Grocery Outlet Returns to Paradise

Almost 3 years after the devastating loss of the original Grocery Outlet store on Clark Road in Paradise, a new store has opened on Skyway under new Independent Owner-Operators, Wayne and Livia Kurtz.

Grocery Outlet, an extreme-value grocery retailer based in Emeryville, California, offers customers big savings on brand-name products. The company, celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, has more than 375 locations throughout California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Washington.

The new store in Paradise brings 32 new jobs to the Paradise Ridge and every position was filled with a Camp Fire survivor eager to return to their homes in Paradise. Grocery Outlet’s vision to open a new store and Wayne & Livia’s desire to hire locally led them to seek out the assistance of Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD). The Camp Fire Recovery Business Services Team set out to identify candidates for full-time and part-time opportunities.

First, the Camp Fire Recovery Business Services team, planned, organized, and executed a company-specific job fair working closely with their corporate office and the new Owner-Operators to develop a marketing strategy to attract candidates in a volatile period of high unemployment and low job seeker interest. The strategy included reaching out to our partners with the Employment Development Department, Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services, the Camp Fire Collaborative Case Management team, AFWD’s candidate pools, as well as utilizing AFWD’s marketing resources to advertise the job fair across all social media streams. The strategy worked! Over a two-day period, Owner-Operators interviewed 57 candidates and selected 32 individuals for various roles in management, customer service, and inventory control.
A Refreshing Start

Cole Ivy came to Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) in early July 2021 in need of assistance with entering the workforce for the first time. Cole was excited to begin his own career pathway after assisting his parents with their event planning business, but he wasn’t sure how to enter into the construction industry with no professional experience. Cole was enrolled into the Adult program to receive one on one assistance with connecting with employers locally who were hiring in his desired career pathway. After connecting with a Business Service Representative, Cole was immediately introduced to the owner, Matt, of Emerald Pools! One thing led to another and the opportunity for an On-The-Job Training (OJT) service provided by AFWD was a reality!

Emerald Pools is a locally owned company that provides professional swimming pool installation and maintenance. Their mission statement is to provide the Chico area with pride and commitment. The position of Pool Construction Laborer and the learning opportunity through the OJT was exactly what Cole needed!

Through the OJT, Cole has learned a plethora of knowledge when it comes to his position and continues to grow each day. He thoroughly enjoys the work he is performing and looks forward to what will come of it in the future. We are excited for Cole and proud of the characteristics of teachability and humility that he has obtained! Great job, Cole!

Connecting People and Ideas

The Young Professional Organization (YPO) through the Chico Chamber of Commerce is helping to connect people and ideas. As an organization with plenty of delegates to offer this organization, the Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) is proud to support team members in participating with the YPO during their monthly functions. While each meeting is decidedly different by design, topics range from online Zoom-meeting Etiquette to what strategies local restaurants took part in during the Covid lockdown to stay afloat. Each meeting typically has a guest speaker, a young professional, to speak as an expert in that month’s meeting topic.

While these meetings are educational, they also provide a venue for local businesses and organizations to connect and talk about common goals. AFWD has recently made new partnerships with some of the members and as we move forward with the cultural and professional shifts that Covid-19 has brought to the world, these new partnerships will help us stay the course for our local economic recovery.
Family Member Opportunities

With the growing need to fill healthcare positions in the Northstate, in collaboration with SMART Workforce Center, Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) launched a new job seeker resource. Healthcare has been a priority sector in Northern California for a long time due to the challenge of recruiting and retaining qualified healthcare providers ranging from entry-level to highly skilled. This challenge is even more difficult within the rural areas of our beautiful locale. While we have had an ongoing recruitment strategy in our area, a collateral challenge has been identified.

When recruiting medical providers into the counties we serve, the family members of these relocated individuals needed streamlined job-seeking assistance. Through a partnership between AFWD and SMART, in association with Partnership Health Plan and the many healthcare providers in the counties we serve, we are proud to present the Family Member Opportunities tool found on northstatejobs.com. This tool makes it much easier for the new members of our communities to lay down roots and grow with us.

The Family Member Opportunities tool will make it easy for future residents to connect to the America’s Job Center of California (AJCC) in the county where they will be moving. From the Family Member Opportunities webpage, the user can click on the county that they intend to relocate to and will then be directed to the website of the corresponding AJCC in that area. Once on the proper AJCC website, the candidate can call or fill out a “Contact Us” form. From there, the talented staff at the AJCC will follow up and identify how best to assist the job seeker.

This new tool is a big win for Northern California and will make it easier to retain medical providers and help with the growing workforce need in our area by connecting those who need a job to the employers who are hiring. AFWD and SMART are proud to join forces to assist the healthcare sector and make a positive impact on our community as a whole.

You can check out the website here:
https://northstatejobs.com/medical-provider-family-member-opportunities/
Moving Forward

Tommy Schmitz is currently a participant at the Male Community Reentry Program (MCRP) in Butte County. Once Tommy completed his programming, he had the opportunity to job search. He participated in weekly AFWD employment workshops and always had a great attitude. Tommy has been incarcerated for the past 13 years; prior to incarceration, he worked in the manufacturing industry. Tommy’s positive attitude and past skills made him a perfect candidate for and On-the-Job Training. After completing some vocational assessments, he was connected with local employers. Fast forward to now, and Tommy has successfully completed his OJT as a Welding Assistant at Metal Works. He will continue working full-time and reside in Butte County. He is currently preparing to leave the reentry program and move forward in the right direction.

“Tommy is doing really well. We are glad to have him as an employee.”

Power of 100 Women Makes Phlebotomy Success Happen

Gabrael came to AFWD in September of 2020. She had been out of work since she survived the 2018 campfire where her house was destroyed. She was also a single mother parenting her young daughter. Gabrael had prior work experience working as a caregiver before the fire and was looking for assistance in pursuing a career in the medical field of phlebotomy. When she met with her CCA she had applied to Butte County’s CTE phlebotomy program. She later found out she was not accepted, so the first task was to locate another phlebotomy program. Her CCA let her know about a program out of Yuba City with Cal Regional. She received help applying and was accepted, but needed tuition assistance, and with the assistance of her CCA applied for a grant with Chico’s Power Of 100 Women program. She received the grant which helped her with the cost of tuition as well as uniforms and textbooks.

Gabrael stayed in constant contact with her CCA, and completed the course with flying colors in May of 2021. They then tackled job search. There was a job opening with Mangrove Medical Group as a Receptionist with room to grow into a phlebotomist position. Gabrael interviewed and was selected for the position and an On-the-Job Training. She has now been working with Mangrove Medical Group for over a month and continues to thrive. Gabrael has been persistent in entering the medical field and continues to work to achieve her goal in becoming a phlebotomist.
Déjà Vu – A Pandemic Business Development Story

This September, Alliance for Workforce Development the opportunity to work with a brand-new Downtown Chico restaurant, Déjà Vu Breakfast Company! This small, but fancy new restaurant, owned by Chico local Christian Griffith, combines 1930’s-style atmosphere and locally-sourced food and drinks for the ultimate breakfast and lunch dining experience. Opening their doors in August, after several challenges, they’ve been an immediate success in the community.

When Christian first signed the lease for his restaurant in February 2020, he thought everything would go smoothly for an anticipated opening in May. As we’ve all become too aware, we were struck by a global pandemic the very next month. This caused significant problems, and of course, impeded the opening of Déjà Vu Breakfast Co. Against all adversity, Christian was determined to pursue his dream. AFWD met with Christian in mid-2020 and immediately began seeking resources to guide this new business’s development. We were able to post the positions Mr. Griffith needed to fill on our platforms and provide prescreened candidates for consideration. Once Déjà Vu Breakfast Company was finally ready to open, it immediately became a busy spot in Chico and a favorite among the locals. The very next month, we had the honor of helping a young man start his career in the hospitality field with an OJT with Déjà Vu Breakfast Co. The trainee has taken well to the Line Cook position and continues training with the company.

AFWD is proud to support Déjà Vu Breakfast Company with business services. We very much look forward to the continuing support of this excellent new restaurant establishment!
Busy Babies Daycare and Preschool

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) and Busy Babies Daycare and Preschool teamed up to assist the business in growing! With such a great need in our area for daycare and preschool, this small 12 child daycare decided it was time to grow and provide quality safe care for up to 49 children and infants. The BSR (Business Service Representative) was able to assist them with required new employee documents and connections to funding streams and support such as SBA (Small Business Association) and Valley Oak Children Services. These key connections allowed the owners to grow their business with sound advice and industry-specific support.

Recruiting during a pandemic proved to be challenging but AFWD was able to successfully recruit candidates through the NDWG Camp Fire program and place them into their new roles through the On the Job Training (OJT). The Business Service Representative was also able to utilize the program for candidates that were still working on obtaining the required Early Childhood Education (ECE) units and give them hands-on work experience.

At the two-week check-in, the employer was delighted with the new employees and their willingness to learn and upskill via the WEX and OJT training as well as their commitment to providing a safe and educational environment for local children. Busy Babies Daycare has raved about the success of AFWD’s NDWG Program in helping their business support local families.
**Jessika Allen Joins Career Center Advisor Team**

I was referred to Alliance for Workforce Development Inc. for an OJT in 2019 for an entry level position, working at a homeless shelter. I then gained skills in the Social Work field and advanced to a promotional position, as a Case Manager, serving clients of the shelter.

In August of 2021, I applied for an open position with AFWD, and subsequently began working as a Resource and Referral Coordinator. Recently, I was provided an opportunity to submit my application for a position as a Career Center Advisor, and in November of 2021 joined the Adult/Dislocated/Special Programs team in the Chico, Cohasset office.

I appreciate having the opportunity to now establish a career with AFWD and have the ability to help clients establish their own success stories, just as I was able to. I plan to continue to advance my skills and knowledge in order to make a difference in not only the community, but the labor force as well.

**Champelle Davison Joins the Oroville AFWD Team**

Initially, I came to AFWD as a client in 2018 after being referred by Social Services for workforce services assistance. I was provided an opportunity to participate in an On-the-Job Training as a janitor at a local homeless shelter. After successfully completing the OJT, I was promoted to Family Case Manager/ Site Lead, and began providing assistance to clients of the shelter. After learning more about my likes in the case management career, I knew that I wanted to continue helping those similar to myself. An AFWD staff member referred me to a job opening AFWD. I applied and accepted a position. In November 2021 I began working as a Career Center Advisor in the Oroville office.

My goal while working at AFWD is to repay my gratitude back to AFWD and continue helping those with financial disadvantages become all they can be and more.
Rehabilitation Success in Education and Employment

Matthew Paradise has been enrolled in AFWD’s P2E program since May, 2021. He chose to enroll in classes at Butte College to further his education while looking for employment. He is currently enrolled in a full schedule and earning straight A’s. His goal is to get a BS in Applied Science with a concentration in Business Marketing.

In September, he was released from parole and decided to move back to his home state of Washington. He has reunited with his mother after 13 long years and is happy to be at home. Recently, he found employment at Roger’s Bakery, a small local eatery in his area. He is so grateful to have found such a great employer and a place where he is able to use his customer service skills.

Matthew’s story shows real rehabilitation and recovery. AFWD looks forward to watching Matthew grow in his career and life. Go Matthew, Go!

Something to be Proud Of

Michael Scott enrolled in the P2E program in July of 2021. He had recently been released from prison and was looking for employment while completing his conditions of Parole. Michael had a desire to find something that was not just a job, but a career. Something that would be able to provide a solid foundation of support for him and his child. He initially got a job with a local production company but stayed persistent in his desire to find a sustainable career he could be proud of. With the help of family and friends, Michael was able to enroll in a Truck Driving course through Jiffy’s Truck Rental in Redding, CA that would eventually lead to the career he always dreamed of! With the permission of Parole and the help of AFWD to provide for his lodging expenses, Michael completed his week-long training on 9/17/21 and by 9/21/21 was employed with a local distributing company as a Class A Truck Driver. He has since obtained his other endorsements and is looking to continually grow in this field. He has also moved into his own apartment and has a place to call home for him and his child, building new memories and looking forward to many more!
Managing Her Own Goals

Dawn Dennison came to Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) in September 2021, after being referred by a Workforce Partner. Dawn had been looking for full-time employment for quite some time as her previous position as an Ophthalmic Technician was only part-time. Dawn met with a Career Center Advisor (CCA) and completed an application. Dawn was determined eligible and enrolled into the Adult WIOA program. Dawn continued working with a CCA on resume preparation, cover letter assistance, interview techniques, career guidance and job search assistance. Dawn was interested in applying for positions in the social services field and business management but was open to new opportunities. Dawn’s goal was to utilize her recent Business Administration with Management Options Degree. She wanted a career that would be self-sufficiency, full-time and provide opportunity for growth and add to her current skill set. She was encouraged to apply for targeted positions of interest which she was qualified for. Dawn applied for a position as an E-Commerce Operations Support Specialist with Fifth Sun. She was invited to interview and reached out to her CCA for direct assistance.

Dawn was referred to the ‘Successful Interviewing’ virtual workshop video on the AFWD.org website and then met with CCA to complete mock interviews, receiving individualized feedback and guidance. Dawn went into her interview feeling confident and having had that extra support behind her. She was offered the position. She is now responsible for supporting and addressing the high volume of needs in the Print on Demand Ecommerce business aspect of Fifth Sun. She will be providing support to the Merchandising Manager, input products into company platforms, create visual reports for top selling designs monthly and quarterly and maintain the integrity of data in catalogs, product uploads and financial selling reports, amongst other assigned duties. Dawn is loving her new career. She is wanting to grow within one company and excited to see where this new opportunity guides her.
Joshua came to AFWD after he lost his home and employment to the 2018 Campfire disaster. He was unable to secure full-time employment after his layoff in Butte County and requested assistance. Joshua was assessed to determine which steps were needed to move forward with finding employment. He expressed an interest in helping with the clean-up and repair of his community. His resume was provided to the Business Service Representative for a Temporary Job Creation (TJC) placement. Joshua was selected for a TJC placement with The Town of Paradise as a Crew Laborer doing clean-up and repair of the areas damaged by the Campfire.

While participating in the Temporary Job Creation (TJC) working as a Crew Laborer, he obtained some transferable skills as well as certification to use a chainsaw. Although he enjoyed the work, it was only temporary. Joshua applied to Brush Masters, a company developed to assist with fire reduction as a result of the Camp Fire disaster. Joshua had some transferable skills that would assist him with this new position, however, he lacked the necessary training and experience as well as technicalities required to do the job. Joshua was offered the position, however, due to his lack of skills, the position was contingent upon an On-the-Job Training (OJT).

The OJT has been providing hands-on learning in the skills and techniques required for success in this position and helping Joshua to move forward in his career pathway working in the Construction sector assisting his community with fuel reduction related to fire prevention. Upon completion of this OJT, Joshua will have full-time, self-sufficient employment with a stable position, providing a service to the community he grew up in.
Clabey Harris came to Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) in July 2021 as a job seeker. Clabey was looking for a possible on the job training opportunity or change in careers. His hope was finding employment that would offer career and wage advancement opportunities, as well as long term placement. After completing the referral process, Clabey met with a Career Center Advisor, who completed an eligibility intake to see if he qualified for AFWD programs under Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Clabey was enrolled with the barriers of long-term unemployed and unable to return to his previous employment. Clabey was then enrolled into the Dislocated Worker program.

Clabey stated he has been applying for positions in which he is familiarized and had previous experience in. He also applied for a Warehouse Specialist position for MC Fiber Solutions in Chico, CA. This business specializes in Infrastructure Cabling, Cable Management, Network Patch Cables and Network Modules; which contributes to a comprehensive solution designed for high bandwidth networks. Clabey applied for and interviewed for this position. This employer felt Clabey would be an amazing addition but lacked certain specialized skills for this position, this is when MC Fiber Solutions reached out to AFWD for possible assistance with an on the job training (OJT) opportunity for Clabey.

Clabey began his Warehouse Specialist position, training, while on the job. The employer was extremely happy with Clabey’s eagerness to learn, positive attitude and the other transferrable skills he brought to the position and MC Fiber Solutions. Clabey met all his training milestones and completed his training as “successful” and is ecstatic about his new position and career pathway in the specialized world of fiber solutions and connecting the world better, to technology.
A Healthier Horizon

Healthier Horizons started their company to provide their customers with modern, healthy, customizable vending options. They deliver quick, responsive services with modern inventory tracking software to ensure their machines are serviced at just the right time, and their customer’s employees are satisfied! They are the workplace refreshment experts!

Choices available through Healthier Horizons include Cold Beverages, Snack & Healthy Vending, Custom Vending, and Hot Beverage Services. Customers have the option of choosing single-serve or commercial brewers for their coffee service. Healthier Horizon’s Micro Market machines offer modern, healthy solutions, including fresh items like sandwiches and salads. The innovative technology of the touch screens allows customers to choose from a variety of convenient and secure payment options including a Market Account, Debit Card, Credit Card, Apply Pay, and of course, cash. The advanced technology carefully traces sales and monitors inventory levels to help improve customer satisfaction.

In September, owner Chad Starkey contacted Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc., (AFWD) with a need for a full-time Vending Machine Route Driver. Resumes were sent, and the candidate selected required complete training from the ground up. AFWD was able to offer a wage reimbursement for Chad’s trainee and the client began work on Friday, October 8, 2021.

Got a Bead on a Successful Partnership

Butte County’s Career Technical Education (CTE) programs 8-week welding academy provides a National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) welding certification. Metal Works is a successful multi-faceted steel fabrication, erection, and sales operation serving the Western United States located in Oroville that is searching for talent. Alliance for Workforce Development’s (AFWD) on-the-job training (OJT) program provides an excellent opportunity to assist graduates with obtaining a higher skill set to become proficient during a brief training period.

With the assistance of Shane Gower, the welding program instructor an extremely successful partnership has formed and brought some exciting new talent on at Metal Works. These students were ready for their new careers to take off and they proved to be great candidates for employment but needed a bit more welding experience on the job. AFWD staff was able to join in to close the deal and provide an OJT.
Jeffrey Ford came to Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) in May 2021. Jeffrey was getting ready to graduate from California State University, Chico; with a degree in Civil Engineering. Jeffrey was struggling to secure an internship or job, prior to graduation. He did apply for a position with Jackson and Sands Engineering in Chico, CA, for a Staff Engineer position. Due to Jeffrey lacking the hands-on experience and specific skills of the position, the employer reached out to AFWD for possible assistance with an on the job training (OJT). Jeffrey met with a Career Center Advisor and was determined eligible for employment and training services under the Title-I Workforce and Innovations Opportunities Act (WIOA). Jeffrey was enrolled, provided an orientation of services and an initial assessment to evaluate his needs for services. An objective assessment was conducted to determine his interest and an employment plan was developed for the on the job training opportunity. This position would take the education Jeffrey worked so hard for and combine it with the OJT; in order to learn the job skills specific to the Staff Engineering position with Jackson and Sands Engineering. Jeffrey completed his OJT successfully and is on his career pathway, cementing his foundation in Engineering. Jeffrey was asked about his experience with AFWD and he stated, “Alliance for Workforce has provided me with the building blocks for my career in Civil Engineering. I graduated Chico State with a Bachelor’s of Science in Civil engineering during the height of Covid-19. The summer before I graduated, I had an internship setup which is the typical path for young engineers to get some valuable experience before they graduate. Unfortunately, Covid-19 impacted the ability to see that internship so I was graduating with zero experience outside of the class room. During the subsequent two semesters, I worked very hard to setup a job or internship for when I graduated. Eventually, Alliance for Workforce was able to step in and help me find a good fit at Jackson and Sands Engineering where I have really stepped into my place. The professionals at Jackson and Sands put a lot of trust into me and had me starting real jobs my second day. They started small and few, however in the last couple months I have been taking on a large portion of the work load. Alliance for Workforce helped me find a place at Jackson and Sands Engineering and begin my career.”
Temporary Stepping Stones

Adolfo was referred to the AFWD Recovery Office by a friend for assistance with finding employment. He grew up in Paradise and was hoping there was something he could do to help out his community that was destroyed by the Camp Fire disaster and earn an income as well. Adolfo was a soldier with the California National Guard, however, he is not currently active. This experience provided him with a general understanding of safety directions and a strong work ethic performing physically demanding arduous tasks.

Adolfo was interested in temporary work to get him by until he finds permanent, stable, full-time employment. Providing a service to his community was a top priority for Adolfo making him an excellent candidate to participate in a Temporary Job Creation (TJC). As a Crew Laborer for the Town of Paradise, he has been assisting with the clean-up and repair work as a result of the disaster. At the worksite, Adolfo has been clearing brush and vegetation from the effects of the Campfire and learning to operate, clean, and maintain basic tools and equipment used on the job. In addition, AFWD provided the means for him to take a Chainsaw Safety Certification course which will be added to his new skill set. The training and experience he has received will open doors to a variety of different Vegetation Management positions that are available in Butte County. Adolfo is grateful for this opportunity to contribute to a great cause, learn new skills and earn an income while looking for future permanent, unsubsidized employment.
When a Window Closes a Door Opens

Richard Sapp sought out services from Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) at the Recovery office after he lost his home and business in the 2020 North Complex Fire. Richard was enrolled as a Dislocated Worker with NDWG Mega Fire due to the challenges he had obtaining full-time, stable, self-sufficient employment and requested assistance. After losing everything in the disaster he was not in a position to rebuild the business stating, “My heart is just not in it, after losing everything”. Richard had been considering a new career pathway in transportation for some time and after considerable research, determined this would be a stable direction and the opportune time to pursue it. AFWD supported the occupational skills training, assisting Richard with the requirements and training necessary to obtain his Class A driver's license. He was accepted and enrolled in the 240-hour Tractor Trailer Operator training through American Career Training Center in Redding, CA.

Richard graduated from the training on September 13, 2021, and obtained his Commercial Truck driving license soon after. Richard worked hard to obtain employment by using all of his connections and resources he had obtained while attending training. On October 1st he began his new Truck Driving position with Blackwell Consolidation, LLC located in Central Point Oregon. His starting pay is $33.00 an hour and he will be driving all of the Western States. Richard states, he is very happy with his new job/career and is driving daily learning everything about this new occupation. Richard’s training coach is impressed with his capabilities and feels he will be ready to drive solo ahead of schedule. Richard’s dedication and strong work ethic as well as some assistance from AFWD enabled him to begin a new career pathway and obtain full-time, self-sufficient employment. Congratulations Richard!

Learning Big Rigs

Vernon McGuire was enrolled into AFWD’s WIOA Program on May 1st 2021. He was, at the time, an Iron Worker and conducting tasks that were very taxing on him. He comes from a long line of truck drivers and decided that he would like transition into a career in transportation. He enrolled into California Human Development Cooperation’s - Anthony Soto Truck Driving School. He was ready to get behind the wheel and drive like a many of his family members. Vernon realized that his savings were insufficient to cover the cost of the program and was looking for assistance in meeting his career goal. AFWD was able to assist him with the remaining required costs so he could complete his training program, Graduate and obtain his Commercial Drivers license. He passed all of his book work and behind the wheel testing with A’s. This really seemed to be his passion and he picked up on it really quickly. After graduation he needed to take his written and behind the wheel driving test with DMV before he was ready to start job seeking. Knowing that he would most likely be driving long haul until he reached a certain number of hours, he was prepared to do so. Vernon would come into AFWD’s office almost daily to job search and meet with his Career Center Advisor. There were several companies that he applied to and was offered a position driving long haul. After several days a local opportunity as a commercial driver with Mission Linen became available, that he would accept in the form of an On-the-Job Training through AFWD. Vernon recognized his lack of practical experience as a truck driver and is excited to get additional training through AFWD. He is appreciative of all of the assistance that he has received so far and will continue to receive during this new opportunity career opportunity.
Developing a Meaningful Career

Michelle Bazer came to Alliance For Workforce Development (AFWD) in August as a recently laid off employee from Lungberg Family Farms. She informed AFWD that she has had difficulty in finding full-time work due to the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic and that she is looking for a position where she can work outside and benefit the community. In her last employment she was working as a laborer where she was sanitizing all the surfaces at the Lungberg Family Farms to insure safety as the pandemic continued.

AFWD has had the opportunity to connect Michelle with a COVID-19 NDWG, TJC placement at the City Of Chico as a Sanitation Maintenance Worker as her desires and skills closely aligned with the position. Immediately into the start of the employment, Michelle stated that she feels this employment will be a great fit for her and that it allows her to be in her desired environment which is being outside! She has been able to sharpen her skills and has obtained additional skills with sanitization and cleanliness protocols with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to public parks.

In this position, Michelle assists at park facilities where she is performing extensive cleanup and sanitizing of local park facilities. She continues to grow in the knowledge and passion for this type of work, helping to keep her community safe. Michelle is optimistic and eager to continue building her professionalism through this employment while she continues to seek full time employment with the assistance of AFWD. We are thankful for Michelle’s diligence in her work and admire her devotion to helping!

Developing a Meaningful Career

Michael Healey was enrolled into the WIOA Program on December 16th 2020. He moved to Chico California from Livermore California for an opportunity to become a firefighter through an On-the-Job Training Program through the AFWD programs. He was in the Airforce for 8 years as a Fuel Supervisor. He operated mobile and stationary hydrants, refueled equipment to dispense products to aircrafts and ground support equipment and specific facilities. He has always been a position where he wants to help people, and becoming a Firefighter would be the ultimate dream for him to help those in need. He was offered a spot in the City of Chico Firefighting Academy through an On-the-job Training opportunity. Without the OJT opportunity in the academy he would not have the chance to live out his dreams. The OJT started on January 4th 2020. He had 8 weeks of in class and hands on training, and then 8 weeks at his new firehouse station. Alliance for Workforce Development allowed Michael to follow his dreams and assist those who really need it through the On-the-Job Training Program. He is now responsible for responding to the alarms and emergency calls within the Chico Metropolitan area, analyzing different fire situations, and adhering to safety protocols to ensure his own safety while assisting those in need. He is now employed fulltime as a Municipal Firefighter and doing great. His goal is to one day be a fire chief and with his dedication he is well on his way to achieving his goals.
Leading the Way

Freedom Bowman and his family were temporarily displaced due to the Camp Fire. Shortly after the disaster, he was laid off from his Landscaping position due to their work relying on the now disaster-affected area. Freedom was struggling to secure permanent employment and came to the AFWD Recovery office requesting assistance with finding self-sufficient employment so he could continue to provide for his family. The Town of Paradise selected Freedom to participate in a Temporary Job Creation (TJC) as a Crew Laborer to assist with the clean-up and repair work within the town limits. This opportunity would provide an income while Freedom continues to search for permanent employment. From the beginning, Freedom’s supervisor quickly noticed his strong work ethic and leadership skills and decided to promote him to the Crew Laborer Lead.

Freedom has continued to showcase his exceptional leadership skills as he grows in his role with the Town of Paradise. He participated in the hands-on Chainsaw safety training and demonstrates daily how to safely utilize this highly sought-after skill. With Freedom’s transferrable skills from his previous employment, his determination, and goal-oriented mindset, he has become an excellent candidate for numerous positions available within the Paradise community. Between his promotion and safety training, Freedom is building a strong foundation making him more marketable to future employers.

Freedom is grateful for the opportunities this TJC program has opened up for him and he is confident he will secure his permanent dream job soon. In the meantime, he finds joy in assisting his community with the much-needed repair work and is proud to play a role during this time of need.
Unemployment Information
July 2021 - November 2021

Unemployment Rates
(As of: Nov. 2021)
California 5.4%
Butte County 4.9%

Weekly Initial Claims by Industry Sector

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

Butte County - 2nd Quarter
One-Stop Visitors: 2,864
Businesses Served: 484
Business Services: 5,746
AFWD
Clients Enrolled: 725

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