



Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc.  
April 1, 2011-June 30, 2011

**Butte County Operations Update**

The Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. spent the better part of this past quarter assessing operations, meeting with job seekers and businesses to ensure WIA services were provided to the extent possible.

Experienced WIA staff, including employees from the previous service provider, looked at each client file and worked diligently to meet the needs of clients in most need of WIA services.

AFWD's goal is to continue to provide job seekers with access to employment and training opportunities as well as providing our employers with links to qualified applicants. All of our efforts are geared towards workforce development, economic vitality, and a stable and prosperous business community throughout Butte County.

We anticipate hiring of WIA staff and resuming WIA services after July 1, 2011.

Additional activities included:

- Working with Chico State University on the eligibility portion of their CalGrip grant.
- New staff training continues
- Working with EDD on dislocated worker services
- Conducted orientation to WIA services for dislocated workers at the Baldwin Ave location
- Continued coordination with Chico State University-Sustainable Manufacturing Program and the Challenge Grant

We finalized the details of WIA operations in Butte County. We anticipate resuming WIA services and One Stop operations on or before September 1, 2011. A big Thank You to Butte County and to the

Department of Employment and Social Services for the assistance with One Stop services since March 1, 2011. We value the partnership and look forward to working together in the future.

Our appreciation to the Employment Development Department, specifically Teri Thompson and Diana Barry. They were instrumental in establishing services at the Baldwin Ave location in Oroville, CA to assist dislocated workers.

## **AB 118 Implementation Alternative and Renewable Energy Training**

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. attended an event at [Transfer Flow, Inc.](#) in Chico, CA on May 26th which launched Northern California's Propane Conversion and Installation Training Program. The event was a huge success. Transfer Flow is a high-tech, modern manufacturing company which has operated in Butte County for the past twenty-seven years. With many experienced staff and new state-of-the-art manufacturing facility, they specialize in fuel system conversions and auxiliary fuel tanks for RV's, vans and fleet vehicles.

Transfer Flow, Inc. has partnered with NoRTEC, Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc., California Employment Development Department and California Energy Commission's Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technologies Program (ARFVTP) to provide this program. Presenters at the event included Roush, Ferrelgas, Calstart, Union Leasing, Butte County's Chief Administrative Officer, Paul Hahn, and Ben Winter, Transfer Flow's Project Manager.

Training programs began June 27<sup>th</sup> and will return July 18<sup>th</sup>, July 25<sup>th</sup> and August 8<sup>th</sup>. Businesses and individuals will gain hands on experience and training to complete propane conversions and fuel tank retrofits. The benefits of liquid propane as opposed to gasoline include reduced emissions to the environment and costs savings to the consumer or business. The training is certified by the National Alternative Fuels Training Consortium.

Outreach is underway throughout the NoRTEC region. We are pleased to be part of this exciting program and will follow up with further information in later CC Reports.

[Register](#) now for the alternative fuel training program. To date, 52 participants are enrolled in the training program.



# Business Services

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) continues to provide services using the business first philosophy, as embraced by the Northern California Rural Training and Employment Consortium, NoRTEC. The business first approach places the highest priority on serving the human resource needs of small businesses.

Below is a brief summary of activities over the past three months:

- Assisted PG&E with recruiting for trainings at the CleanTech Innovation Center.
- Continued outreach to elected officials in Butte County, City of Chico and City of Oroville.
- Assisted City of Gridley with laborshed maps for potential new business.
- Assisted City of Chico with laborshed maps for potential new business.
- Working with the City of Chico, members of City Council, Chico Chamber of Commerce on how AFWD could assist with the implementation of the ED strategy. The final ED report for the City of Chico can be accessed [here](#).
- Recruiting for an open position with the City of Gridley.
- Rapid Response services to the Leo Chesney Women's prison (in coordination with Sutter County), and the Chico Hallmark store.
- Met with eRecology about their future plans.
- In discussions with Matt McLean at Bender Brothers for future workforce needs.
- Assisting BCM on Stapleton Spence Solar Project workforce needs.
- Placed an OJT at Green Construction, Transfer Flow, Inc., and Springboard Biodiesel.
- Partnered with Butte College on Green Building Training classes held May 2-5. Worked with 34 participants in this training.
- Partnering with the City of Oroville on a Youth Build project. More to come in next quarter's CC Report.

## Innovation Lab Updates

### What is the Innovation Lab?

The Innovation Lab, located in the Hegan Lane Business Park in Chico, anchors the North State iHub. Established with seed funding from the Governor's Green Innovation Challenge Grant, the iHub and Innovation Lab help businesses with new and scalable innovative products and services to grow and remain viable in the North State by:

- Accelerating technology commercialization
- Providing nontraditional capital and professional expertise
- Deploying new technologies in the green sector
- The Innovation Lab offers a network of expertise encompassing local university support, connections to outside research institutions, and management and investment resources specializing in fast-growth companies, as well as a physical space and equipment.
- The Year End Report for activities at the Innovation Lab can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

## Lab Opens for Business

Funding pitches by North State start-ups and an Emerging Product Showcase highlighted the Innovation Lab's ribbon cutting and grand opening on Thursday, May 12.

The activities began at 4:00pm when "Start-Up Sensations" made their pitches to a panel of investors. This activity was sponsored by Wavepoint Ventures.

The ribbon cutting followed the "business pitch" panel and was hosted by the Chico Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by CEPCO. Featured guests included:

- Doug Hoffner, Undersecretary, California Labor & Workforce Development Agency
- Joel Ayala, Executive Director of Governor's Office of Economic Development
- Peter Gardner, Partner, Wavepoint
- Dr. Glenda Humiston, State Director, USDA

A reception followed with local companies on hand to share their new products at the Emerging Product Showcase—a sort of "science fair for grown-ups." The showcase is a mix of new and established companies, all with new products or services to present.





**Chico Bag**  
 Located: **Chico**  
 Started: **2005**  
 Product: **Reusable Bags**  
 Employees: **31**  
[www.chicobag.com](http://www.chicobag.com)

In 2004, Andy Keller used ChicoBag™ founder, tool straps to the local landfill after spending the day landscaping his backyard. He was frustrated by what he saw. Single-use bags were readily the dominant article of the landfill that day. Wondering for the landscape in a few days of water and huge plastic. On his way home he began to notice plastic bags everywhere, caught in trees and on fence posts, half buried in gutter patches and blowing in the streets like when hurricanes. That day Andy vowed to stop using single-use bags. Inspired, Andy dropped a few bucks on a second hand sewing machine and began sewing what would ultimately become the first ChicoBag™ brand reusable bag.

Andy understood that a reusable bag was only valuable if it was reused. To lower his challenge was larger than designing any ordinary reusable bag - ChicoBag™ had to be designed to be unrecognizable. It needed to be small enough to fit in a pocket and have features that allowed it to fly anywhere. After countless hours, fabric and prototypes the Original ChicoBag™ brand reusable bag, complete with an integrated staff pocket and attached carabiner, was born. Andy's ChicoBag™ brand reusable bags were first sold in 2005 on Earth Day at the Farmers Market in Chico, CA. Today, ChicoBag™ sells bags in all 50 states, as well as several countries overseas. It has a national in Chico, CA and employs more than 30 local residents.

**Andy Keller**  
 President - ChicoBag™

**Cascade Orthopedic**  
 Located: **Chico**  
 Started: **1975**  
 Product: **Orthotics & Prosthetics**  
 Employees: **65**  
[www.cascade-usa.com](http://www.cascade-usa.com)

Cascade Orthopedic Supply is the largest, independently owned orthotics and prosthetics distributor in the nation. Cascade's mission is to provide superior value and support on the products that they create and the services that they provide to domestic independent providers of prosthetics and orthotic care. The company's advancements in technology and efficiency have set many industry standards and their innovative company culture will continue to set them apart as an industry leader.

Cascade began distributing OAP products from Seattle, WA in 1974 as a group of OAP practitioners. In 1977, Cascade was purchased and incorporated by the Loney family, Jerry Loney, a traditional upper extremity amputee, and his family moved Cascade to Chico, CA where it operated until 1988 and grew from a small regional distributor into a leading national distributor. Now Cascade manages three distribution facilities in Ohio, CA, Lancaster, PA, and Grapewind, TX, which allow them to deliver products overnight anywhere in the contiguous United States via Next Day Air Service at published ground rates for their customers.

**Jeff Collins**  
 CEO-401 Cascade Orthopedic

## **CEO and Entrepreneur Leadership Series**

The Leadership Series kicked off Thursday, June 30, 4:30-6:30 p.m., at the Innovation Lab, with a discussion about "Digital Marketing & Commerce". Can your business take better advantage of digital marketing? Learn how to create a sensible, economical strategy to drive more revenue from online channels. Takes simple steps to ensure your online presence complements your business strategy. Learn ways to leverage the unique profit potential of online campaigns...channels...analytics...and more to drive revenues and lower costs. The first hour features a guest speaker, guest investor, and brief presentation by a local growth company. A second hour of networking with other CEOs and entrepreneurs is planned.

For details about the upcoming speakers, contact 530-892-1707.

## **Upcoming Events and Activities**

**AB118 Training – July 18<sup>th</sup>, July 25<sup>th</sup>, August 8<sup>th</sup>, others TBD**

**City of Oroville Youth Build and Public Works Youth Partnership**

**WIA Services return to Butte County-September 1, 2011**

**Staff Training – August 16<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>**

**Recruiting for open positions through July 27<sup>th</sup>**

**AB 98 Subsidized Employment Program – Kick Off, September 1, 2011**

**Full implementation of National Emergency Grant-On the Job Training Program**