Since the start of the Camp Fire on November 8\textsuperscript{th}, responding to our community’s needs has resulted in a massive shift in priorities for AFWD. Our team immediately mobilized to begin the planning of operating in recovery mode, which at that time included planning for the unknown. What was known was that thousands of displaced workers were going to need immediate assistance, including all employment/unemployment related services. Hundreds of businesses would be affected, and obtaining information on the services available to them was also going to be crucial.

The Monday following the start of the fire, the AFWD offices in Chico and Oroville were inundated with individuals that were displaced. They needed immediate assistance with obtaining unemployment benefits and information on other job related services. Hundreds came through our doors in the following few days. This influx of unemployed individuals required staff to be called in from all six of our counties to assist. We also quickly learned that we needed even more help, so calls to other Workforce Development areas were made and additional staffing was provided.
On November 16th, FEMA opened the Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) in Chico, and a second DRC in Oroville opened on November 23rd. AFWD was there when the doors opened, making sure that we secured a good location to set up our “resource area” to begin providing services along with other State and Federal agencies. The DRCs were a 7 day/week operation (9:00a-7:00p) through December 8th and currently 6 days/week, closing only on Sundays. The centers did not close for any of the November holidays but AFWD staff stepped up to make sure every hour was covered and that continues to this day. Other Job Centers have assisted by sending their staff to help cover the DRC hours and much appreciation goes out to those areas, which include NoRTEC service providers JTC, SMART and STEP; the counties of North Central Counties Consortium (Colusa, Glenn, Sutter, Yuba), Placer County HHSA/Econ Development, the Golden Sierra Job Training Agency and Lake County Workforce Alliance.

The difficulty in providing services at the center cannot easily be explained. How staff have handled the difficult situations they have encountered, while accomplishing the following, is commendable:

- Assisted over 1,000 Camp Fire affected individuals with employment/unemployment related services.
- Approximately 700 of those contacts have been made at the DRCs with the others taking place at our AFWD offices.
- 484 applications from these individuals have been collected for enrollment into our Federal programs.

These numbers will continue to grow as we remain in the DRCs (along with other important partners such as Butte County, EDD, the SBA and other state/federal agencies) and play a key role in the various committees that are being formed and include NoRTEC, Butte College, BCOE, 3CORE the Town of Paradise, various Chambers and more, to assist businesses and job seekers now displaced due to the fire.

The Camp Fire was the most devastating in the history of the state and all eyes will be on the recovery efforts that are being put in place. AFWD will be at the forefront of these efforts and will be key players in the recovery and rebuilding of our community.
AFWD Chico Celebrates with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony!

After settling in to our new Chico office located at 500 Cohasset Rd. Suite 30, staff welcomed community partners and local employers to a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to see for themselves all that AFWD has to offer. The afternoon included office tours, information on the extensive Business Services available to employers, a firsthand outlook on current recruitments and detailed information of the many free programs available to our community and job seekers alike.

The event was catered by Pleasant Valley High School’s Culinary CTE (Career Technical Education) program, with students on hand to serve the impressive dishes they themselves created. Attendees were extremely impressed with the quality of food, and the professionalism the program incorporated. This made for a great partnership.

Chico Chamber’s outgoing President and CEO Katie Simmons gave a speech reflecting on the long standing relationship with AFWD, and the asset our agency is to the local economy. In addition, a representative from Congressman Doug LaMalfa presented the agency with a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition in appreciation of AFWD’s commitment to creating economic prosperity. This was followed by a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with AFWD Board President Connie Barton and Executive Director Traci Holt. All in attendance praised the agency for the efforts put forth in the community and the professional and welcoming environment of the new office.
AFWD and the Chico Chamber of Commerce: A Partnership That Benefits a City

Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc.’s (AFWD) achievement in providing pathways to success is a result of the quality partnerships built with other local service organizations. An excellent example of one of these fruitful relationships is the partnership between AFWD and the Chico Chamber of Commerce (CCOC.) These activities range from weekly activities such as business community mixers, grand openings for new businesses, and special forums and seminars where the Chamber offers business leaders valuable insight on current topics. Engaging in Chamber events increases AFWD’s visibility and impact in the Chico business community.

Chico Chamber Ambassadors: The Chamber Ambassador Program is a group of business leaders helping the Chamber of Commerce ‘Move Chico Forward’ by leveraging the voice of business for the good of the community. Currently Business Service Representative, Gary Besser serves as a Chamber Ambassador on behalf of AFWD.

Chico Chamber Business Connections: Business Connections is a weekly mixer held every Wednesday Morning at 7:30 am. Hosted by a different Chamber member or partner business/organization each week, the event is a chance for the host to showcase their business or organization to their peers, as well as a chance for attendees to network, share ideas, or trade services with one another. Several AFWD employer partnerships have been developed as a result of Business Connections including Bidwell Truck, Knockout Collision Center, Happy at Home In-Home Care Services, Longmire Insurance, Matson and Isom Technology Consulting, and 9 Round Kickboxing Fitness.

Chamber Special Events, Ribbon Cuttings, Forums and Seminars: The Chamber hosts many events each month and over the course of the year. These include ribbon cuttings for new businesses, professionally hosted seminars on topics ranging from labor law to local development updates, and signature events like the Annual Dinner and Business Awards Ceremony held each January. As a Visionary Partner, AFWD Business Service Staff, Program Managers, and other staff members attend these events regularly to network with business leaders, and show support for our local business community.

AFWD’s partnership with the CCOC is more than just an opportunity to network. What it really amounts to is an invaluable venue for AFWD to engage with the business community we serve, and keep our finger on the pulse of what our local business partners’ needs are. As with all of our community partners, we appreciate the Chamber’s efforts in helping us provide pathways to success.
Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) staff attended the Enloe Medical Center’s 2018 Health and Wellness Expo on October 27, 2018. While the majority of the information and service booths were healthcare focused, AFWD was among the select few service providers in attendance supporting the promotion of overall wellness. Other service providers offering their services and information included Butte County 2-1-1, Butte College, Butte County Public Health, Therapeutic Solutions, Chico Eye Center, and many more.

Enloe Medical Center offered a full scope of services on display and provided free flu shots, general health screenings, diabetes assessments and information, sleep tests, cardiovascular assessments, nutrition information, cancer awareness programs, and dozens of other information tables.

AFWD Youth and Business Services staff promoted AFWD programs and took the opportunity to display sustainable employment as part of the expo’s overall goal of helping community members, “Make positive changes and live well.” Specific items promoted by AFWD staff included our free Job Readiness classes and workshops, the 21st Century Workplace Skills series, Resume services, Interview Readiness preparation, Job Seeker services and WIOA programs.

Business Service staff not only engaged with potential job seekers and training candidates, but also had a chance to network with other service providers in attendance. Several valuable connections were made, potential partnerships discussed and staffing and training solutions provided to private, nonprofit, and government providers.

AFWD is always enthusiastic and honored to attend the local events that bring our community together and move our citizens forward. In all of our programs, we acknowledge the connection between physical health, mental and emotional wellness, positive habit building, and sustainable employment. AFWD is proud to call Enloe Medical Center a partner in our mission of “Providing Pathways to Success.”
Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) Business Service and Career Counseling staff attended the Chapmantown Night Out event on September 28, 2018 at the Dorothy Johnson Center in Chico. AFWD attended as part of a conglomerate of local service agencies, nonprofits, and community minded businesses, providing information to attendees on the services we provide, while celebrating the diverse and dynamic Chapmantown community. The annual event is part of the National Night Out (NNO) community-building campaign. NNO is a non-profit movement that brings neighbors, community leaders, and local law enforcement together to encourage safe neighborhoods and strong community bonds. However, the inclusion of a wide variety of community resources was a component of the event introduced by local organizer, Vince Haynie. This was the seventh anniversary of the event’s founding in Chapmantown.

In addition to dozens of local businesses, government resources, and nonprofits on hand, local City police and fire officers, City Council members, County Supervisors, and candidates for each body attended as well. A barbeque dinner, snow cones, and cotton candy were provided to attendees free of charge. A highlight of the evening was a multicultural talent show, which included Hmong and Mexican dancers, singing, a rap performance, and even standup comedy.

AFWD staff provided attendees with information on our One Stop services, handed out job lead flyers, and encouraged visitors to stop by our Chico Offices for resume, job search, training, or other services. It was also a great opportunity for staff members to introduce themselves on a personal level to the community, and to put a face to the services we offer. A conservative estimate is that AFWD staff engaged with around 75 individuals one-on-one, and provided a visible community presence to hundreds more.

AFWD is proud to be a part of the Chapmantown Night Out community. We are grateful to the event organizers for the opportunity to meet the citizens of Chapmantown and show them how we provide pathways to success.
On a beautiful, early fall evening on September 12, 2018 at Riffles Resort located beside an ambling section of the Feather River, over 100 Oroville community members and business owners shared some good food and common community goals. This low-key annual event showcased how the Oroville Economic Alliance (OEA) has been promoting business retention, attraction, and growth in the greater Oroville area. The OEA is under the umbrella of the Oroville Area Chamber of Commerce.

The short program that evening centered around the new Chamber CEO, Eric Smith’s vision for the future of Oroville. There was an informative Q&A time from the locals as Eric wanted to get to know the thoughts and opinions of the stakeholders. The theme of the event was based on the monopoly board game and there was an Oroville-opoly game board on display that depicted Oroville businesses, prompting discussions on historic and current business lore. Dirk’s Automotive lead the pack with 45+ years in the Oroville Community and is one of the longest running members of the Chamber.
In partnership with the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet), the Oroville branch of the Butte County Library is one of many libraries that offer help to veterans and their families. Veterans can visit the Veterans Resource Center at any participating public library to learn about state and federal education, employment, housing, health, disability and other benefits that may be available to them and their families.

Veterans can call their local library to schedule a one-on-one consultation with trained volunteers, many of whom are veterans themselves or who have had professional experience assisting veterans, or they may just drop by and check out the collection of library books and other library materials selected especially for veterans.

If their local library is not listed as a resource on the website https://calibrariesforveterans.org/veterans.html they may contact the California Department of Veterans Affairs or call toll free 1-844-SERV-VET for the nearest County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO).

In attending a Veterans Connect @ the Library event at the Oroville Branch of the Butte County Library on Saturday, October 20, 2018, I was pleased to meet United States Army Veteran, Nancy Prince. Nancy shared with me that she has been in to Alliance for Workforce Development’s new location in Chico and has received wonderful assistance with updating her resume from our Resource Staff. She uses the Resource Room computers as well as the Job Boards on a regular basis.

Nancy was attending the event at the library to learn about all the veteran’s benefits offered through the local Veteran’s Service Organization (VSO). As part of the Vetconnect program at the local libraries, Dennis Whitt from the VSO, provided us an in-depth PowerPoint presentation on all the services available to veterans and their families including home loans up to 100% of the value, college assistance for veterans and their children, temporary housing for the homeless, medical and mental health services, and services for spouses of Veterans.

Graciela Tiscareno-Sato, United States Air Force Captain, was on hand to deliver her presentation on Authentic Personal Branding for Military Veterans, where we learned the benefits of setting yourself apart by effective “Personal Branding”. Graciela Tiscareno-Sato is an Air Force veteran and former aviator who left active duty with a master degree in global marketing and management. She has since become an award-winning author, keynote speaker and workshop facilitator. She has taught many veterans in Personal Branding workshops across the USA how to create their own compelling, memorable, unique branding statements. Topics covered in the workshop included:

- Are you having trouble communicating your distinctive experiences and achievements earned on active duty?
- Are you feeling shy and awkward talking about yourself?
- Are you struggling to get people to remember you long enough to call you for an interview?
- Are you hesitant to talk about your earned awesomeness and the value you will bring to a civilian employer?
- Are you unsure of which words to use as you apply for university or grad school admission?

Graciela brings this critical workforce expertise to veterans in a three-module course they can enjoy at their own pace. Participants will learn how to position themselves as the MUST-HAVE candidate and be comfortable doing so.
Brett Hawkins served in the U.S. Navy as a Chinese Linguist for 14 years. When the Camp Fire occurred, Brett was employed as a full-time home care provider in Paradise. Due to the business closing from the Camp Fire disaster, Brett found himself unemployed and evacuated from his home and no idea on how to start over.

After receiving assistance from AFWD, to file for Disaster Unemployment Insurance Benefits at the Disaster Relief Center, he started working with AFWD and Work for Warriors to find a new career path and employment.

Brett wanted to be employed in an occupation within the Social Services environment. After some research and evaluation it was determined that Brett did not have the skills, knowledge and or understanding to work in this field yet. Butte County opened Right of Entry Center(s) and was willing to take on individuals that needed some work experience. This opportunity would allow him to learn some of the skills necessary for this particular sector. Brett lacked the skills and the understanding of this career path, as his previous occupations were not in this line of work.

Working with AFWD, Brett was able to get an internship position with Butte County. The ROE Processor internship would give him the knowledge, understanding and insight to the skills he would need in the social service sector. This particular sector shows growth in Butte County and upon completion of the Internship, Brett would be able to use these new skills and experience to obtain full-time, self-sufficient employment.

Brett enjoys his internship, the learning experience and enjoys his role in helping other displaced citizens caused by the Camp Fire.
Trisha Floyd was a job seeker searching for any type of employment and assist her spouse to support their family in Paradise. She had 12 years of administrative and receptionist skills and four years as a Military Police in the U.S. Air Force. Her discipline that was molded by serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, gave her the resilience to job search in Butte County. She attended a one week Job Readiness class at the new AFWD Inc. America’s Job Center Office in Chico. Trisha learned new resume, application and interviewing strategies for the New World of Work.

Soon after the class ended she created new job search goals for herself. She quickly submitted her resume for a full-time Fiscal Operations Assistant at Nest Bedding in Magalia. Trisha was able to utilize her new job seeker strategies and successfully interviewed for the position and was immediately hired. On July 24, 2018 she was enrolled in the Dislocated Worker Program and participated in the On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program.

Trisha had successfully shown how skilled she was and how her skills could transfer to a new occupation in a new sector. Her OJT began on August 6, 2018 and according to her supervisor, Trisha had made an immediate impact in her position. Supervisor stated Trisha quickly improved the Fiscal Operations systems that existed and created new systems.

Trisha’s OJT ended on November 26, 2018 and according to her supervisor, Trisha was able to be successfully trained in nearly all of her core indicators listed on her OJT evaluation. Supervisor stated Trisha will continue to learn new skills and meet any challenges she’ll face. Trisha ended her OJT with a promotion and a raise. Trisha had reinvented her job seeker persona with success. She indeed became Trisha Floyd 2.0!
Zack was referred to AFWD by the Butte County Probation Department in July, for assistance with attending the Butte County Office of Education Career Technical Education Center’s Professional Welding Academy.

While in the process of completing his probation requirements, the opportunity for training was presented and Zack really wanted to take advantage of everything he could to show that he was turning his life around, as well as to be an example to his young son. During training, Zack had a minor setback, but was able to complete the Welding Academy. The Instructor was impressed with Zack’s determination and perseverance to graduate and move on to his Internship.

While Interning, Zack had the opportunity to interview for a Welder position at Norfield, Inc. This company is aware of the On the Job Training programs through AFWD, and reached out to the Business Service Representative. While Zack did not have all of the necessary skills to enter employment on his own, the employer was willing to hire him and train him through the OJT program.

Zack has most certainly turned his life around with the help of the Class Room Training and OJT programs through AFWD. He has been able to rent a house for himself and his family, and purchase a used vehicle for work.
Butte County Transitional Age Youth Program (TAY) has had many amazing success stories with the participants. TAY is a 1-year diversion program that once completed and successful, the criminal charges are removed from a participant’s record. Since starting the TAY program in 2017, there have been twenty-eight enrolled participants and the number continues to grow. Working with community-based organizations which focus on job development, education and treatment, as well as other Butte County departments, has allowed the participants to receive the best possible programming. The hard work that has been put into this project has not gone unnoticed. The California State Associate of Counties has awarded Butte County Transitional Age Youth Program the 2018 Challenge Merit Award. It goes to show that working together for the same purpose can make a difference in lives of our participants.
Butte County
Total Visitors
15,155

Butte County
Business Services
Businesses Served 562
Services Provided 2,652

AFWD
Total Clients Enrolled
988

Unemployment Rate
(As of: November 2018)
Butte 4.3% Nevada 3.3%
Lassen 4.1% Plumas 6.4%
Modoc 6.3% Sierra 4.8%