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Community Coordinator Report

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Lassen Business and Career Network

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Native American Educational Summit

On August 15, 2012, Youth Career Center Advisors, Leslie Scott and Kim Keith attended the 2nd Native American Educational Summit held at the Diamond Mountain Casino in Susanville. The Summit’s theme, “Portraits of Success”, highlighted the educational strides achieved by local Native American students while emphasizing the work that still needs to be done. Administrators from nearly all the local schools including the high school and college joined many Native American community members. Scott and Keith were able to share what the Youth Program could offer to attendees and learned what local educational institutions were doing in an attempt to collaborate efforts.

The focus of the night was empowering and encouraging children to success. Despite personal obstacles and cultural barriers high school graduation and college degrees are attainable and AFWD’s Youth program is here to help.
All the Right Moves

Allesandro Pimentel was enrolled in our Job Seeker program when he asked for assistance with attending the Welding Technology program at Lassen Community College. Right out of high school, Allesandro was determined to make his own way and knew it would take a lot of hard work and determination. “Alex” continually received high marks from his instructor. Always looking to achieve more, Alex also participated in our Pathways to Success program. The purpose of this training was to provide technician-level training for the clean energy workforce and gave the participants an introduction to fundamental concepts by providing a well-rounded foundation in building knowledge.

With this certificate and a variety of different welding certificates, Alex asked his Career Center Advisor to assist him with finding a job that would incorporate his schooling. At this point he had started a family and wanted to support them in a manner that he felt they deserved. Making sure his resume was perfect and his interview skills were honed, he worked with his advisor closely and applied to a number of jobs. Finally, a position as a Maintenance Assistant with Honey Lake Power opened up and his advisor alerted Alex. Providing an opportunity to use his education and with a good chance of future promotions, Alex and his advisor knew it was a perfect job. Alex prepared well and Honey Lake Power hired him immediately.

Alex loves his job and is grateful for the mentoring and new opportunities that the Business and Career Network provided him.
Alex working the weigh station, weighing chip trucks

HL Power, located 22 miles east of Susanville
On the Job Training Enables Business to Grow!

In January 2012, Robert Bardoza, owner of Auto World in Susanville was at a crossroads for his business. The business could expand which is both exciting and risky in this economic time or the business could remain status quo. Robert contacted Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc (AFWD) to discuss recruitment possibilities; through this discussion the opportunity of participating in an On-The-Job (OJT) training program was recognized.

From February 7, 2012 through June 29, 2012, Rhiannon Finnerty worked as an OJT in the capacity of Service Writer/Administrative Assistant position. Having an employee cover the front office, book appointments, handle invoicing, and providing fantastic customer service Robert has been able to focus on other areas of his business.

Robert shared that the partnership with AFWD and the OJT program was been very advantageous to his business. He said, “I knew I needed someone but was skeptical about moving forward, actually I was afraid to move forward, having to devote not only time but the money for an new employee and put my livelihood in someone else’s hands. The OJT program allowed me to overcome my hiring fears, really roll up my sleeves on what my business needs are and how I can allow someone else to take on the workload. It allowed me to take a risk!”

The outcome of this endeavor is Auto World has retained a valuable trained employee, and is expanding their operations; Robert has rented additional space and now can take a few days off with peace of mind knowing his business will run smoothly and, in fact, increase business in his absence.
Rhiannon Finnerty and Robert Bardoza

Rhiannon Finnerty
On the Job Training Program at Lassen County Planning and Building Department

Lassen County Planning and Building Department, located at 707 Nevada Street, Susanville is the new employment home for Jaime Smith originally from Murrieta, CA. Jaime is participating in Alliance For Workforce Development Inc., (AFWD) On-the-Job (OJT) training program, working as a Housing/Grants Specialist I under the supervision of Jenna Aguilera, Housing Grants/Specialist II.

The Planning and Building Department is responsible for administering multiple housing grants and small business assistance programs at any given time. Recognizing the workload responsibilities the Department was able to recruit for a Housing/Grants Specialist I position which Jaime enthusiastically applied for, interviewed and accepted the position when offered.

Jenna and Jaime have been able to structure this department, streamlining processes, facilitating grant programs and continued partnering with various agencies both in Lassen County and outside the county boundaries. During a recent onsite visit Jenna stated, “Ms. Smith has shown tremendous professional growth, she is willing to take on any task given.” Jenna elaborated on how the OJT program has been beneficial to the Department saying, “The OJT program helped the Department place a well-educated and motivated person in the position we were recruiting for. Ms. Smith is exactly what we were looking for in a candidate for the position.”

For more information please visit: www.afwd.org
Jaime Smith and Jenna Aguilera
Susanville Ford benefits from On the Job Training Program

Finding a job after being unemployed for over three years is tough, but not impossible. Mark Duff knows this better than most. A mechanic by trade, he left Susanville Motors when they downsized due to the poor local economy. He came to the Business and Career Network looking for assistance with job search and realized that he may have to look at different career options.

He attended workshops and worked closely with his Career Center Advisor, applying for many different positions. Finally, the perfect opportunity presented itself and with the advice of his Advisor, Mark capitalized. His prior employer had been bought out by Susanville Ford and after the company restructured, they needed automotive mechanics. Mark interviewed and the company was interested however, because Mark had been out of the industry for some time and needed training to be certified to work on Ford and Dodge automobiles for warrantee and recall work, he would need a significant amount of training.

Working with the staff from the Business and Career Network, an On-the-Job training was discussed. As it benefitted both the client and the business, it was agreed that Mark would be hired. The business would spend the time training Mark and the Business and Career Network would assist with his wages during the training to offset the cost of the time the business would take to train Mark. Things are going quite well for Mark and he is thrilled to be back doing what he loves, fixing automobiles.

For more information please visit: [www.afwd.org](http://www.afwd.org)
Training For Business Service Team Members

Applied Economics:
Custom Economic & Revenue Impact Software

Business Service team members from several NoRTEC counties met in Anderson, Shasta County on Thursday, August 16th for an enlightening training session from Sarah Murley, a partner with economics software company, Applied Economics.

Sarah is an economist with 20 years of experience in urban and regional economic analysis, particularly in economic development and public finance. She is an experienced economic modeler, researcher, and analyst.

Applied Economics conducts studies and develops models to measure the economic effects of a wide variety of activities. Sarah’s seminar focused on NoRTEC’s Regional Project Assessment System, a customized economic & revenue impact software package developed specifically for the needs of the eleven county region covered by NoRTEC.

This Regional Project Assessment System can be used to measure the impact on Lassen County of new training programs or a new business establishing in the area. Its Tourism and Hospitality assessment tool can also gauge the impact of a particular event or tourist attraction and its effect on the economy of the county.
Sarah Murley, Applied Economics
Employment Plan Pays Off

Tamara was recently faced with the challenge of being laid off and was forced with the daunting task of finding another job. Unsure of where to start, she decided to seek out the assistance of the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) and met with a Career Center Advisor. Together, they created and implemented an employment plan by targeting job specific employment opportunities, creating a professional resume and improving her interviewing skills.

After being referred to a position with the City of Susanville by her Career Center Advisor, Tamara soon interviewed and was offered the position of Maintenance Worker. Tamara enjoys her new job and working outdoors. She is “excited to be given the opportunity of working for the City of Susanville.”

For more information please visit: www.afwd.org
Revving Up for Success

Rhiannon Finnerty’s passion and hobby was cars. Her past employment was in retail and customer service. Luckily, Rhiannon came to the Business and Career Network and they assisted her with finding employment that blended her passion and prior work experience.

Rhiannon had been looking for employment on her own for almost two years. When she came to the Business and Career Network her goal was to find employment in the automotive industry. With assistance, Rhiannon was referred to Auto World. They were thrilled with her enthusiasm and sunny personality, but were concerned she lacked the skills necessary for the position of Service Writer, that Auto World was recruiting for. An On-the-Job Training was discussed with Auto World which would allow Rhiannon the time necessary to learn the job and receive her ASE certifications while compensating Auto World for the time it took to train her. Both parties were thrilled and Rhiannon’s training was started soon after.

Rhiannon thrived during her training and she continually received excellent reviews during her monthly monitoring. She completed online ASE certifications and completed her On-the-Job Training successfully. Now Rhiannon has a job she loves and Auto World has an employee that “….has shown great interest in the automotive field and displayed enthusiasm and promise.”

For more information please visit: www.afwd.org
Rhiannon Finnerty
The Fastest GED in Town

Eighteen year old Youth participant Lorena Iragorri had been working at Round Table Pizza for almost a year. Wanting to go to college and improve her opportunities for future employment, Lorena had one major obstacle: no high school diploma. As of July 1st of this year, changes in legislation make it impossible to be eligible for financial aid without a high school diploma or GED.

Utilizing the McGraw Hill GED software available in AFWD’s computer lab, Lorena completed each of the five diagnostic tests for the GED. Her diagnostic scores indicated she was ready and able to pass the GED. Unable to afford the $175 exam fee, AFWD assisted her with cost. She passed her GED on July 20th, applied for financial aid, and enrolled in classes a week later. On August 20th, Lorena started the fall semester at Lassen College with 12 units.

For more information please visit: www.afwd.org

Lorena with her GED!
Preparing for the GED

If you are thinking about taking the California General Educational Development test (GED), you’re in luck. The Business and Career Network is now facilitating a workshop geared to assist those who would like to prepare for the GED examination. This workshop helps test takers prepare for the exam by introducing the five parts of the test: Writing, Math, Reading, Social Studies, and Science. You will gain essential knowledge about the scoring process as well as tips on how to pass the test.

The Business and Career Network’s computer lab houses a GED tutorial that encompasses practice tests for each section of the exam. These practice tests will help test takers focus on any of the test sections that need improving.

For more information about the California General Educational Development (GED) exam, please go to the Lassen District Library’s website at www.lassenlibrary.org.

For more information about workshops please visit: www.afwd.org
IN MEMORY OF CHIVON

Chivon Nelson was one of Lassen County's most successful Youth Program clients. Chivon secured employment at City of Susanville Public Works following an exceptional 2009 Summer Youth Work Experience. An unassuming and appreciative Chivon referred many of her friends to Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc (AFWD)'s Youth Program. After her tragic death in a house fire in 2011, her friends and family put on a dinner to raise funds for two local organizations, one being AFWD's Youth Program which Chivon thought as highly of as we did of her.

In July, AFWD was able to help a deserving young woman with the Chivon Nelson Memorial Fund. Jessica Counts, a Youth Program participant, had obtained a position with Ross Dress for Less when they opened their store in Susanvillle in February of this year. A dependable hard worker, she was placed in the stock room working regular weekday hours. Jessica came to AFWD after ending up in Doyle California following a trek from St. Louis Missouri. Living in Doyle and working in Susanville was a transportation hardship for her. Placing her name on several of the low income apartments in the area, she had risen to the top of the list and finally had a place of her own near to her work.

Excited, but tapped out financially from all the initial apartment deposits, Jessica was given a few pieces of furniture and some kitchen items from co-workers. With the Chivon Nelson fund, AFWD was able to assist Jessica with purchasing many major household necessities like bedding, towels, a vacuum cleaner, and microwave oven. Now Jessica not only has the means to live on her own, but is only about a mile from work.
Jessica and her apartment furnishings.

Chivon Nelson
Upcoming Events

For further information on these and other events contact us at
Lassen Business and Career Network
530-257-5057,
TTY, CA Relay 7-1-1
or visit our website http://www.afwd.org