’s former position of Customer Service Representative. Ms. Ritchey is excited to have dependable employment in the field of veterinary medicine.

At the time of this writing, Companions Animal Hospital is days away from seeing their first patients at their new location: 2607 Esplanade in Chico. While their collective losses were great, they are poised to be back in business, stronger than ever and providing even more services to their clientele than before.
HAZWOPER TRAINING SUCCESS

James had been unemployed since August of 2018. In November James lost his home in Paradise, CA due to the Campfire. With a family of five and three children under the age of 18 he needed to get back to work as soon as possible. James reached out to Alliance for Workforce Development to see if we could assist him with Hazwoper training so he could help rebuild the town he grew up in. After his training AFWD assisted him with updating his resume and directed him to our Job Fair at Butte College. He met with several potential employers and shortly after had a job offer with PMI Thompson Consulting for $22.50 an hour with benefits, doing Quality Assurance Control in Paradise, CA. Alliance for Workforce Development assisted him with supportive services to obtain work related attire and required steal toe boots. Since he started work James has visited Butte College Hazwoper training class where he has been an inspiration to other Hazwoper students.

Sustainable Employment

Dana initially came to AFWD in February of 2019 and was enrolled as a Dislocated Worker. She lost her Intake Assistance position of 9 years at Feather River Hospital due to the disaster. From one ordinary day to another she was one of the victims affected by the Camp Fire and lost her home and belongings including thousands of others that were affected. Dana never gave up and maintained positive for herself and her family. After an assessment, Dana stated she was fortunate and had an interview with Adventist Health Clinic. She received AFWD assistance with interview clothes and hoping for a sustainable opportunity.

On March 2019, Dana came in to the office to give me wonderful news that she got the position with Adventist Health Clinic as a Patient Access Representative. Everything was falling into the right place for Dana. She was re-assessed and received AFWD assistance with work clothes for her new job. Dana started her full time employment as of March 18, 2019. Dana stated that she is happy and appreciative with the assistance and support that AFWD and will forever be grateful.
Early this year, AFWD had the pleasure of connecting with Chico Fire and Rescue, a small municipal fire department in Butte County. The Chico Fire Department had an opportunity to take on three new hires, fresh graduates from the Fire Academy. These young men could have gone on to any fire department in California and decided to take a great opportunity right here in Chico. AFWD stepped in to support these three individuals and the Chico Fire Department. What a success it has been!

Chico Fire and Rescue is notably outstanding in two key ways. First, the firefighters here are all invested in their productivity to ultimately provide the highest level of fire, rescue and emergency services to the Chico community in a caring and professional manner. Another quite commendable aspect of this organization is their onboarding process. These firefighters don’t just come to the department with an academy diploma and go to work. Chico Fire and Rescue puts them through an eight-week intensive training program that serves to apply what was learned in the academy to real-world circumstances and bolster that knowledge, while educating new hires on the peculiarities of the Chico Metropolitan Area.

Meet the firefighters: Jake Miille (right) came to us as a part time Firefighter Reserve in Red Bluff. He graduated from the Butte College Fire Academy and was seeking full time, self-sufficient employment. Stephen Ross (center) was a part time Paramedic with Enloe Medical Center. He had the goal of becoming a firefighter for many years. Mickey Sensenbach (left), was also a part time Reserve Firefighter, working out of Morro Bay. He had been searching for full time, self-sufficient work in the industry for three years. These gentlemen come from all different geographic regions and walks of life. They bring their experience and resources with them as unique and valuable assets to Chico Fire & Rescue.

All three of these men are glistening with potential and doing very well in their On-the-Job Training program. “It’s a dream that has been 13 years in the making”, exclaimed Stephen during an interview with him. The rigorous training they are receiving will serve them for the entire duration of their 30+ year career, whether they decide to stay on with Chico Fire and Rescue or take their knowledge to another lucky area. Chico Fire and Rescue is going above and beyond to serve these men and all their new firefighters, providing them with the crucial training and experience they need to battle and prevent fire in an area so devastatingly prone to fire calamity. Hats off to Chico Fire and Rescue!
Aaron came to AFWD in July 2018 with an interest in the TJC Wildfire Cleanup program. He had worked briefly at a temporary job in 2018, but prior to that, had not worked since 2015. Aaron’s employment background was in warehouse stocking, food service, and janitorial. Aaron was assessed for TJC placement. A contract was developed for a placement at the State of California Department of Fish & Wildlife. The crew’s primary duty at this location focused on repairing barbed wire fencing destroyed in the LaPorte Wildfire of 2017. After an assessment and a completion of an Economic Analysis showing need, he was provided the required safety gear, in the form of Hardhat, gloves, and safety glasses. In late August, we received word from Fish & Wildlife that they wanted to shut down operations at the site. At the time of the shutdown, there were no TJC sites that Aaron could be transferred to due to his background. However, Aaron had made quite an impression on the Worksite Supervisor and was invited to apply for a permanent position with Fish & Wildlife. Aaron came into the office for job employment and resume assistance. He was enrolled in a Job Search & Placement activity for AJCC staff to provide job search and placement assistance and career counseling, including the provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations, as well as non-traditional employment (Gig employment). He was also enrolled in a Resume Preparation Assistance activity to provide one-on-one instruction on resume and cover letter format, and assistance in the development of both. At the meeting, Aaron was assisted with the paper application by his career center advisor (CCA). The application, indicating an interest in several open positions, was mailed by AFWD on behalf of the client. Aaron was also referred to several landscaping positions, and a tree service position. Online applications were completed for all with CCAs assistance. Client’s comfort level in interviews was also discussed. Aaron indicated he is very comfortable interviewing, rating himself an 8 out of 10. The following week, Aaron contacted his CCA and shared that he had secured an interview with SC Winchester Development, and was hired shortly after. Two weeks later, his CCA contacted Aaron to see how things were going. Aaron indicated that his hours were being cut shorter every week and he really needed to find more stable employment. His ability to travel to Durham was discussed, as there was an opening for a full time worker at Tink Inc. His CCA assisted Aaron with printing the application and completing it successfully. Tink requires applications to be dropped off in person. Client was provided a map with directions. Several days later, his CCA was contacted and informed Aaron was hired. He will be working full time hours, mostly on his feet and inquired about work boot assistance. Aaron came in to meet with his case manager and a request for supportive services was submitted on Aaron’s behalf and approved. The assistance AFWD provided to Aaron has enabled him to secure full time, benefitted employment that could develop into a career with respect to the advancement opportunities that may come available.
Nicole was a job seeker searching for any type of employment to support her daughter in Chico. Her work experience was minimal, yet she had short-term work experience at the Jesus Center in Chico. Her lack of experience had proven itself as a barrier to full-time employment. Nicole had attended a one week Job Readiness class at the new AFWD Inc. America’s Job Center Office Office in Chico. Nicole learned new resume, application and interviewing strategies for the New World of Work.

Soon after the class ended she created new job search goals for herself. She quickly submitted her resume for a full-time Office Admin Clerk at United States Thermal-Electric Consortium Inc. (USTC) in Chico. Nicole was eager to utilize her new job seeker strategies and successfully interviewed for the position and was immediately selected. On September 10, 2018 she was enrolled in the Adult Program and participated in the On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program.

Nicole had successfully shown how eager she was to learn new skills and apply them to her new position at USTC. On September 24, 2018, according to her supervisor, Nicole had made an immediate impact in her position. Supervisor stated how quickly she learned new skills and applied them to her position. Nicole quickly became part of the USTC team.

Nicole’s OJT ended on February 11, 2019 and according to her supervisor, Nicole was able to be successfully trained in nearly all of her core indicators listed on her OJT evaluation. Supervisor repeatedly stated that Nicole has played a vital part of their sales team due to her ability to full-fill orders on their Amazon account. Supervisor stated Nicole will continue to learn new skills and meet any challenges she’ll face.

A little fun story from the Disaster Recovery Center...

The rains had slowed as I exited my car Friday December 14 and crossed the parking lot to work my shift at the Disaster Recovery Center in Chico. I was looking down to avoid the puddles when I noticed a glimmer from the crack in the asphalt. I picked up the object I could tell it was a gold emblem from a college graduation keepsake. and on closer inspection I saw it said Amber University. My first thought was someone that lost everything in the fire then lost a precious sentimental item while they sought assistance. I made a stop that evening at my daughter Kelsey’s house and we did a more thorough examination of the emblem with a good light (and better eyes than mine) we could see it had been inscribed with first Initial the last name and MA 98. We had quite a bit to go on now. Kelsey posted a picture of it on Facebook and it was quickly shared many times, eventually someone tagged Amberton University.

Three days later Dr. Melinda Reagan President of Amberton University messaged Kelsey and she promised to research the information that she’d provided from the back of the necklace and she thought she knew someone that might know the owner of the necklace. The Holidays slowed everything down but on January 3, 2019, Brigette Cockrum came to the AFWD table at the DRC where I was doing a shift and asked for me. Brigette is a FEMA employee from Texas working the Disaster Recovery Center. Brigitte was so excited to get her necklace back which she said she wore all the time. We were both very amazed at how this happened and a little giddy with the outcome.

Brigette has since headed back home to Texas with her favorite necklace.
Manny came to Alliance for Workforce Development via Butte County Probation and the Butte County Office of Education/Career Technical Education Instructor for the Welding Academy. At this first meeting, he was very discouraged and had a difficult time maintaining eye contact. Manny has some barriers to employment, not only legally but in how he processes information. He had not worked in several years, but had a huge desire to gain skills to become employed full time, so that he was a successful help-mate to his spouse, and a positive role model for his young daughter. He met with a Career Center Advisor for AFWD and was determined eligible for Class Room Training assistance for the Welding Academy. In addition, the CCA reached out to the other entities that Manny was receiving assistance from to coordinate efforts for all to help him be successful. These included his Behavioral Health Counselor, who monitored Manny’s training by meeting with him at the Welding Academy weekly, and also speaking with his training instructor to make sure that Manny was on target for completion. The LIFE Skills Lab Case Manager with Butte County Dept. of Employment and Social Services (DESS) met with Manny twice a week to go over his bookwork, help him with exam questions, create flash cards for memory retention, and to provide encouragement. The last partner was Manny’s Employment Case Manager (ECM) through DESS, who also kept tabs on Manny’s progress, monitored his family and home needs and encourage him.

Manny completed the Welding Technology program, and graduated with his Certificate of Achievement. His whole demeanor had changed! Within two days of graduation, he had a list of local Welding Shops and Fabricators, had met with Resource Staff and created a resume, and was ready to job search. He found full time, employment with RPA Welding in Oroville, and was then placed into an On the Job Training Program.

Not all clients require such in-depth collaboration of partnering agencies. But when it is required, it is nice to know we all work together for a common goal – the best interest and employment objectives for the client!
The Youth Staff at Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) are continuously working to find new ways to help the young adults in our communities. Effective staff development opportunities are an excellent way to facilitate innovative programming. Good communication with a client is key. On March 14th and 15th, the staff were treated to an excellent presentation by Butte County Probation staff. Officers Lucas Russell, Che Nelms and Acting Assistant Deputy Chief Melissa Romero enlightened staff on Motivational Interviewing (MI). MI is an interviewing technique that allows staff to assist the client to reframe the changes that need to be made and come up with their own steps to their goal. This style technique helps the clients know they create their own path and destiny and empowers them to continue with positive strides. This counseling approach was developed by clinical psychologists William R. Miller and Stephen Rollnick, with the purpose of being more focused and goal directed. During those two days of training, staff was able to put their lessons to action by working with each other to see firsthand how M.I. techniques works with clients.

AFWD staff continue to work with Butte County Probation to ensure a strong partnership for our clients. By sharing effective communication techniques, clients are better served in achieving their long-term goals.
On the morning of November 8, 2018, a fire erupted on Camp Creek Road. In a matter of minutes it spread to the neighboring communities of Concow, Paradise and Magalia. The fire was moving so fast it spread a football field a second, destroying Paradise and most of Magalia. Ridgeview High School was one of the schools that were destroyed. Trevor Allard was a student at Ridgeview High School the morning of the fire. He knew it was a serious fire when they evacuated the entire school. After weeks of being evacuated, Ridgeview partnered with the Boys and Girls Club of Chico to set up a temporary school facility at their Chico location. Trevor also met with Youth Career Advisors from Alliance for Workforce Development Inc.’s (AFWD) Youth Program and was enrolled in December 2018. Trevor continued to attend school through all the chaos and graduated later in December. Trevor was determined to find work in Paradise and be a part of the community rebuilding process. AFWD was able to assist Trevor by helping him create his first resume, acquire interview clothing and learn how to navigate a job interview. On February 6, 2019, Trevor was hired by O’Reilly’s Auto Parts, one of three auto part stores still standing in Paradise. As Trevor obtained his first official employment, he is excited and determined to work his way higher in the O’Reilly’s Auto Parts company while being a part of the community rebuilding process.

Desirae Fargo

We met Desirae the summer of 2018. She came to Alliance for Workforce Development Inc. (AFWD) wanting help in finding employment and completing her high school diploma. Desirae was enrolled into the Youth program and attended the On-the-Job (OJT) Boot Camp. At the beginning of Boot Camp, staff noticed Desirae was quiet, overtly shy and had trouble making eye contact. The third day of Boot Camp, Desirae was taken to a Job Fair where she visited a few employers, handing out her resume and talking to them about the positions they offered. After completing Boot Camp, Desirae was offered an internship with the AFWD Chico office, as a Receptionist, which she accepted. As Desirae settled into her new position, her confidence increased. She greeted customers when they first entered the office and assisted staff as needed. At the end of her internship, Business Service Representative Besser had an employer in need of an office manager and dispatcher. Desirae interviewed and was selected for the position. All Star Towing is now her new work place. Desirae is learning new skills that include dispatching and bookkeeping and is happy to be a part of the All Star Towing team.
Making a Difference

Antonio Rivera was referred to the Youth Program by Probation. He wanted to make a difference in his life and determine what options he had. Antonio has always found a way to provide for his family. Having an entrepreneurial mindset, he sold dogs that he breed. This is what made him perfect for our Workforce Accelerator 6.0 program. The program was explained to him and he was excited to expand his entrepreneurial skills. Antonio was enrolled in the Entrepreneurial Academy through Butte County CTEC and completed the eight-week training class that covered a variety of topics including financial literacy and how to manage your credit. Antonio also completed career assessments and it was determined that he would be a great candidate for the Butte County CTEC Welding Academy. Not surprising, Antonio completed the six-week training which included an unpaid internship. Antonio did such a great job at the internship that he was hired by the company and is currently participating in an On-the-Job training. Antonio has been officially certified to weld through Bruckenstein Welding & Inspection, has completed his Probation, and is on the path to be a contributing member of society.
A Young Success

Karla came to Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc., (AFWD) looking for employment. Karla, a young mother to a beautiful little girl, struggled to make ends meet, having only temporary work. She was looking for a career with security for herself and her daughter. Karla never missed an appointment with her Career Center Advisor (CCA) and she always came into her appointments professionally dressed and ready to interview. After submitting many job applications, she was called for an interview with ThirdLove, where she successfully interviewed and passed a typing test at 47 wpm! ThirdLove is a company that produces and sells women’s undergarments online. Although Karla had many attractive attributes and did an excellent job in her interview, she lacked many of the skills that the employer was looking for in an employee. With the help from her CCA and the Business Service Representative (BSR), AFWD was able to place Karla in an on-the-job Training (OJT) at ThirdLove. During the on-the-job training period, the employer was compensated a portion of her salary and Karla was given consistent feedback on how she was doing and what she needed to work on. Karla successfully completed her 3-month OJT at ThirdLove and continues to be employed full-time earning $13 an hour, as a Customer Experience Associate. She is thankful for the opportunity that both AFWD and ThirdLove provided her with little work experience.
AFWD America’s Job Center of California

Statistics
PY 2018 -2019

Butte County
Total Visitors
25,163

Butte County
Business Services
Businesses Served 804
Services Provided 5,843

AFWD
Total Clients
Enrolled
1,439

Unemployment Rate
(As of: February 2019)
Butte 6.1% Nevada 3.9%
Lassen 6.2% Plumas 12.5%
Modoc 10.9% Sierra 7.8%