400 New Jobs in Chico!

Milestone Technologies, Inc., which opened a small office in Chico last year, announced a huge expansion with the immediate need of 230 employees! Within twenty-four days, Milestone opened a fully functional contact center out by the Chico airport. This included finding a facility, renovating the space, configuring not only a comprehensive tracking database for the new client but also a secure wireless network capable of massive users. AFWD as you know assisted with the initial job fair bringing in 1000 plus applicants to fill the initial 230 new hires!

With one job fair under our belt, Prem Chand called once again for our assistance in helping find an additional 200 full time employees. AFWD staff jumped on the task of recruiting the best of the best in customer service Butte County could offer. Eight hundred pre-registered applicants were ready for interviews at the new Milestone Chico site on November 16th. Together again, Milestone and AFWD staff had the day’s event dialed in like clockwork. After interviewing close to 1000 people, 200 individuals were offered full time positions starting at over $15.00 per hour! Efforts put forward by these job fairs have equaled almost 400 new jobs created!

The exhilarating journey that we have embarked on with this company has been one full of excitement and success. AFWD will continue to offer our outstanding services as they move forward in their business efforts in Butte County.

AFWD staff Luis Moreno and Heather Alexander enjoy a quick break with Milestone CEO Prem Chand at the hiring event.
AFWD, Inc. Butte County and YouthBuild Chico

The AFWD, Inc. Butte County Youth program has partnered with YouthBuild Chico to serve youth who are in need of their high school diploma or GED, and who would like to learn work habits and skills through hands on work experience in the construction industry. The pictures above show the first cohort graduating from “Mental Toughness Week” and two workers on the job at a Habitat for Humanity site.

YouthBuild is a federally funded community development program that addresses core issues facing low-income communities: housing, education, employment, crime prevention, and leadership development. In YouthBuild programs, young people, both men and woman, ages 16-24 work towards their high school diploma or GED, learn job skills and serve their communities by building affordable housing, and transforming their own lives and roles in society.

AFWD, Inc. youth staff are assisting with the recruitment and case management of YouthBuild participants. The youth are grateful for the extra help and support this partnership has been able to provide, and staffs from both agencies are playing an important role in their success. The youth attend school in the morning and alternate between vocational shop trainings and the build sites in the afternoon. AFWD, Inc. has been able to assist in the purchase of work clothing and help with transportation expenses for the youth, as well as provide on-site workshops for pre-employment skills and resume building.

We look forward to a very successful partnership between both agencies which will result in the youth participants completing their educational goals and going on to careers that they enjoy and that allow them to become productive members of our community.
Oroville Chamber of Commerce held their annual Holiday Gala event at Gold County Casino on November 15th. The evening highlighted all the best that Oroville and the North Valley has to offer including products such as extra virgin olive oil from California Olive Ranch. The event was co-hosted by the casino staff and chamber members whom generously donated over 120 items for the silent auction. Senator Jim Nielsen attended the Gala and is pictured here with Oroville Mayor Linda Dahlmeier sampling the award winning oil.

Purple Line Urban Winery is a small family owned winery located in Oroville. With grapes sourced mainly from Northern California Sierra Region; the process of crushing, fermenting, pressing and bottling is done completely in their downtown Oroville “cellar”. Recently there has been quite the buzz on the opening of a much anticipated tasting room. The event was quickly put together and took place in November where members of the public gathered to welcome Purple Line Urban Winery into the Oroville business community. The event was complete with wine tasting, music, food, and the owners George and Kate Barber who welcomed all that attended this historic event. AFWD welcomes them and wishes them great success as this new business unfolds.

A wonderful turnout for the new downtown Oroville wine attraction.
Gale Collins came through the Butte One Stop after a layoff in July 2013. He had over 23 years of Technical Support for three different companies, including Unisys, ACS/Xerox and Southern Wine Spirits. During this time, he provided technical support to computer users, answered questions or resolved computer problems for clients in person or via telephone, and electronically performed initial troubleshooting, categorization, and documentation. Technical Support jobs are not in abundance here in Butte County, so when Milestone Technologies announced they were coming to town in September, staff encouraged him to pre-register for the job fair. It was a match tailor made. Gale did advance at the CSU job fair to the face-to-face interviews, but was unfortunately not selected for either Tier 1 Agent or Supervisor. Gale continued to meet with AFWD staff for mock interviews, and to keep up to date on his job search tactics. He also attended every one of our AFWD workshops, some more than once, including the Networking, Resume, Interview, Successful Applications, and Jumpstart Your Future. Gale stated that he felt the workshops were extremely helpful in preparing him for his job search, and also shared that he emerged with new relevant information even the second time around. In November, Milestone Technologies announced they would be holding a second job fair at their Chico facility located in the Chico Airport Industrial Park. The Director of Butte County Operations asked Career Advisors if they felt any of the clients were strong enough to recommend a second consideration, as all who attended the prior job fair would be disqualified from registering for the upcoming job fair. One strongly recommended to be given a second chance was Gale because of his tremendous relevant experience. Gale’s name was submitted for reconsideration and he was granted a time slot at the job fair. Gale sought out his Career Center Advisor Sandy Wangberg prior to his initial screening who shared a few interview tips and inspiration. Sandy spoke with Gale on the following Monday, and he was excited to report that he had made it to HR at the job fair, and was asked if he preferred to train in the morning or the evening, signaling to him that he was going to be offered a position. Gale was also pleased to be featured on the local KRCR newscast highlighting the Milestone job fair. Two days later he was offered the Tier 1 Agent position and accepted. Gale came in person to thank staff for all that AFWD did to help him secure employment. He shared that Milestone’s company climate is extremely fun and the people he works with are all truly amazing. Congratulations Gale!
Team Chico, is a collaborative partnership between The City of Chico, Chico Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Chico Business Association, 3CORE, Inc. and the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc., with support from Chabin Concepts. The primary goal of Team Chico is to provide various business expertise to the diverse local business base. Some organizations provide direct business assistance, such as financing, human resources, and business counseling, while others operate programs to generate economic activity.

A business walk program has been established so that our collaborative partnership is visible to the community. The primary goal is to listen to local businesses so that needs may be addressed as they arise. The secondary goal of the walks is to inform the entire business community of the services available to them through multiple providers on an immediate basis. To date, Team Chico has connected with over 500 businesses throughout Chico!

During the late spring and summer 2013, with the generous support of Tri Counties Bank, Team Chico conducted a retail market analysis for all of Chico. The analysis was conducted by national retail market consultant, Marketek, Inc. The analysis assessed the growth potential of the retail market sector based on demographic trends, shopper survey, local and regional competition and a statistical demand analysis.

This information is invaluable to brokers, property owners, local retailers and those seeking to start new retail outlets. The retail market analysis is the basis for forward-thinking, vision and strategic actions to build upon this economic sector. Below are the top ten findings for Chico. The full report is available for download at the Tri Counties Bank website, www.tcbk.com

**Top 10 Retail Market Analysis Findings for Chico**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Finding</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chico is experiencing an $85 million annual leakage in four main categories – Apparel, Home Furnishings, Electronics &amp; Appliance and Specialty Retail.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Chico is a regional retail center, with key shopping attractions – Chico Mall, large discount retailers, like Costco, and a unique Downtown – enabling Chico to pull from a large market area (upwards of 270,000 people in the Chico-Redding-Sacramento corridor). However, retail expansion in Chico's secondary market areas may be eroding Chico's regional pull.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Chico residents are generally very supportive of the local business community and cite this as the #1 reason for shopping locally but they definitely want more diversity of shopping – Roseville is a pull.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Downtown Chico is a significant community and visitor retail/entertainment center offering pedestrian-oriented shopping – but also at risk with current issues of safety.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Chico's retail market is diverse and complex including families, university students and visitors. Market dynamics challenge retailers to know their target customers and focus their merchandise on key niches.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Chico lacks a unified vision and message for retail business development; there is no marketing &quot;headline&quot; or storyline supported with a cohesive retail marketing campaign.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Business leaders expressed concern; a segment of the consumer base is routinely leaving town to shop (or online). Chico residents need more encouragement to shop locally.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Local brokerage community perceives City as not being pro-active toward new business. Related are concerns about too many regulatory layers, too much uncertainty about what kinds of retail will be supported as well as more cost and long permitting times.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Chico is a 'good bet' for mid-market retailers but has shallow demand for high end chains.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Consultant observation is that Chico is 'head and shoulders' above most communities in terms of salesmanship and community leadership/organizing to promote retail opportunities.</td>
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Innovate-North State held its Annual Innovation Ceremony on December 3, 2013 at Chico State University’s Bell Memorial Union to announce this year’s top business innovators. "Attendees, nominees and award recipients are from game-changing companies ranging in size from the earliest-stage start-ups to the largest corporations in the region, along with representatives from government and education who are focused on fostering an environment conductive to innovation," according to Jon Gregory of Innovate-Northstate. Twenty five separate awards were given with 100 individuals/businesses being nominated. AFWD Inc. was proud to be nominated for the Innovation in Public/Private Partnerships for our work with Milestone’s expansion in Butte County. As you can see below, Butte County Director Luis Moreno accepted on behalf of the agency as we were announced the winner of that category. Additionally, CEO Prem Chand was awarded in two separate categories including Business Expansion of the Year and Executive of the Year. Congratulations to Milestone for bringing us all together and making such a positive impact in our community.

Congratulations to all AFWD and Milestone staff!
California North State Manufacturer's Directory

On Tuesday October 8, 2013 the Business Services Team attended a luncheon to launch the California North State Manufacturers Directory. Jack Stewart, the CEO of the California Manufacturers & Technology Association (CMTA), was the guest speaker. The purpose of the directory is to provide a web presence for manufacturers to find and connect with other manufacturers, contract manufacturers and suppliers. How the directory will work is Manufacturers and Suppliers may enter their company profile, manufacturing process and specialized equipment. The manufacturers may also add videos and photos of their manufacturing equipment. The second side of the data base will be for the users looking for manufactures. They may search for manufacturers by type of process or equipment through the keyword search. There will also be a directory of all manufacturers, so users can look up by company name. This directory is created by manufacturers for manufacturers and will be maintained by a third party. Please check out this new site at www.manufacturer-directory.com

Butte College CNA Program

This semester a class of 10 participants graduated from the Butte College/Allied Public Health Service Certified Nursing Assistant and Home Health Aide certificate program on December 5, 2013. For these students, part of the graduation program included a mini-job fair to introduce them to local healthcare facilities in Butte County who are currently hiring for CNA’s. AFWD, Inc. Business Services pulled the event together, inviting facilities such as Twin Oaks Rehabilitation, Riverside Convalescent, LifeHouse/Cypress and Roseleaf as they were actively recruiting for CNA positions. The students were given the opportunity to have quality, one on one time with these employers. Graduates took their exams on December 9, 2013 and upon passing will then be ready to go to work in the healthcare field. Several of the students expressed appreciation for the assistance they received from Career Center Advisor, Monica Perez, and for all services made available to them. We wish them well in their new career path in the growing healthcare industry.
Butte County Visitors
36,763
AFWD Business Services
- Business Served: 1281
- Service Provided: 5394
- Positions Filled: 1679
- Training Assistance: 211

Program Services
New enrollments this Quarter
- Adult: 307
- Dislocated Worker: 227
- Youth: 121
- Employed: 428

Unemployment Rate
- Butte: 9.3%
- Plumas: 11%
- Lassen: 10.1%
- Sierra: 10.4%
- Modoc: 10.3%