Opening soon in Chico!

Take a look at these great new businesses new to the Chico area! Many of these large retailers have requested the assistance of AFWD services. Recruitment efforts, screening, and room reservations for conducting interviews has kept our Business Service Representatives extremely busy!

Currently OPEN! Kirkland’s carries home décor and uniquely distinctive gifts. From wall décor, home decorations and furniture. Located in the Kohl’s shopping center.

After two years of being out of our area, the store is returning. Offering a wide selection of quality products from everyday household items to fresh produce & seasonal items. Renovations and hiring are complete with a grand opening day of January 5th, 2015!

Ground has been broken for this new employer to our area. It will be located in the Chico Mall. It is a specialty discount retailer of young men and women’s latest fashion trends for less.

A small location is coming to Mangrove Avenue. A family friendly chain known for “It’s made to order pizzas, delicious pasta and wings!”

The restaurant chain has plans to open one of their sport bar-style restaurants in Chico, where they will be serving juicy wings, 21 sauces, and a varied menu including salads, burgers, sandwiches and beverages. It will be located in the North Valley Plaza at Cohasset Road and East Avenue.
In September, Big 5 Sporting goods held a two day hiring fair at the Chico, America’s Job Center of California (AJCC). Big 5 asked the assistance of Business Service Representatives (BSR) in Chico to facilitate a hiring event preparing for the opening of their new store in Paradise. The BSR team went to work on Job Postings for Big 5 and referring people to the job board and online postings. When it came time for the event – 97 people had applied online and were scheduled for interviews on September 29th. Big 5 hired 25 people during that hiring event; from cashiers to supervisory level positions.

The Big 5 management team who were present during for the event, including the Regional Manager, Amy Reed, was quite impressed with the level of service provided by the BSR team. On October 29, 2014, the new Big 5 in Paradise, CA had a Ribbon Cutting and Open House. The event was well attended by AFWD, Inc. staff members, community members, Chamber of Commerce members as well as the Mayor and Council Members.

25 New jobs in a small community such as Paradise is a BIG EVENT! Way to go AFWD!
The Workforce Accelerator Funding was awarded to AFWD, Inc. to serve 15 youth currently involved with the Butte County Probation Department. Each candidate has to be recommended for the program and participate in an interview with CCA Raechelle Villarreal and Youth Program Manager, Heather Alexander, along with other staff. After the successful completion of the interview, youth are co-enrolled in the AFWD, Inc. Youth Program and the Workforce Accelerator Grant. Youth in this project will receive daily assistance with completing their secondary education requirements, starting the process of sealing their juvenile or adult records, earning occupational certificates, and the opportunity to participate in a paid work experience or On-the-Job Training placement in the local area. The youth chose to give their program the name – “Opportunity for Change”.

We have been fortunate to have guest speakers from various industries present information to the youth about entry level requirements for employment in their business or agency. Representatives from California State Parks, Clean-Rite Build-Rite and Cal Fire. Cal Fire gave examples of entry level positions and/or certifications each youth could earn in preparation for applying for firefghting positions.

Several of the youth from Opportunity for Change earned the federally recognized Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 10 certification this December. This certification will be added to their resumes to let prospective employers know they have been trained in entry-level construction and labor safety criteria. With assistance from the AFWD Business Service Team, we have scheduled interviews for some of the youth, and those youth have been offered positions in OJTs or WEX placements. Each participant is working very hard to become ready for work, and to make positive changes in their lives. Their hard work, motivation and determination is making the name of our program (Opportunity for Change) truly fitting.
Having a criminal record could haunt job seekers and intimidate hiring managers. So many things could slow down a job hunt: the economic climate, the industry in which you’re seeking employment, your qualifications and more. But having a criminal history could leave a scar on a background check that narrows your options and lengthens your job hunt even more.

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD), has recently partnered with the Butte County Probation Department in Chico California to help mitigate those in this specific situation. Career Center Advisors from AFWD started presenting the ‘Job Readiness Workshops’ for those on formal adult probation in September 2014. The partnership was created in part due to the already established and successful workshops that AFWD provides in Oroville at the DRC (Daily Reporting Center) for those on alternative sentencing and the growing success of the clients that attend those classes.

The workshops were specifically developed to address the hardships and barriers clients in this particular situation face when looking for employment. The 3 phase workshops start with the basics of filling out an application and creating a resume to setting goals, how to look for employment, knowing your rights and the interviewing process.

Since the start of the workshops over 120 adult probationers in Butte County have attended! We’ve noticed a majority of these attendees are gaining employment or started training within a month after attending the workshops and the rest within 3 months! Needless to say, the Probation Department in Chico for Butte County sings high praises of the program and the benefit it has had to their probationers.
Promising Day for the CNA Class at Butte College-Allied Public Health Services

On November 11, 2014, at the Butte College Oroville Campus, it was all about 19 CNA students (13 WIA enrolled). This group of students had completed their CNA training (and passed the exam) and completed the HHA (Home Health Aide) training. Two down, one to go – the newly added Acute Care Aide training would be next for completion.

AFWD partnered with Butte College-Allied Public Health Services and invited several Health Care Facilities from Chico, Oroville and Paradise to meet with the students for CNA recruitment efforts. In attendance – LifeHouse Cypress, Oroville Hospital Post-Acute Center, Pine View Care and Rehab, Roseleaf Senior Care, Shadowbrook Healthcare, Twin Oaks Post-Acute Rehab and Windsor Chico Creek Care and Rehab. The event was great community support for the Butte College students for possible employment opportunities.

Several of the CNA participants expressed appreciation for the assistance received through AFWD and for the help they received from their Career Center Advisors.
Andrew was laid off from his job at a local Steel and Fabrication Facility where he worked for 6 years, gaining experience as a machinist, welder and iron worker. Eligibility was determined and Andrew was enrolled in the WIA program. He met with his Career Center Advisor to discuss the WIA services available and how he could utilize those services to assist with his training goals. After assessing him, it was determined that he had the necessary knowledge and transferrable skills for Lineman training. His past work at the Steel facility as well as his background in construction and light electrical, were all skills strongly related to that of Electrical Power line workers and Installer positions. Andrew was accepted into the Power Lineman program at Northwest Lineman College in Oroville. This occupation, per O*Net, is a “Green Increased Demand” occupation — green economy activities and technologies are likely to increase the employment demand, but would not lead to significant changes in the work and worker requirements. An informational assessment with Andrew determined he would exhaust his Unemployment Benefits prior to completion of his training. With his Advisors assistance, he was signed up for California Training Benefits, enabling him extended assistance through our sponsorship.

As you can see from the photo to the right, Andrew completed his program successfully and with the help of AFWD, is gainfully employed doing what he was trained to do and enjoying it.
AFWD Inc. Registered Nursing training participants usually request assistance several semesters into their training. They usually walk into America’s Job Centers doors with a tired stride, slumped in the waiting room chairs and often forgetting why they’re meeting with a Career Advisor. The average nursing student has invested years meeting prerequisites and have spent one year to four years on the waiting list. They’re excited to be participating and most of the time they’re either excited to be at the half way point in their training or excited to be in their final semester. They forgot what celebrating Thanksgiving looked like because they were cuddled in their sofas memorizing flashcards and face deep into their textbooks.

These nursing students provide monthly progress reports to their Career Center Advisors and review their training status. Their time is limited to meet because of their class load and meeting the rigorous demands of clinical hours. Many of these students are mothers and fathers. Some are single mothers continuing to raise their families as they participate in training. They tell the Career Center Advisors their personal stories each month. The Career Center Advisors are able to strengthen the relationships by listening and adapting case management strategies based on the diverse needs of the nursing students.

Eventually, the fourth semester does arrive. Smiles often appear during the last month of their training. Their energy level slowly rises and they no longer sit slumped with exhaustion. Their monthly progress reports are no longer wrinkled and stained with coffee rings. Graduation is around the proverbial corner. At times, these nursing training students get to know their Career Center Advisors on a different level. Recently at the Chico location, several AFWD Inc. sponsored nursing students assisted the Butte County Health Department in providing flu shots. Career Center Advisors confidently sat before the nursing students realizing the circle was now complete and these fellow students have been successful in completing their RN training.
Self-Determination

Jane Nantes faced some challenges in finding full time self-sufficient employment. She found it difficult to obtain full time employment with her limited skills. She had minimal work experience as a server at an assisted living facility as well as working in fast food. Jane had limited exposure to the healthcare field as only a few family members work in this industry; therefore, Jane had a great desire to pursue her education in the healthcare field. It was determined after assessing Jane that she was a great fit for this occupation in a growing industry.

Alliance for Workforce Development was able to participate in the sponsorship of Jane Nantes, in the Butte College Licensed Vocational Nursing (LVN) program. AFWD was able to assist with the materials and other costs associated with the training. Jane has successfully completed the LVN course and passed her State Board exam with flying colors. She updated the skills on her resume to reflect her successful completion of training, and was soon able to meet with prospective employers and start networking in her field. Jane’s persistence and unwillingness to fail paid off as she was contacted by the facility, Shadow Brook Health Care for an interview. The interview resulted in an offer of employment the company offering Jane a position! Jane is now working full-time, earning over $20.00 an hour, making her the highest paid individual in her family. Jane is extremely thankful for AFWD’s assistance and looks forward to continuing being part of the workforce.
Butte County Visitors
31,965

AFWD Business Services
Business Served 1,092
Service Provided 4,599
Positions Filled 126
Training Assistance 392

Program Services
Total enrollments this quarter
Adult 205
Dislocated Worker 168
Youth 63
Employed 320

Unemployment Rate
Butte 7.7%  Plumas 9.1%
Lassen 8.7%  Sierra 8.6%
Modoc 9.2%