Alliance for Workforce Development is pleased to share the positive results of the Butte County Fall Job Fair that took place on August 31st at the Masonic Lodge in Chico, CA. With it being the first in-person job fair in nearly two years due to the pandemic, many safety precautions were implemented.

The Job Fair was host to 41 employers, each with at least five or more openings within Butte County. While there were many returning long-time partners in attendance, AFWD welcomed several new businesses such as USPS, Chico Electric, and Cleanrite Buildrite. Throughout the duration of the event, over 140 job seekers participated, many of which had advanced skill sets to take advantage of the diverse job openings available. As it stands today, over 30 job placements have been completed in the last four weeks as a direct result of the 2021 Fall Job Fair in Butte County. Of the many jobs filled, a couple unique positions were filled like a Bus Driver for Transdev/Veola Transportation, an electronic operator for Joy Signal Technology and a Covid Testing Coordinator for the Butte County Office of Education.

With the bolstering of established partnerships and the discovery of new affiliations, Alliance for Workforce Development will continue to bring success to Northern California’s workforce through connections between employers and job seekers alike.
Thank you to our participating employers!
A Formula for Success…

**WARN + AFWD = A Rapid Response to Support**

The WARN Act is the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification. It is triggered by the shutdown of a single employment site, facility or department, that results in a loss of at least 50 full-time employees, during a 30-day period or mass layoffs. Notices must be submitted to EDD and the chief elected officials of the local government. Processing of a WARN notice activates the local Rapid Response team which is comprised of AFWD Staff, EDD Workforce Services, and Butte County Social Services.

Rapid Response is a pro-active, business-focused, flexible strategy designed to respond to announcements of layoffs and plant closings by quickly coordinating services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers to ensure rapid reemployment and to minimize the negative impacts of the layoff.

On July 12th 2021, a WARN Notice was received by the appropriate persons in local government: the Mayor of Chico, the Butte County Board of Supervisors, and the AFWD Director of Business Services. The WARN notice described that Crothall Healthcare’s contract to provide environmental services at Enloe Medical Center will be terminated. Subsequently, Crothall Healthcare’s entire operation at Enloe Medical Center will be closing. Therefore, Crothall Healthcare’s operation at Enloe Medical Center will cease on September 12, 2021, and the impacted employees will be terminated effective September 12, 2021. We have not been told whether the new environmental services provider intends to hire the existing workforce. This action will affect 125 employees.

AFWD Director of Business Services passed the information to the Butte team and connected them to Crothall HR & the Crothall Environmental Services Director. Due to the caring management at Crothall, four informative workshops were scheduled and were implemented on July 20th & 28th on company time for the affected workers.

The workshops grabbed a handful of the dislocated workers. The positive reaction from those that attended is a reassurance that the information will be filtering out to other dislocated workers and there will be a steady stream of new job seekers to the AFWD offices for assistance.
Paint Your Dreams

Charles “Chuck” Miller is a seasoned commercial/residential painter and after working with local companies over the years, he has decided to branch out on his own! He is in the process of obtaining his business license and designed his own business cards. “Color of Dreams Painting—You Dream it, We’ll Paint It.”

Chuck is also very passionate about physical fitness and has helped others develop their own workout plans, with positive results. After some thought, he decided to also create business cards promoting his skills as a cut-mass trainer. Chuck is up-front about his background, and very happy to share how much he has overcome through the years with the right support that really got him through the toughest times. Chuck now wants to help others find hope and joy in their lives.

Restoring Hope in the Future

David Barnes has been enrolled in the P2E program with AFWD since the beginning of April. He was hired at Habitat for Humanity’s ReStore as a part-time warehouse associate utilizing an on-the-job training. He quickly became a valued full-time employee. David excelled at communicating and showed mediating skills when working with customers and co-workers. After his three-month on-the-job training was completed, he was offered a promotion, with a raise, to Shift Lead. He is now learning the procedural operations and is gaining great experience. David’s long-term goal is to work as community outreach representative. His time at ReStore is allowing him to gain the viability, skills, and network to support a transfer into the position he most desires.
Added STEP’s Made for Communicating Success!

It is no secret that since mid-2020 employers are scrambling to find talent. The same is true for our amazing Skills Employment & Training Program (STEP) in our Butte County AFWD Offices. The effects of the pandemic have slowed the pace of the applicant pool referrals to a minimum. We have reached out to our partner Employment Case Managers (ECM’s) and they have dug deep to provide referrals the best they can, but for many COVID-related reasons, the CalWORKs participants are not all ready to go back to work.

Lue Yang was a referral that was ready to work physically and emotionally. However, Lue has a significant language barrier for many employment worksites. Lue is Hmong and although he told his ECM Sor Thao that he’s ready even Sor wasn’t sure we could make it happen.

The Butte BSR’s began their job referrals for the newest addition to the pool. Lue landed an interview at an Oroville manufacturing company. The interview was met with a “thank you for your interest but we will not be able to train him correctly without an interpreter on the line.” The same response was received at two other sites.

In a conversation with the human resource manager Angie at Joy Signal Technology, it was discovered that one of their lines has a Hmong-speaking department head. The BSR asked Angie if there was an opening on that line. Two weeks later a position came open on that line and an interview was arranged. Before the interview, the ECM and BSR met with Lue. Through translation, we posed possible interview questions and reasoned out some good responses. Lue left our “mock interview” a little more confident. The interview went very well and Lue was hired! We are excited to keep the partnership going with Joy Signal Technology for future referrals.
Bookkeeping and Accounting Assistant in Training

Kayla Ortiz came to Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) in February 2021 when she was laid off from a part time position as an Administrative Assistant. Kayla was referred by her County caseworker. Kayla needed assistance gaining employment and getting back into the workforce full-time. Kayla was looking to obtain additional skills and hands on training in a position that would take her on a career pathway, provide full-time employment with economically self-sufficient wages with an opportunity for career advancement. Kayla had previous office assistant experience from working at the Esplanade House through one of their step programs but no secondary education or certifications.

Kayla was determined eligible and enrolled into the Adult WIOA program. She interviewed for a Bookkeeper/Accounting Assistant position with Heather’s Bookkeeping and Tax Services in Chico, CA. Kayla had no previous experience in tax preparation or bookkeeping but they liked her and saw her ability to absorb information and her drive to succeed. The employer reached out to AFWD for possible assistance with an on the job training opportunity; as they have worked together before and been very successful. Kayla was approved to participate in an OJT and began her training with Heather’s Bookkeeping and Tax Services in February 2021. Kayla met all her training milestones in her position as a Bookkeeper/Accounting Assistant. Kayla loves her job and states she has learned a considerable amount and continues to be educated and trained daily. Kayla completed her training and is full time employed and working on a career pathway under the Professional, Scientific and Technical Services industry.
Damian Dumas came to Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) in July. He had not been able to find employment since experiencing a layoff in February of the same year. He informed AFWD that he has always enjoyed working outdoors and growing in hands-on skills, but has had some difficulty in finding full-time work due to the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic. In his last employment he was working as a landscape laborer where he was maintaining the grounds of commercial buildings, collected and disposed of rubbish, and drove the company vehicles to assist with the job orders. There were little to no opportunities to find similar work in his previous occupation.

AFWD has had the opportunity to connect Damian with a Temporary Job Creation (TJC) placement at the City of Chico as a Sanitation Maintenance Worker. Immediately into the start of the employment, Damian stated that he really enjoys the work he is learning and being able to make a difference in the local area! He has been able to sharpen his skills and has obtained additional knowledge with sanitization and cleanliness in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. Damian has been going above and beyond to complete his work successfully!

Damian assists at park facilities where he is performing extensive cleanup and sanitizing of local park facilities. He continues to grow in knowledge and passion for this type of work that allows him to be outside and grow in professionalism. Damian is optimistic and eager to continue finding ways to better the community area through his employment, too. We are thankful for Damian’s hard work and big heart for the Chico community!
Assisting and Persisting

Billie Young came to the AFWD Recovery Center looking for assistance with immediate employment after being recently laid off. Billie like so many other residents of the Paradise area was affected by the Campfire when she lost her home. Billie was assessed and it was determined that she was a great fit for the TJC program. Billie was selected for a TJC placement with the Town of Paradise as a Crew Laborer.

While at the Town of Paradise she has helped repair roadways and clear fire damaged areas. She has gained new skills and experience as well as a sense of accomplishment in helping her community recover from the Camp Fire disaster. When the worksite requested additional Chainsaw Operations and Flagging training, AFWD ensured it was provided to Billie. After receiving additional training, Billie demonstrated leadership skills and earned a position as a Lead Crew Member.

Billie has been an asset to the Town of Paradise crew during her TJC placement. She is grateful for the opportunity to increase her skillset while earning an income. The safety certifications, experience, and leadership skills Billie has gained enabled her to apply for a permanent position with the Town of Paradise as a Senior Maintenance Worker. She is eager to continue her career development while also helping her community recover.

New Opportunities - New Outcomes

Christopher Benham volunteered to participate in the Male Community Reentry Program in Butte County, after being incarcerated for four years. Christopher successfully completed his required programs, and earned the opportunity to job search. He is now working at a local business in Chico, MJB Welding. AFWD’s P2E (Prison to Employment) program helped Christopher learn how to build a resume that showed off his skills and experience, and to explain his background when requested to under the Fair Chance Act. Christopher was eager to start earning wages with an employer who would give him a chance. P2E was also able to support Chris with work clothing and any other needed supplies.

By eliminating some of the barriers job seekers are facing and making job search less stressful, people are more quickly able to get back into the workforce. Christopher also participated in our weekly workshops and had a great attitude – we knew that any employer would appreciate his positive personality. Christopher has perfect attendance at work and is really enjoying his position.
Ron was referred to the P2E program by his probation officer. He was working as a landscaper in Reno at the time, but the commute was too costly for a job that paid just over minimum wage. It was also tough work and he wasn’t sure how long he could keep up with the physical demands. After trying to find work closer to home, he decided to look into pursuing his dream job of truck driver. It was a job that he could physically do and one that would allow him to see the United States, which was something he longed to do.

He met with his Career Advisor and they discussed how they could turn that dream into a reality. After conferring and getting the approval from probation, they researched training facilities. Ron’s daughter lived in Sacramento, so housing was available near Western Truck School, an approved training center. After a couple of months of saving money, Ron started his training with a little help from Alliance for Workforce Development for tuition.

He completed the training, passed the DMV test on the first try, and by that time had already received a job offer! He started working the very next day driving commercially. Ron is thrilled with his new career and excited to see what happens with his new future.

Carmi came referred to Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) in October of 2020 seeking assistance with her Registered Dental Assistant program. She was desiring to receive help with the Butte County ROP program fees and the program director pointed her our way! Carmi had been waiting years to have the opportunity to begin her career pathway and finally had the chance to do so! Carmi was determined eligible and enrolled into the Adult WIOA program. AFWD had the opportunity to come alongside Carmi and partner with her to insure her success with the program by assisting in the fees of the program, such as tuition, textbooks and medical uniforms.

She completed her Registered Dental Assistant successfully in June of 2021 and even became connected with a local dentistry employer within the last month of her training program. Now, she is working diligently as a Dental Assistant for Skyway Endodontics and is loving every minute of it! She has been able to put all the knowledge and skills she has learned through the RDA program to practical use. Carmi is thoroughly enjoying her job and let her Career Advisor know that she has learned a considerable amount more! Way to go Carmi!
The Paradise Memorial Train Park – aka Depot Park, as it is known to the locals was damaged due to the Camp Fire. As it is part of the larger Community Park on Black Olive it was once a place where community events were held, like Party in the Park. The town and community knew that this needed to be cleaned up and repaired as this was vital part of the park experience.

With that in mind, the town’s Public Works Manager - Mike Houdek - tasked Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) crew laborers who have been supplementing the town’s Public Works crews to help in the cleanup and repair of the park facilities. AFWD was able to utilize the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) through the Temporary Jobs Creation Program (TJC) to provide the town of Paradise with the work crews needed to help with the cleanup and repair of the Depot Park.

This program is geared towards individuals who need a temporary job and an opportunity to gain new skills to supplement their work history. The crews assisted with identifying and removing burnt brush in the depot park section, clearing the bike path corridor on both sides by removing dead and decaying materials from the aftermath of the Camp fire. They also assisted in repainting the restrooms to ensure a full clean up and restoration of the area ensuring that the community has a place to continue traditions like Party in the Park that help with the process of recovering from the Camp Fire.
Brian Mcafee came to AFWD seeking assistance with securing full-time employment after he was laid off from his previous position as a Stagehand. Living in a disaster affected area, Brian found it difficult to quickly obtain the necessary employment to remain self-sufficient. Based on his prior experience in manual labor and working in a warehouse, it was confirmed he has a general understanding of safety directions and can perform physically demanding labor. This made Brian an excellent candidate to participate in a Temporary Job Creation (TJC) as a Crew Laborer to assist with the clean-up and repair work with the Town of Paradise. Brian happily accepted this offer as he felt he would be contributing to a great cause, while also being allowed to earn an income and broaden his work experience, as he continued to search for unsubsidized employment.

Within the first few months of his contract with the Town of Paradise, Brian was selected to obtain a Flagger Safety Training certificate. Obtaining this certificate would enhance his skill set and make him more marketable to future employers, so Brian quickly completed this course and was heavily relied on for Flagger positions when they arose while working with the Town of Paradise.

Recently, Brian was made aware of the opportunity to participate in a Utility Line Clearance Arborist Training by attending a 200-hour class. He realized this was the perfect chance to move forward in his career pathway, so he was co-enrolled into AFWD’s Classroom Training program and completed the course on May 28th, 2021. After receiving his certificate, Brian applied with Mountain G Enterprises (MGE). MGE extended an employment offer as an Apprentice Tree Climber, where he will be able to continue learning the details of this trade and accrue additional hours, leading to career advancement opportunities. Brian is overwhelmed with gratitude for the support from Alliance for Workforce Development and is proud of his accomplishments made possible by participating in this program.
Boen Cipolla came to Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) in May 2021 as a Job Seeker as he had been unemployed as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. Boen met with a career center advisor who determined eligibility and Boen was enrolled into the Dislocated Worker program to be assessed for services. Boen’s previous work history consisted of grocery clerk, store manager/sales, and warehouse associate. He was struggling to get approved for unemployment and just wanted to get back to work and his everyday life. Boen expressed his desire to work for a few different local companies, one being Chico Bag. He had applied many times before when an opportunity arose as Chico Bag is his dream job.

Boen enjoyed the warehouse position he worked at for over three years and was looking to utilize his previous skills and obtain a position with a career pathway in either the Transportation or Warehouse industry. Boen worked with his career center advisor to update his resume, conduct a practice interview, go over career guidance & planning, and received individualized counseling.

Boen’s Career Center Advisor was notified by a Business Service Representative that Chico Bag was about to open up a Warehouse Associate position and Boen was notified to look for the posting daily. The moment it was available on the employer’s website, Boen applied and was invited to interview and eventually offered the position. Boen kept pushing through and his persistence presided itself. He is now the Operations Associate for Chico Bag and could never be happier. Boen is greatly appreciative of his career center advisor and AFWD for their assistance.
Established in 1949, Bestway Painters, Inc., CSLB #415758, is a second-generation family-owned painting firm. They specialize in residential, commercial, and institutional repainting in and around Chico, California. They also refinish and restore fine furniture and cabinetry. They are licensed by the California State License Board and fully insured.

They operate out of a well-equipped shop complex in Chico, complete with two spray booths, a paint stripping tank, paint mixing facilities, and a furniture refinishing shop. They have invested over $30,000 in our wastewater and solvent recycling systems to prevent environmental contamination. The cleanup necessary for all projects is done in their shop facility under regulated controls, not on the job site.

Their employees are skilled craftspeople trained to complete projects efficiently and professionally to customers’ satisfaction.

With more than 50 years of experience and a commitment to keeping abreast with new technology in a swiftly changing industry, Bestway Painters can provide top-quality service and long-lasting results.

They approach each project with the skill and professionalism their customers deserve as defined in their Mission Statement, “To serve our customers with the best quality of service while delivering the best quality results in a timely manner with skilled, courteous, and professional people. With these goals in mind, every customer will become a customer for life,” and reflected in testimonials on their website: bestwaypainters.com.

In early spring, AFWD was contacted by Bestway Painters looking for both entry-level and skilled individuals. A conversation led to AFWD posting their job and beginning recruitment. After half a dozen candidates were referred, they settled on an individual that had great all-around construction experience but did not specifically have painting experience. They were willing to train due to the work ethic and steady work history of this individual. AFWD was able to assist Bestway Painters by offsetting the cost of training through our On-the-Job Training (OJT) program.
Frank attended California Conservation Corp (CCC) where he obtained his high school diploma. As a crew member, he also worked on fires doing cleanup and discovered he wanted to do more. CCC’s Transition Navigator referred Frank to AFWD for assistance with his college expenses and housing because after leaving CCC he was homeless. Applying for AFWD services during Covid 19 protocols required Frank to meet with a CCA over Zoom, a different experience!

Frank and his CCA completed his eligibility paperwork, and he was enrolled into the AFWD Youth Program to receive support and assistance during the Yuba College Firefighter 1 Academy. Frank found housing with another classmate and received assistance from AFWD with his rent. His CCA also assisted him with navigating his syllabus, making sure he obtained the required textbooks and exam fees required to complete Firefighter 1 training. After he completed the FF1 Academy, his CCA asked how he felt about earning the certificate and Frank replied that he never thought he would do anything beyond high school but now he sees so much more that he can accomplish, such as becoming a municipal firefighter.

Frank stayed in school to complete FF2, understanding this would make him more employable. After completing FF2, he was selected for an internship with the Linda Fire Department! His goal is now to be hired on permanently.
The Business Service Representatives (BSR) at Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) work with a variety of different programs. The versatility of these programs allows us to serve the employers in our community in a variety of ways and help open doors to new job opportunities for our clients.

In addition to the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), AFWD also works with County programs such as the Skills Training & Employment Program (STEP) and State-funded programs like the Prison to Employment program (P2E.)

AFWD is fortunate to work with so many employers in our community, open to the possibilities and opportunities these programs have to offer. The Habitat for Humanity ReStore of Butte County is the perfect example of win-win opportunities created thru the utilization of AFWD programs.

“The Habitat for Humanity ReStore of Butte County has benefited greatly from the programs and services offered through the Alliance for Workforce Development. These programs have helped us find employees and provided an incentive to hire them. Many of the employees have been great additions to our staff and may have been overlooked in the interview process due to a lack of experience. Thankfully, these effective programs help potential employees get their foot in the door and a chance to prove they can be an asset to a company in need of employees. Even when they have not had employees for placement they have been very helpful with posting our positions on their job boards, which has also resulted in several hires for our business. Furthermore, the staff at AFWD has always been a pleasure for us to work with. They are professional, polite, and helpful. I would recommend their services to any business in Butte County.” - ReStore Director, Cory Beynon
A Rough Journey to Graduation

Dianna Vinecke first came to AFWD in July of 2019 when she started her Respiratory Therapy Program at Butte College. She had waited for 5 years to be accepted into the program, and by the time she was accepted, she knew that it couldn't be done without some assistance due to losing her employment because of the Campfire in 2018. The Respiratory Therapy Program is a 2-year program that includes summer and winter sessions, it takes dedication and attention to detail. She was introduced to AFWD by her instructor and was ultimately enrolled as an Adult. In her last year of school, she was faced with yet another obstacle, COVID-19.

School shut down for a short period of time, and students started all online classes and online clinicals. Her journey to graduation was a little rough, to say the least, but she overcame and completed her degree. She took her first exam, the TMC exam and after passing it, she was able to take the Clinical Simulation Exam and passed it as well. Dianna kept in close contact with her advisor at AFWD to assist in guiding her through the hard times in school. Being able to be a part of a program that assists those with their aspirations and dreams has truly helped Dianna persevere and navigate the challenges that she faced in school. Dianna stated that she was only able to get where she is today, looking for a position as a Respiratory Therapist, with the assistance and guidance from AFWD.

Driving the Local Economy

This August, Alliance for Workforce Development had the wonderful opportunity to work with the high-speed connections company, Joy Signal Technology. This small, local manufacturer produces high-performance electrical and electronic interconnect embedded systems connectors used in crucial infrastructure communications applications everywhere. Joy Signal Technology is a vital auxiliary to the success of many businesses in our community. Perhaps more importantly, Joy Signal Technology is a local economy driver as an employer offering career pathway-oriented job opportunities at a living wage in our community.

Recently, Joy Signal Technology has experienced impressive growth and needed help recruiting additional staff to take on many of the production and assembly tasks. AFWD has been able to support Joy Signal with three current On-the-Job Training opportunities in great, full-time, well-paid Production & Assembly positions. The trainees are very happy with their new roles and AFWD is glad to support the success of all involved. As Joy Signal Technology continues to grow in our area, AFWD will continue to address their evolving business needs and support their development.
Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) and the TLC Preschool teamed up with multiple community resources to welcome the families and community to their new preschool campus. The new preschool facility on 6th Street is one of the largest capacity preschools in the state, able to serve about 200 children, TLC is a California State Preschool Program. They offer quality services to income-qualifying families with Full-Day Classes and Part Day Classes. The Business Service Representative (BSR) team from the Recovery Office joined in to help out with outreach to those that attended.

There was a large turnout from both parents of the students and community members that have been affected by the lack of preschool openings and social distancing guidelines. It was an opportunity to organize resources, involving the local community, and coordinating among community members.

These types of community events help community members connect with service providers they may not have been previously aware of and spread the word of all the available programs and benefits. AFWD was excited to participate in the opening of this campus, as it provides income-qualifying families with an affordable optional learning environment solving some childcare issues for working families. Many parents were attending higher education at colleges and universities and were looking for assistance with paying for books and required supplies. Some of the parents were also getting ready to re-enter the workforce now that they had dependable, affordable child care.

We look forward to continuing to partner with community public, private and non-profit agencies and businesses!
Melissa Yang moved from North Carolina to Butte County to be closer to family. She is a single parent of a growing family. Melissa came to Alliance for Workforce Development in February 2021, having been long term unemployed and had barriers she was needing assistance with. Melissa was new to the area and due to the COVID 19 pandemic, was struggling to obtain full-time employment with a comparable wage and room for career advancement and opportunity. Melissa had limited employment experience; having only worked as a customer service representative and she did not have a high school diploma. But Melissa was motivated with success at her forefront.

Melissa met with a Career Center Advisor (CCA) who provided various services ranging from individualized counseling, community referrals for her diploma (which she has since completed), supportive service assistance with interview & work attire, the Work Experience Program, and Temporary Job Placement. Melissa was selected for a WEX (Work Experience) position with Butte County Public Health at the COVID Call Center as a Call Center Representative helping assist the community with COVID-related questions and concerns. Melissa was enrolled under the COVID AA grant and later co-enrolled under the NDWG COVID TJC (Temporary Job Placement).

The Covid Call Center opportunity filled a gap in Melissa’s employment history, provided a regular income, and added to her skill set. More specifically, it gave her hands-on training and experience in the Public Sector Assistance for Local, State, County, and Federal, rules & regulations.

At the end of Melissa’s temporary job placement, she applied for and was offered a full-time position with self-sufficient wages and benefits with Northern Valley Indian Health as a Medical Receptionist. Melissa was very appreciative and happy with the services and assistance she received from Alliance for Workforce Development and feels it helped her in a direction she was hoping to be successful in.
AFWD-America’s Job Center of California

Unemployment Information
Oct. 2020 - Sept. 2021

Unemployment Rates
(As of: Aug. 2021)
California 7.5%
Butte County 6.8%

AFWD Region County UI Claims

Weekly Initial Claims by Industry Sector

Top 3 Affected Industry Sectors - Butte County
Food and Accommodation
Healthcare and Social Assistance
Retail Trade

Butte County - 1st Quarter
One-Stop Visitors: 1,471
Businesses Served: 359
Business Services: 3,170
AFWD
Clients Enrolled: 578

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

Oroville Community Employment Center
78 Table Mountain Blvd. (530) 538-7301

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