Responding to a Crisis: COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic is a public health and economic crisis that has impacted the world, and demands both a global and local response to mitigate. In Rural Northern California, partners in the Government, Private, and Nonprofit sectors have acted quickly to suppress the effects of the pandemic on our community health, regional economy, and local workforce. Alliance for Workforce Development is doing our part by providing crucial services, information, and resources to impacted workers and employers.

On March 19, 2020 California Governor Gavin Newsom issued a Stay at Home Order for all Californians as a measure to curb the spread of the Novel Coronavirus. While employers deemed “essential services” were permitted to remain open, the vast majority of worksites were forced to implement systems that allowed workers to work remotely, or close operations entirely. AFWD has responded by providing Rapid Response services to businesses and employees. These services consolidate information and programs from the State EDD, the Federal Department of Labor, and the Small Business Administration to provide a comprehensive emergency remediation for COVID-19 affected worksites. Using technology tools like web conferencing and web linked document sharing, we are able to safely provide employers and workers the tools and information they need to navigate temporary layoffs and furloughs.

We have updated our website, www.afwd.org, with live links to valuable services for businesses and workers impacted by COVID-19. We have increased the number of staff devoted to our website chat feature, so that customers can communicate with a live Resource Specialist regarding EDD applications, SBA business loans, and other relief programs. We are providing the public with job leads from critical sector employers who are staffing up in response to the crisis. We are utilizing social media to provide the latest information from federal, state and local agencies to our sizeable digital audience.

AFWD is committed to helping our partner businesses and workforce customers navigate this challenging time. By providing access to the services and information our community needs, we will continue to ensure that businesses and workers in Butte, Nevada, Plumas, Lassen, Modoc, and Sierra counties have access to the resources they need to weather this crisis.
Chico 2020 State of the City and Business Summit

On Friday, January 24, 2020 Alliance for Workforce Development Business Service staff joined hundreds of local business owners, community members, and stakeholders for the City of Chico State of the City Address and Business Summit. This annual event, hosted by the City and the Chico Chamber of Commerce, includes a finance update from the City Manager, a Presentation of Business Climate Data from the Chamber of Commerce, and an Economic Snapshot and Forecast provided by Golden Valley Bank.

City Manager Mark Orme and Director of Public Works Brendan Ottoboni provided a Community and Development Update, highlighting the challenges in funding the city’s day-to-day operations and long-term development. Both officials mentioned the priorities, projects and staffing that could be generated by a 1% city-wide sales tax increase, as well updates on road projects, right-of-way issues and development. Orme cited the City’s pension liability as a pressing concern, and Ottoboni made specific mention that $6.5 million in annual funding would maintain the City’s roads to industry standards, while $3.2 million is currently budgeting.

Jolene Francis, Chairperson of the Chamber Board, offered an in depth look at the Chamber’s survey data on business confidence and health. Key points from the Chamber’s perspective included the impact that local crime has on business retention and growth; how the housing crunch, exacerbated by the Camp Fire, is impacting workforce shortage issues; and that supporting business health will be vital to solving the challenges Chico faces.

Mark Francis of Golden Valley Bank offered an economic snapshot and forecast for the City. He warned that while certain economic indicators were up, like active construction and transient occupancy tax; it was important to remember that these metrics are influenced by a temporary influx of cash from Camp Fire insurance settlements and relief funds. On other key metrics, including sales tax generation, and new building permits issued, are trending down. He also highlighted Golden Valley’s comprehensive Business Confidence Survey, which shows a 10.7% decline from one year ago.

AFWD appreciates the efforts of the Chamber, City of Chico Administrators, and Golden Valley Bank, in organizing this annual comprehensive view of the finances and conditions of the City. We will continue to work with our partners in government and the private sector to improve and promote workforce and economic vitality, as we move Chico forward together.
Rising from the Ashes

Alayna came to the AFWD Recovery Center about a year after the Camp Fire. She lost her home and employment in the fire. Since then she had struggled to find employment and housing. Alayna was staying in temporary post-fire housing but finding employment had been a challenge due to the lack of local jobs. Alayna has children and needed a work schedule that allowed flexibility. She was interested in Disaster Recovery work she had seen going on in Paradise but didn’t know how to apply for these positions or how she might be qualified.

AFWD assisted Alayna in obtaining a Temporary Job Creation (TJC) position for the Paradise Alliance Church as a Humanitarian Aid. She works evenings to provide hot meals for Paradise residents and process donations for fire affected individuals. Alayna’s work provides a comfortable environment, hot showers, and laundry facilities for those struggling to rebuild a life in the burn area. This temporary employment has enabled her to be close to her children as well as provide for them in the daytime. Alayna is providing a worthwhile and necessary service to the community.

This position has enabled Alayna’s family to thrive rather than merely survive. They have recently found permanent housing in Paradise, and are deeply involved in the resilient Ridge Community. She is a great example of rising from the ashes for her community.

From Interns to Employees

Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) assisted Northern Valley Catholic Social Services by recruiting Disaster Case Managers through our National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) Internship program. During the course of the internships, AFWD subsidized 100% of the employees’ wages while they received training on how to support community members recovering from the Camp Fire. Training included how to navigate resources for urgent needs such as housing, food, medical care, social services, and how to navigate numerous processes such as working with permits and insurance companies.

AFWD’s NDWG Internship program was able to meet NVCSS’s hiring needs while they were waiting on additional funding from FEMA. Without AFWD’s assistance, critical DCM positions would not have been filled and crucial pre-scheduled training would have been missed. AFWD provided two full time interns and one part time intern, the latter being a survivor herself.

The partnership between AFWD and NVCSS has been extremely successful with both full-time interns being hired on directly to NVCSS. The part time intern is still working on her training and is expected to be hired on at a later date. We look forward to building on our partnership and supporting NVCSS and their training needs in the future.
AFWD and Chico Chamber Celebrate Local Business Leaders

On January 16, 2020 Alliance for Workforce Development Business Service staff attended the 82nd annual Chico Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner, held at the Sierra Nevada Brewing Big Room. This night is historically both a reflective and seminal event, as the Chico Business Community thanks the past year’s Chamber Officers and Directors and welcomes the new Board to a year of service and advocacy. It is also an opportunity for AFWD and other Chamber partners to celebrate the significant achievements of individuals who have made contributions to business health and growth in our area. Awards are given in areas of business advocacy and contribution to the community.

This year’s honored recipients included:

**The Ted Hubert Memorial Scholarship** - Jesse Saavedra, Boys & Girls Club of the North Valley

**The 2019 Chairman’s Award** - Assemblyman Jim Gallagher

**Young Professional of the Year Award** - Gabe Eggen, Northstate Powersports

**Community Service Award** - Sierra Grossman, Sierra Nevada Brewing

**Business Advocate of the Year Award** - Butte Community College (Accepted by Butte College President, Samia Yaqub, Ph.D.)

**Jeanne Posey Business Woman of the Year Award** - Laura Urseny, Chico Enterprise Record

**J. Pat Lappin Award for Business Excellence** - Rodney Krebs, Coldwell Banker DuFour Realty

**The 2019 Legacy Award** - In Honor of Steve and Kathy Nettleton (Accepted by Dave McAlister on behalf of the Nettleton Family)

The theme of this year’s event was “Moving Chico Forward”. As a Visionary Partner to the Chico Chamber, AFWD is proud of our partnerships with the Chamber and its members, that help promote that ideal. “Everything around you, from the car you drive to the clothes on your back, are the result of a successful business.” said Chamber Chair and Enloe Hospital Executive Jolene Francis, in her address to the dinner’s attendees. We couldn’t agree more, and we look forward to helping businesses succeed in 2020.
Paying it Forward

Custom Granite and Tile is located in Oroville and specializes in granite fabrication and installation for residential and commercial projects. They have been providing service in Butte County for over 40 years. Recently, Alliance for Workforce Development was contacted by Custom Tile and Granite’s new Chief Financial Officer and General Manager, Christopher Fox.

Chris was a former AFWD client, who first came to us as a jobseeker in 2019. At that time, Chris was facing some barriers to employment, as he had little work experience and had been involved with the justice system. AFWD initially helped Chris secure a temporary position with the Butte Environmental Council, then later placed him in a permanent position through our On-the-Job Training (OJT) program. Having gained valuable work experience as an OJT participant, Chris set his sights higher and landed a management position with Custom Granite and Tile.

To meet growing business demands, Chris recognized the need to increase Custom Granite and Tile’s workforce. Grateful for the opportunities he was provided through AFWD, he thought, “I want to offer other’s the amazing second chance I was given.” Chris called his former AFWD Career Advisor who put him in touch with a Business Service Representative to discuss Custom Tile and Granite’s workforce needs. Chris was specifically interested in hiring enrolled OJT candidates who had been justice involved. This was welcome news as AFWD prepares to launch Butte County’s pilot Prison to Employment program later this year. In the meantime, we went over the OJT programs we currently have to offer and began sending our interested candidates to Custom Tile and Granite for interview.

Chris selected one of the candidates enrolled in the Skills Training Employment Program (STEP) as Custom Tile and Granite’s first OJT. Keith Wallis was hired as a Master Setter’s Apprentice and is now receiving valuable training in this trade.

As AFWD continues to recruit for Custom Tile and Granite, we sincerely appreciate Chris’s “Pay it Forward” attitude.
Rapid Response—Kmart Chico

On January 23rd the Rapid Response team from Alliance for Workforce Development was onsite at the Chico Kmart store as it conducted one of its final days of business. AFWD staff provided information on retraining and job placement services to approximately 90 Kmart Employees as part of our Rapid Response Program. The AFWD team invited Recruiters from Weiss McNair and Lulus.com to meet Kmart staff and promote job openings. The California Employment Development Workforce Services Branch provided specialists to answer questions and share information on Unemployment Insurance claims.

These kinds of comprehensive Rapid Response events are possible with strong community partnerships and proactive store management. While the Kmart staff continued to provide customer service to clearance shoppers, long-time Chico Kmart Manager Michelle Simmons strolled through her store encouraging her staff to take time out to come talk to representatives from AFWD, the EDD, Lulus.com and Weiss McNair.

Since the Kmart Rapid Response event, AFWD staff have connected with several Kmart employees to assist them with resumes, interview skills, job opportunities, and unemployment benefits. AFWD is grateful to the Kmart management team, as well as our partners at the EDD, Lulus.com, and Weiss McNair, for making this important service possible.

DESS Partnership Workshops

In January of 2020, AFWD began partnering with Butte County to provide employability workshops at the Department of Employment and Social Services (DESS) Chico Office at 765 East Avenue. On the 2nd Wednesday of the month, we present a Resume and Interview Workshop. On the 4th Wednesday, we present a Workshop from the New World of Work 21st Century Employability Skill series.

The Resume/Interview workshop covers the three types of resumes: Chronological, Functional, and Combination; as well as information on which is style is most effective for a given individual or industry. The interview portion covers the interview process from submitting resume or application, through the post-interview waiting period. Topics include appropriate questions to ask during an interview, what to wear, and how to follow up with an employer.

The New World of Work 21st Century Skills curriculum was developed by leaders in the California Community College System to instill soft skills that employers report as valuable in the workplace. In January, we offered a course on Self-Awareness. In February, we offered a workshop on Adaptability. Future workshops will include Digital Fluency, Empathy, Social Diversity, Communication, and several other employability skills. These courses are also offered bimonthly in Oroville at the DESS Building, 78 Table Mountain Blvd., and at AFWD the Chico Office, 500 Cohasset Rd. Suite 30. With these three locations, AFWD is able bring these valuable skills to the widest possible range of Butte County workers.
From Blue Light Specials to BMW’s

Nathan applied to AFWD after graduating from Paradise High School. He was needing assistance with registering and paying for college. He was working part-time at Kmart in Paradise but wanted to pursue the Automotive Technology program at Butte College.

With the help and guidance of his CCA, Nathan registered for the Automotive Technology program believing he would be able to finish in less than one year. As he neared the end of the Certificate required classes, the class requirements changed and he found he would need to attend for an additional year. Then the Camp Fire burned through Paradise leaving Nathan without a home and without his part-time job. He and his family secured housing in Chico and Nathan, despite the setback he was able to keep up with his studies, maintaining a 3.90 GPA.

In December, 2019, Nathan graduated from the Automotive Technology program with his AS Degree and two months later he landed a job with Courtesy Motors BMW in Chico as an Automotive Technician. Courtesy Motors plans to send Nathan to Southern California for additional training at a BMW Technician School.

When asked how the AFWD program helped him, Nathan said, “I would say the program helped me a lot with being able to go to school and afford my books and tuition in some cases, in times which I would not be able to do otherwise. It allowed me to go from a regular job to starting a career and follow my goals. I was also put through the mock interviews which always helps. Overall I was kept on track and allowed to achieve what I set out to all because of your guys' help!”

Persistence and Dedication Pays Off

Esmith Conklin came into the AFWD Oroville One Stop Center looking for employment. She has a language barrier, as English is her second language. She was dedicated to her job search. As a resource specialist for AFWD, Jenn Murdock, helped Esmith in creating a resume and applying for multiple positions online, one of them being for Walmart.

Within a month Esmith was called to an interview at Walmart for the Produce Department Associate position. She came into the Oroville One Stop Center to practice her interview skills. She completed the interview and was hired as a Produce Department Associate, Level 4, earning $14.10/hour working part-time. Esmith was ecstatic!

After Esmith completed her 90 day probation period, she was hired on full-time and received a raise, earning $16.47/hour, with health benefits and retirement. Esmith was successful in reaching her goal to find full-time employment with benefits.
Batting a 1000

In the post Camp Fire rebuild efforts, the demand for trades workers has been increasingly high in Butte County. This has left many local employers scrambling to find qualified employees. Table Mountain Cabinets & Fixtures was no exception. Located in Chico, California, Table Mountain has been designing and manufacturing custom cabinets since 2000.

Having heard of Alliance for Workforce Development from a colleague, Owner Randy Nazaretta decided to give us a call. Table Mountain Cabinets needed qualified cabinet builders and installers ASAP. Randy called a Business Service Representative who explained the recruitment and training services we offer. With the resources at our disposal, it wasn’t long before we came up with our first qualified candidate. Jonathan Miller had the experience they were looking for and was hired immediately as a Cabinet Installer.

Table Mountain also needed a CNC Operator. AFWD continued searching for candidates the necessary technical skills. As CNC Operation is an in-demand and short-supply skill in our area, our recruitments did not produce immediate results. However, we were able to come up with a candidate from our Resume Database who lacked experience in cabinetry, but had some transferable skills. Jonathan Wortham was enrolled in our program as a Dislocated Worker, having recently become unemployed by the closure of Milestone Technologies. He had computer skills and enjoyed woodworking as a hobby.

Open to training the right person and with the help of AFWD’s On-the-Job Training program, Table Mountain Cabinets decided to give this candidate a try. Now, a month into his training, Jonathan is thoroughly enjoying his new position and Table Mountain Cabinets couldn’t be happier with his performance and commitment to learning this new trade. At our one-month meeting to monitor Jonathan’s training progress, Randy told his Business Service Representative, “So far you are batting 1000, both candidates hired through AFWD have been great!”

2020 is a year of renewal!

Oroville Area Chamber of Commerce and Sierra Pacific Industries partnered to hold the first Chamber Mixer of 2020. It was a perfect opportunity for SPI to celebrate 20 years in Oroville, and the opening of their beautiful new Sawmill. Butte County representatives along with City of Oroville dignitaries and 60 community and Chamber members attended the event. There was an abundance of food, networking and organized tours of the new office and sawmill.

Sierra Pacific Industries is a third-generation family-owned forest product company that manages over two million acres of timberland in California and Washington. They invest heavily in the communities where they work and live. The Sierra Pacific Foundation has demonstrated its commitment to Growing Healthy Communities by contributing nearly $10 million dollars to nonprofit organizations and public education throughout California, Washington and Wisconsin. The foundation has donated over $7 million in education scholarships. SPI is also a leader in sustainable forestry, growing a wide array of native trees and shrubs in their forests, which creates thousands of acres of wildlife habitat.
Chance Meeting Turns in to a Partnership

AFWD staff met Jason Teixeira, Vice President of Sel-Tech, at the Grow Manufacturing Expo October 2019. Business Service Representative Sandy Wangberg spoke with Jason at the Expo about hiring assistance that AFWD could offer as his company grows. Jason invited Wangberg for a tour of Sel-Tech’s Chico plant to get a clearer understanding of his business and his personnel needs.

Sel-tech is a precision manufacturer for the aerospace industry. Sel-Tech’s advanced processes and technology allows them to produce components with the accuracy and repeatability required for aircraft manufacturing. Sel-tech has produced parts and systems for many different aircraft models and is capable of both production and prototype manufacturing.

A month or so after the tour, Jason contacted Wangberg regarding a recent CSU graduate that he was considering for hire. This individual had classroom training, but no real-world experience with CNC programing and operation. BSR Wangberg created a Job Specific Skills Inventory for the position of CNC Press Break Operator, using job criteria provided by Jason. A preliminary evaluation of the candidate, using these skill metrics, determined that he needed training to be able to do the job successfully. Sel-tech was offered an On-the-Job Training (OJT) to help offset the cost of training the new hire. The OJT process assists employers in monitoring an employee’s progress and provides structure and insight into the training process.

In February of 2020, BSR Wangberg was able to assist Sel-Tech with a second OJT placement. This time the candidate was an individual who had recently been laid off from the autobody repair industry and was classified as a Dislocated Worker. Jason felt the candidate had some good basic shop skills but would need extensive training to become a precision aerospace metal worker. Wangberg created a Job Skills Inventory for the position of Assembly Technician, and it was determined that the candidate did meet the “need for training” criteria of an OJT.

Both placements are doing extremely well, and Sel-tech has proven to be an exceptional training site and employer. AFWD is proud to partner with a Butte County company working on the cutting edge of aerospace technology, and to assist in creating exciting career pathways for two local members of the workforce.
Sheyenne has just graduated as a Registered Nurse with help from Alliance for Workforce Development. Prior to going to nursing school, she worked as a receptionist at a chiropractic office, but wanted to do more in the healthcare industry. Talking to family and friends in the medical field she determined that becoming a Registered nurse would be the best fit for her. She self-enrolled into the RN Program at Butte College, where she learned about AFWD’s assistance with Vocational Training Programs. Once she learned that we would be able to assist her with books and supplies through our WIOA programs, she knew without a doubt that she could complete her schooling.

Sheyenne maintained an “A” average throughout her RN Training. She passed her clinicals and enjoyed the different sites that she worked at. Upon completing her courses, she had a Pinning Ceremony (pictured to the right). After Pinning, she still had one more obstacle to overcome, to take and pass her State Board NCLEX Examination. She was very nervous but with study materials provided by AFWD and intensive preparation she felt confident. She took the exam and passed with flying colors.

Sheyenne recently gained a position as an RN at Vitalant, a nonprofit organization that provides blood, plasma and services across the United States. She is proud of what she does because she helps to save lives.

Ian Lynn came to Alliance for Workforce Development in 2019 seeking work. He had just graduated with a degree in sustainable manufacturing, but didn’t have any work experience under his belt. Ian was having trouble finding work in his field of study and was seeking assistance. AFWD had the opportunity to assist Ian with a very successful On-the-Job Training program and into a stellar career with Sel-Tech.

Ian’s degree and his transferrable skills were perfect for the CNC Machinist occupation, but extensive hands on training was necessary to promote his success in a real-world application of his studies. Sel-Tech took Ian under their wing and he caught on quickly with a training plan supplied by a WIOA On The Job Training grant.

Now, Ian is excelling at his job and loves coming to work every morning. He has even begun developing training programs for new staff to learn the machining processes that Sel-Tech applies! We are so very proud of Ian’s hard work and dedication. He has truly embarked on a rewarding career.
From Trainee to Business Owner!

John Chiatovich came into the Alliance for Workforce Development Chico AJCC in July 2015. He was job searching after having been laid off from his previous job a year prior. He met with a Resource Specialist from AFWD and was referred to a position with Ace Plumbing for general construction and Plumber Trainee. While John had a lot of transferable skills, especially in construction, he wasn’t well versed in plumbing. John interviewed with the employer and was hired through an On-the-Job-Training (OJT) program.

John and completed his six-month training successfully in January 2016. Ace Plumbing was extremely pleased with how quickly John learned and grew as a tradesman under tutelage of a Master Plumber and the training program created by AFWD.

Due to this training and hands on experience, John was able to branch out on his own, obtaining his CA Contractors License. As of 2019 he started his own small business, providing remodel and new construction. John has now come full circle and has reached out to AFWD to help facilitate hiring new employees to help him, and committing to providing On the Job Training to the right candidate.

Reaching Goals

Douglas was enrolled into Alliance for Workforce Development Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs in December 2019. At that time, Douglas was homeless and staying at the Torres Shelter in Chico. His goal was to become employed and find housing. He had barriers including a lack of transportation, and no support system to rely on for assistance.

When Douglas met with an AFWD Career Center Advisor (CCA), they discussed what type of employment he was interested in. Douglass conveyed that he wanted to do something with his hands that helped others. His CCA helped Douglas apply for Unemployment Benefits, and he was able to buy a bike for transportation. Within a few months was able to save up enough to buy a car and purchase his own car insurance.

Douglas’ life had begun to move in the right direction, thanks to involvement with AFWD and collaboration with a CCA. With assistance he revised his resume, created cover letters, and practiced interviewing. He spent many days in the AFWD Computer Resource Center researching open positions and applying for jobs. He completed Interest Profilers to get a better understanding of the jobs he might like to do.

After submitting several applications, and attending a few interviews, Douglas has secured a position with Tompkins Tree Service. He now is employed full-time, and is working on stable housing for himself. He is a very determined hard worker and completes what he sets his mind to. We are confident that Douglas will continue on the right path and will eventually be in his own place and become successful in anything he does.
Beautiful Goals

Kimberly joined AFWD’s youth program in April of 2019. She was looking for assistance in obtaining her general education diploma along with career planning and finding employment. When Kimberly met with her Career Center Advisor she had a goal of becoming a cosmetologist. Kimberly wanted to work part-time while she attended school. She received assistance in creating a resume and searching for part-time employment. Soon she received a referral to Big Al’s Drive-In where she interviewed and gained part time employment. Kimberly’s CCA helped her in choosing a school that would work with her new schedule. Kimberly was referred to Oroville Adult Education where she was able take her classes while working part-time. Kimberly then received assistance with the purchase of her GED exam, which she passed with flying colors. After obtaining financial assistance with applying to Butte College’s Cosmetology program, she is now ready to start her schooling in Cosmetology.


Alexandra Braswell came to Alliance for Workforce Development’s Youth Program in October 2018, searching for assistance to reach her goal of obtaining a high school equivalency.

A Youth Career Center Advisor (CCA) informed Alexandra about the HiSET, a High School Equivalency Test, that is offered through Oroville Adult School. Alexandra passed her HiSET in December 2018 with study assistance from her CCA. After completing her HiSET, Alexandra decided to job search. She received resume assistance from Youth CCA. Alexandra and her daughter relocated to Sacramento County, as that is where she considers home. Alexandra quickly obtained a full time position with benefits at Red Hawk Casino.

Alexandra has expressed gratitude toward AFWD’s assistance and stated, “The [Youth] program was helpful and helped me obtain one of my goals. I would have stayed in the program if I did not receive an employment offer.” Alexandra has successfully exited the Youth Program.


Keeping a Positive Attitude!

Joe Andre frequents the Chico AFWD, Inc., resource center for job search services. Joe is a very bright and positive person, often giving words of encouragement to other job seekers in the resource computer lab. He has lots of work experience and skills from many different areas in the workforce, and is currently a substitute teacher in Paradise. Lately Joe has been on the lookout for a part-time job that can work with his schedule and supplement his income.

With the help and assistance of the resource team, Joe receives copies of his resume on professional parchment paper, gets documents scanned into his USB drive to compliment the positions he has applied for, and gets professional input on cover letters and resume updates for specific jobs from AFWD Resource Staff.

Recently Joe applied for the Census Bureau and has been offered a position. He will be starting at $18 per hour this Spring and is very excited and happy to have this job opportunity, as this will supplement his teaching position. Joe will continue seeking full time employment in the district he is substituting, with the assistance of AFWD staff and its available job search resources.

Keeping at it!

Joseph Carlucci has been accessing resource services at the Butte County Employment Center in Chico for many years. He had moved to Walnut Creek, but after returning to Chico in April of 2019 he was once again searching for employment. Joseph received assistance from AFWD Resource Specialist, Jane Haberman, to assist him with his resume development. After it was completed he was assisted with an application for Goodwill in Chico, which he had been working with in Walnut Creek. Goodwill was conveniently located downstairs from the Butte County Employment Center in Chico, so it was quite convenient. After securing that position, he was still looking for opportunities that would give him more hours.

Joseph obtained employment with Taco Bell and was able to work enough hours to buy a car. He was still interested in increasing his income. He once again checked in with Jane, where his resume was submitted to an AFWD Business Service Representative for a position as a Shelter Monitor at the Torres Shelter. He secured an interview and came in professionally dressed to get his resume printed up and checked in for a pep talk. The Torres Shelter was happy to hire him and Joseph started his full-time employment in February. Way to go Joseph!
A Fresh Start

Valarie Murray, a Campfire Survivor and former employee of Feather River Hospital, decided she needed to make a career change and a fresh start after the Campfire permanently closed her place of business. She needed a reasonable salary and health benefits, because her husband has health and is unable to work. After a long career as an LVN, she wanted to move into a new field with upward mobility.

When Valarie visited the Oroville AFWD resource center, she received assistance from Resource Specialist, Corina Sansone. With Corina’s assistance, Valarie’s transferable skills and experience were identified, such as scheduling, medical records, insurance, supplies and inventory were used to revamp her resume into one more suited to Office Management.

Accompanied by her newly revamped resume, interview practice and encouragement, Valarie felt confident and motivated, where she applied for several office management positions in Butte County. She attended several interviews and even though she wasn’t hired right away she knew she was evolving for the better and did not give up. She finally aced her interview with Valor Oncology, a new radiology company in Chico, and was hired on as the Office Manager. She recently passed her probation period and is now making $31.50 an hour! with full benefits!

Building Resiliency Center

Monday January 27, 2020 the Building Resiliency Center (BRC) in Paradise CA. opened to the public. This center provides one-stop shop services for the residents of Paradise looking to rebuild within town limits. The Town of Paradise Building Department has relocated to the center, along with agency partners who are assisting with the recovery effort, providing one-stop service to Paradise Ridge property owners and builders.

Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) has been hard at work behind the scenes to assist the Town of Paradise in opening the BRC. The location had sustained damage in the fire and required extensive cleanup and repairs. Through our Temporary Job Creation program (TJC) we were able to provide manpower to the Town of Paradise for renovation of the site.

The Temporary Job Creation program (TJC) assist individuals who have been affected due to the Camp Fire, with a temporary job to help them get back on their feet. In this case, AFWD was able to utilize the TJC program to provide work crews to assist in the clean-up and repair of the BRC. This included landscaping for the exterior, as well as restoration work inside due to fire damage.

Rebuild Advocates are available at the BRC to residents of the Town of Paradise and Butte County to help navigate the rebuild process, and to guide people through permits, code compliance and other issues. They can also help navigate financial resources available to make rebuilding more affordable such as finding affordable loans and soliciting bids from contractors.
Paradise Irrigation District Recognizes Alliance for Workforce Development

On January 31st, Alliance for Workforce Development, received a beautifully framed Resolution from the Paradise Irrigation District Board of Supervisors, expressing their sincere gratitude and appreciation for AFWD’s assistance in the recovery and rebuilding efforts of its water distribution system.

Through AFWD’s National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) and Temporary Job Creation (TJC) program, AFWD has provided 20 TJC workers and two Interns to assist PID in the clean-up and repair of their water system throughout the Town of Paradise. To date, these crews have performed over 9,500 hours of work repairing meters, valves, water lines, and assisted PID customers with answering questions and providing guidance through the rebuild process. AFWD TJC crews have also benefited from this partnership by learning valuable skills in the maintenance and repair of the town’s water system which has led to six TJC workers receiving offers of employment directly with PID.

It continues to be a great honor and privilege to partner with Paradise Irrigation District (PID) and support their recovery efforts.

The second “Together We Rise” outreach hosted by Paradise Ridge Chamber of Commerce took place in January. Both the Paradise Ridge Chamber of Commerce and partner agencies visited more than 50 businesses on the Ridge to hear about their successes and challenges and to offer support and resources.

In January, Alliance for Workforce Development staff from the Camp Fire Recovery Team gathered with other members of the Paradise Ridge Chamber of Commerce to visit businesses that have come back to the community. It was great to see companies returning to the Ridge and reopening businesses.

Some of the barriers they are having to overcome are the Public Safety Power Shutoffs and the cost of generators, building their customer base back up, access to internet when power is out, and finding employees. Each business contacted was given valuable community resource information, including information from AFWD, to point them in the right direction on the road to recovery. All the owners and workers are excited to be back in their new or repaired buildings and we all look forward to seeing more of the neighboring businesses return as the community rebuilds.
Butte County

One-Stop Visitors: 17510

Businesses Served: 965

Business Services: 12472

AFWD

Clients Enrolled: 788

Unemployment Rate (As of: February 2020) 5.5%

Chico Community Employment Center
500 Cohasset Rd., Ste. 30
Chico CA 95926
(530) 961-5125

Camp Fire Recovery Team
1600 Mangrove Ave., Ste. 115
Chico CA 95926
(530) 616-1053

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