Labor Law Update Workshop/Webinar

Heraclitus’s quote, “The only thing that is constant is change” certainly holds true for Labor Laws and Employer/Employee relations. On January 24, 2018 employers, managers, community members and Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) staff attended in person or via webinar hosted by Butte College, The Training Place – Labor Law Update 2018 workshop facilitated by Ann M. Wick, Attorney at Law. Ann has more than 20+ years of experience advising companies of all sizes in matters involving employment and labor law.

2018 offered a first by offering webinar access, which allowed participants from Lassen, Modoc, Plumas and Sierra counties to participate without having to deal with the winter driving conditions.

Ann provided overviews of significant labor and employment legislation taking effect in 2018 and court decisions from 2017 that affect employers. New law subjects discussed encompassed:

- New Hire Changes-Ban the Box and Salary History Issues
- Immigration Worker Protection Act
- New Parental Leave Law
- Human Trafficking Issue

Ann revisited laws involving:

- Harassment Training Requirements
- California Sick Leave Law
- Increase in Minimum Wage
- Changes to NLRB Enforcement Policies

Participants were able to ask questions with Ann providing clarification for the diverse subject matter that was delivered during this workshop. James Kooyman, H.R. Director for Seneca Healthcare District, felt the workshop was “Very informative, definitely worth the time to attend.” Webinar participant Gwenna MacDonald, City of Susanville, City Clerk stated, “I learned so much which has brought up other questions. I reached out to AFWD, who in turn has supplied important reference materials for my department.”
Lassen Alliance Discovers Lassen College

Six Lassen Alliance Community Day School students participated in the bi-annual Discover Lassen Community College program on February 6, 2018. The group was chaperoned by staff from the school and from the Lassen office of Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc.

After spending the first 30 minutes in the college gym getting acquainted with Lassen College’s Career and Technical programs, the students ventured out to visit demonstrations of each of those programs. They began with Administrative of Justice where they were asked to participate in a crime scene investigation. They were given clues, had to mark evidence, sketch the crime scene and victim, interview persons reporting the crime, and attempt to analyze what happened. From there they visited Fire Science. Several students volunteered to don fire gear and practice putting out a fire. Once into the gear, Instructor Chris Baker taught them the P.A.S.S. method of using a fire extinguisher. School staff were then given home fire safety handouts to review with the students.

Next on the agenda, was Gunsmithing. Here students watched a demonstration of color case hardening of metal. Steel was baked for two hours at high temperature and then plunged into cold water to give the metal a rainbow watercolor effect. The presenter mentioned that the Gunsmithing program at Lassen College, which was started in 1945, is the oldest in the country. He also mentioned that many gunsmiths are retiring and jobs are opening up in the industry.

Next stop was the Agriculture Department. Students played a game similar to Jeopardy answering questions about animals and plants to win candy and prizes. Students then watched demonstrations of computerized laser metal cutting in the Welding department and toured the Automotive department where they saw a new state-of-the-art $20,000 diagnostic scanner.

A quick walk moved the group to the college’s Child Development Center. There students spoke with instructors in three levels of child development based on the age of the child. They had an infant section, a toddler section, and a pre-school section. Each area had age-appropriate tactile play sections for the students to experience.
Discover Lassen College continued

The group went on to a different building in the college which housed the Nursing and EMT/EMS programs. They watched phlebotomy and staple removing demonstrations by LVN students in the nursing lab. They participated with EMS/EMT students in immobilizing a patient. Some students experienced being the patient being immobilized.

The tour concluded with an exploration of the Graphic Design department. Students were able to try out programs where they could create designs and actually draw using a computer. A Graphics Design instructor and his students helped with questions regarding use of the programs.

All Lassen College Career and Technical departments did an excellent job actively engaging these at-risk students with relevant activities.
Check It Out! A Youth Internship

In November of 2017, Elizabeth Knigge came into the Business and Career Network looking for employment. Referred by frontline staff to the Youth Program, she had worked as an in-home caregiver and was having difficulty securing that next job. Although Elizabeth also had retail experience, she was looking for a quieter environment that would accommodate her disabilities. After completing several career and personal assessments, it was determined that Elizabeth would be best served in a creative, detail-oriented environment where she would have supportive supervision and opportunities for creativity. Although searching for work, her Career Center Advisor (CCA) thought she would be best served with an internship. The hurdle was finding the right internship.

With a closer look at her assessments and matching occupations, her CCA saw a commonality of library occupations: Library Science Teachers, Librarians, and Library Technicians. The CCA contacted the Lassen District Library with information regarding internships. The Library Director approached her board of directors and the employee who would supervise Elizabeth. The answer was affirmative and after interviewing Elizabeth, they were ready to have her start. Elizabeth was quite excited about this opportunity.

Her CCA reviewed with her labor occupational data for Library Technicians and the labor market information. The internship at Lassen Library has been such a positive experience for Elizabeth. The Library Director states that Elizabeth is a natural for this type of work. They quiz all employees on the Dewey Decimal System before they start and Elizabeth’s score was one of the highest she had seen. She counseled Elizabeth that although jobs in the field are scarce in Lassen County, there are many opportunities in larger areas especially those with colleges and universities. Elizabeth says she loves her job and she really likes how her worksite supervisor trains her to do the work carefully. They give her opportunities to be creative and learn new skills. Her supervisor is currently working with her on developing people skills of answering the phone and manning the circulation desk. All her co-workers enjoy involving her in library programming. She recently participated in “Dr. Seuss Day”, a celebration of Dr. Seuss’ birthday complete with readings from his books, coloring activities, prizes, and giveaways. Elizabeth also developed and directed a children’s “Shamrock Scavenger Hunt” for St. Patrick’s Day. She created a flyer advertising the event and with the help of her supervisors, posted it to various social media sites to get the word out to parents.
Going the Extra Mile

Jessica “JJ” recently completed the Licensed Vocational Nursing (LVN) program at Feather River College. She had been employed for 17 years as a Medical Assistant, but had never worked as a LVN before. She was referred to the Business and Career Network office in Susanville to meet with a Career Center Advisor (CCA) with Alliance for Workforce Development for potential On-the-Job Training (OJT) services after interviewing for a LVN position with Seneca Healthcare District. She met with a CCA to evaluate her need for assistance and to assess her probability of success in completing her training. Her classroom and clinical LVN training has given her a good basic foundation for this career path. She knew she did not have the necessary hands-on experience needed to perform the position of Clinic LVN without intensive training.

JJ’s previous work experience as a Medical Assistant and her LVN training gave her a good understanding of the skills she would need to learn and demonstrate in order to work as a LVN. Assessments completed with her Career Center Advisor showed JJ’s interests were in line with LVN positions in the healthcare sector, making her an excellent candidate for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult program. Seneca Healthcare District interviewed JJ and determined she had promise as a LVN. They wanted to hire her as a LVN despite her lack of hands-on experience in the position. It was decided an OJT would be helpful in order for JJ to learn the specific and technical functions of the position and to be able to perform them on her own. Job specific goals were created for her to determine her success over the length of the OJT. AFWD, JJ and Seneca Healthcare District worked together to develop an OJT employment plan. JJ was required to meet a specific set of criteria in order to complete her training successfully.

JJ started working in September of 2017 as a LVN at the Seneca Healthcare District Clinic. During the training, her employer commented, “JJ continues to improve and advance her skills. She is patient centered. You can see it every task she performs. She goes the extra mile to perform personalized care. JJ is an above average communicator. She is able to diffuse upset patients well. She is able to guide staff effectively and a positive role model and representative for our organization.” JJ also achieved her LVN Licensure in January of this year.

Great job, JJ!
Lassen Healthcare Employer’s Roundtable

Healthcare and Education professionals gathered on January 31, 2018 for an Employer’s Roundtable organized by Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD). Representatives from Banner Lassen Medical Center, Northeastern Rural Health Clinics, Seneca Healthcare District, Sierra Medical Services Alliance (SEMSA), Lassen Nursing & Rehabilitation Center, High Desert State Prison, Lassen Community College and Lassen County Public Health Department took part as members of the Rural Health Care Industry Sector Partnership whose mission is to improve the accessibility of quality healthcare in Northeastern California.

The goals of the partnership project are to identify employer workforce and training needs and improve the alignment between education and workforce resources in order to meet those objectives.

Christi Myers, Director of Nursing, Lassen Community College, provided a presentation about the Health Sciences and Medical Technology Program which includes LVN, Emergency Medical Services, Certified Medical Assistant and Phlebotomy courses at this time.

Traci Holt, Executive Director, AFWD, shared a presentation with the group recapping the positive progress made towards these goals and the assistance provided by AFWD over the last year. This assistance included funding for On the Job Trainings, Internships, HR Assistance and Client Support. Additionally, AFWD co-hosted alongside Butte Community College a leadership training series titled “Leading in a Health Care Environment.” Traci shared future training opportunities including the possibility of bringing “Hi-Touch Health Care: The Critical Six Soft Skills” to Lassen and Plumas County.

Labor Market Information and the progress made in filling the educational and workforce needs in Lassen County in the healthcare field was presented by Rudeen Monte. This overview revealed there is now a lower vacancy rate for CMAs, EMTs and Paramedics while RNs, LVNs and CNAs are still desperately needed throughout the county. This continues to be a focus that AFWD will further develop solutions towards with community partners.
Career Change Champion

Sam worked as a Drug & Alcohol Journey Level Counselor, but decided the prison environment was not for her as her position did not offer her the career satisfaction she was looking for. She had many transferrable skills and a desire to serve the community. Over her time working as a Drug & Alcohol Journey Level Counselor and in other positions as a Business Assistant and EMT, she discovered her desire to find ways to provide assistance for families in need. Sam had earned her Associate’s Degrees in Drug & Alcohol Counseling and in Human Services at Lassen Community College, hoping to enter into a career in the Social Working field. Sam decided to apply for an Integrated Case Worker position with Lassen County Health and Social Services (LCH&SSD), although she was lacking specific skills in that type of work.

LCH&SSD interviewed Sam and determined she had great potential. They wanted to hire her, despite her lack of experience, but felt she would benefit from an On-the-Job Training (OJT) in order to learn the specific requirements of the position. They referred her to Alliance for Workforce Development for possible assistance. Sam met with a CCA and completed a series of interviews and assessments, which indicated she had the interest and capability of successfully training to become an ICW. It was determined she would benefit from the assistance of AFWD. Sam had a basic knowledge of social services, but not the technical skills and knowledge required for the specific programs involved. It was determined an OJT would be helpful in order for Sam to learn the specific and technical functions of the position and to be able to perform them independently. Job specific goals were created for her to determine her success over the length of the OJT. AFWD and LCH&SSD worked together to develop an OJT employment plan. Sam was required to meet a specific set of criteria in order to complete her training successfully.

Sam started working in October of 2017. She showed great motivation and initiative throughout the entire process and training. Her supervisors stated, “You continue to grow as an ICW. You recently received a compliment from another department head in your dealings with clients. Well done!” Sam successfully completed her OJT recently, receiving either above average or outstanding scores on all competencies.

Way to go, Sam!
Often youth in the foster care system have lived through multiple traumas and disruptive events by the time they begin their transition to adulthood. Angelica Schriver is one former foster youth who’s done amazingly well in that transition. Eighteen and pregnant, Angelica entered a SILP (Supervised Independent Living Placement) in December of 2015. The following June, she graduated from high school, in July gave birth to her son, and in August, started classes at Lassen College.

This last summer, she was accepted into Lassen College’s Licensed Vocational Nursing program. Encouraged by the college and how pleased they have been partnering with Alliance for Workforce Development, she came into the Business & Career Network to speak with a Career Center Advisor. Angelica, being in the foster system, was co-enrolled as a Youth and also as an Adult to support her ETPL Occupational Training. AFWD assisted her with the required uniforms, supplies, and transportation so she could do the classroom and clinical training.

She is now in her final semester of the recently accelerated LVN program with just a couple more months until graduation where she will take her nursing exam, obtain her license, and enter a nursing position in the local community.
AFWD America’s Job Center of California

Statistics

PY 2017 -2018

Lassen County

Total Visitors
13,841

Lassen County Business Services

Businesses Served 59
Services Provided 365

AFWD

Total Clients
Enrolled
721

Unemployment Rate
(As of: February 2018)

Butte 5.7% Nevada 3.9%
Lassen 6.3% Plumas 11.7%
Modoc 10.5% Sierra 7.8%