THANK YOU!

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to our businesses, organizations, and community partners for the support this past year. Our programs and partnerships provide employment opportunities for residents and educational training programs towards career pathways. This supports our local economy, improves lives, and helps the business community thrive.
On April 13, 2021, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) announced the upcoming deactivation of the California Correctional Center (CCC) located in Lassen County by June 30, 2022. CCC is comprised of four facilities and is the hub for training incarcerated people in firefighting. These trained firefighters are placed in one of 14 Conservation (Fire) Camps in Northern California. The fire camps will become part of the Sierra Conservation Center in Jamestown, CA. CCC was built in 1963 with additional facilities build in 1983 and 1988 encompassing Level I, Level II and Level III facilities.

There are currently 1,080 staff employed at CCC and approximately 2,064 incarcerated people. California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation is working with staff as this deactivation proceeds including possible relocation to other institutions.

Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) staff immediately began coordination of Rapid Response services for all impacted employees at CCC and High Desert State Prison (HDSP). Rapid Response services are available for people who have lost their employment at no fault of their own such as a business closure or large layoff.

Rapid Response services include: resume assistance, interviewing assistance, job search, employment skills upgrade, on-the-job training opportunities, education/classroom training, supportive services for required equipment, work attire, etc. to name a few.

The magnitude and impact of CCC’s closure can only be speculated at this time. AFWD stands ready to provide as much assistance as required to help the community members, businesses and county maintain economic stability.
Vanery had been laid off from her job as a Preschool Teacher’s Aide. She was looking for a career path with potential for growth that would help her to support her family. She had been interested in healthcare most of her life and discovered that the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program was available at Lassen Community College. She enrolled herself into the program, deciding to pursue a career in healthcare because she, “desires to help people.” She completed the CNA program in July of 2020.

After completing the program, she applied for a CNA position with Seneca Healthcare District. Although they saw her potential, Seneca knew she had no prior paid experience in healthcare and was lacking the hands-on experience needed. They requested she participate in an On-the-Job Training with Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. Vanery met with a Career Center Advisor in the Susanville office and took assessments to determine her probability of success and need for assistance with an On-the-Job Training for a Nursing Assistant position. Vanery’s assessments showed her to be an excellent match for a career as a Certified Nursing Assistant and for the On-the-Job Training program.

Vanery started working at Seneca Healthcare District in the Skilled Nursing Facility in November of 2020. She worked hard and completed her On-the-Job Training recently. Due to Covid-19, there was a delay in achieving her Certification through the State of California, but she recently tested and passed her exam. She has transitioned to a Certified Nursing Assistant position with Seneca Healthcare District. Her supervisor said, “Vanery is very well liked by all residents and staff members.” She is a great addition to their team. Vanery plans to continue to further her career in the medical field over the next few years.

Great job, Vanery!
Lassen Community College (LCC) has been continuing to produce excellent Licensed Vocational Nurses since the program resumed in 2017. Alliance for Workforce Development is currently assisting 7 of these current students through WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker program funding. Recently, the LCC Licensed Vocational Nursing (LVN) Program has been assisting the community and the Public Health Department by administering Covid-19 vaccines through the drive-thru clinic on March 17th, 2021, and again on April 14, 2021. The LCC nursing students are always ready to jump to the front line to assist our community whenever a need arises. Community service is a value they will take into their future careers as medical professionals. This cohort will be completing their LVN training in the first week of June, 2021.

The Lassen Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Center Advisor assisted on the Mock Interview panel for the LVN program on March 12th, which helped prepare the students for real-world interviews, and allowed them to meet some of the healthcare professionals they will be working with in the future. The interviewees were well-prepared and thoughtful with their interview responses. Undoubtedly, they will make great additions to our medical community.

A big thanks to all of these individuals who are working to make our community a better place!
HEALTHCARE HEROES VIRTUAL HIRING EVENT

As hospitals and clinics fully open, the need for staffing is increasing across the county. Healthcare facilities in rural communities are having a difficult time reaching job seekers due to the restrictions brought on by Covid-19. To meet this growing need of healthcare professionals in our local rural communities, Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) held the Healthcare Heroes Virtual Hiring Event on April 20, 2021.

The online event encompassed Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta and Siskiyou counties with 12 healthcare facilities and over 82 job seekers signing on to participate. There were a variety of job openings from medical positions, housekeeping, administrative, and maintenance. The full range of openings allowed participants the opportunity to explore many options in the healthcare field.

Job seekers could enter a virtual booth and begin chatting with recruiters directly. Participants typically want to understand not only the type of openings, but the culture of the firm as well. By talking with hiring managers and department staff, participants have the chance to chat in a relaxed atmosphere. The Virtual Hiring event platform is easy to navigate and job seekers can go quickly from one “booth” to another.

Carolina Martin, an LVN student exclaimed “This was a great experience. The format was easy and just by clicking a few buttons I was chatting with potential hiring staff.”

Gemma Prado, just arrived in Plumas County and had never attended an online hiring event. She commented “This was so easy to explore my career options in this beautiful town. The recruiters were so helpful and nice. One even set me up with an interview after the event.”

Hospital staff were on hand at their booths to answer questions about department positions and also the firm’s culture. The recruiters were grateful to have this platform to safely and easily meet qualified job seekers. Several comments made by the recruiters included that this type of job fair gave them a lot more “foot” traffic than a standard in-person job fair.

Samantha Nelson, HR Coordinator from Plumas District Hospital said, “This is a great way to let people know about our hospital. We were able to talk to several candidates and set up interviews. We hope to hire from this event.”

Recruiters and staff alike spoke very favorably about this event, giving high marks for reaching many job seekers in a challenging market. After following up a couple months after the event, AFWD Business Services Representatives spoke with those same healthcare recruiters and it was discovered that there were several positions filled as a direct result of the Healthcare Heroes Virtual Hiring Event. AFWD is once again at the forefront of meeting the challenges of this new environment.
Great Strides

Winston Churchill once said, “Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts”. After serving nearly 20 years of incarceration, Curtis decided that failure was no longer an option and put his best foot forward on the road to changing his life.

Taking advantage of educational and vocational programs that were offered in prison, Curtis received his GED and started taking every firefighting class offered. Upon his release in July of 2020, he had his parole transferred to Lassen County to attend the Cal Fire Academy at Lassen College. Even after he graduated from the Academy he continued to take fire classes and volunteered at the Susan River Fire Department.

Working professionally with Cal Fire was his dream job. Curtis took the initiative to gain education. He excelled at networking with industry professionals and submitting fire applications. What he lacked were financial resources. Living only on financial aid does not leave much at the end of the month for extras. Good thing he had followed up with his parole officer’s suggestion to call Alliance for Workforce Development and ask about the P2E (Prison to Employment) program. Meeting with the advisor, he was quickly enrolled.

When he was eventually offered a position with Cal Fire he was overjoyed, but in a quandary as to how to pay for the necessary boots and gear. His Advisor was able to step in and give him the financial assistance he needed to get the required gear. Curtis started his job in late April and says it is everything that he has dreamt about. He recently moved into a larger housing and is enjoying his new community. He is always looking for ways to give back and to make a difference for others who are in the situation he was in. He wants them to know that it can be done with hard work and fortitude....it can be done, because he did it.
A Chance to Bloom

“What I like best about this job is that I can do it”. Words from Taylor, a Lassen Youth program participant, who is wrapping up an Internship at Every Bloomin’ Thing in Susanville.

Taylor came to Lassen Alliance for Workforce Development after graduation from high school in Vacaville. Wanting her to be employed and self-sufficient, her parents – familiar with AFWD’s services – brought her to the Lassen Business and Career Network for assistance. Taylor believed that services through the Youth Program could help her. She applied to and was enrolled.

During the second round of COVID shutdowns, many meetings with Taylor were virtual. Taylor had never worked before. Not only had she not worked on payroll, she had never volunteered or worked odd jobs for cash. Working with her Career Center Advisor, Taylor learned to recognize her strengths, developed a resume, and practiced her interviewing skills. She learned how to create and keep a budget. She was exposed to Work Readiness concepts, but for Taylor, a practical, hands-on experience would be ideal.

Taylor’s CCA approached Melissa McCoy, owner of Every Bloomin’ Thing, about the possibility of bringing on Taylor in an internship capacity. McCoy loved the idea, provided job skills competencies, and interviewed Taylor. AFWD helped Taylor secure work clothes and she began a 12-week Internship.

The work readiness training paid off because for someone who had never worked, Taylor, from the beginning, was rated quite well on her soft skills. An initial issue from Taylor’s inexperience in the work world was an understanding of responsibility to her job duties. She tended to wait for direction from her site supervisor. With a little coaching, she understood her specific duties, what to look for, and when to do them on her own. Taylor soon learned some of the more complicated duties involving the plants, trees, and other merchandise. Most of her duties involved working solo without much customer contact. On Mother’s Day, one of the busiest days for Every Bloomin’ Thing, Taylor rose to the occasion. She jumped in and showed initiative in helping customers and co-workers. Her site supervisor was pleasantly surprised and very pleased.

This Internship has been a positive experience for Taylor. She has gained the confidence that she can learn job duties and she has a feeling of pride and accomplishment. Every Bloomin’ Thing Owner McCoy says that job seekers who list her as a previous employer on their resumes are always hired by other local employers. She states that they know what she requires of her workers. And, Taylor can proudly add her internship to her resume.
Six students recently attended and completed the Certified Nursing Assistant training program at Lassen Community College. Alliance for Workforce Development staff offered assistance to all eligible participants. Three of the six students were enrolled in WIOA programs and were provided with financial assistance with required program costs of Live Scan background screenings, uniforms and equipment. They all performed exceptionally in the program and will be scheduling and receiving WIOA assistance in taking their certification exams soon. This cohort completed the clinical portion of their training at Lassen Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, and one has already received a job offer there and started working as a Nursing Assistant the week after her training was completed.

Congratulations on your hard work and willingness to help others!
AFWD-America’s Job Center of California
Stats

Unemployment Information
June 2020 - May 2021

Unemployment Rate
(As of: May 2021)
5.3%

AFWD Region County UI Claims

Top 3 Affected Industry Sectors Lassen County

- Food and Accommodation service
- Healthcare and social Assistance
- Retail Trade

Weekly Initial Claims by Industry Sector

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