Hiring Event for
California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation hosted their first hiring workshop at High Desert State Prison and California Correctional Center on September 27, 2018. Ninety-one potential employees from all over Northern California showed up to find out about current vacancies and conduct on-site assessments of qualifications. Posted positions included Correctional Supervising Cooks, Electronics Technicians, Groundskeepers, Pest Control Technicians, Plumbers, and Water & Sewage Plant supervisors. For those that were qualified, interviews were conducted and job offers were made. Assistants from CalHR were on hand to assist with online applications and answer questions about salary and benefits.

Staff from Alliance for Workforce Development Inc. (AFWD) were invited to tour the institution and to learn more about the hiring process in order to better serve their clients and the public. Tips such as how to set auto-alerts were given and an explanation of what it means by “being on the list” clarified. At the end of the day job offers were made: 21 Correctional Supervising Cooks, 4 Electronic Technicians, 4 Records Technicians and 1 Water & Sewage Plant Supervisors.
Youth Education Summit

On September 29th and 30th, 2018, dozens of at-risk youth, teens, and transitional aged youth gathered for the 8th Annual Youth Education Summit at the Grizzly Creek Ranch in Portola, California. The event is a multi-county collaborative: youth from Lassen, Plumas, and Trinity counties attended. They were joined by their parents, resource families, case managers, probation officers, advocates and educators to experience an overnight camp that provided recreation, fun activities, and fellowship. The goal of the program is to provide an opportunity for youth and caretakers to connect, and through educational workshop and fantastic guest speakers, to be empowered with new ideas and experiences.

The campers gathered Saturday morning and were dazzled by guest speaker Judith Black, a professional storyteller with an international following. For youth aged 5-12, there was a Kids’ Camp that provided crafts and entertainment of their own. For parents and resource families, a Parent Café provided training on how to deal with childhood trauma and for older youth, there were team building activities and a High Ropes Course. All participants enjoyed dinner and evening activities which included more storytelling and s’mores.

On Sunday, the participants chose from a list of assorted breakout sessions. Topics included Crockpot Cooking, The Laws, Facebook and Bullying, College Programs/Services, Financial Readiness and Employment Skills. Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc.’s Youth Program was on hand to assist them with resume writing, application tips, job search techniques, and interviewing skills. The group interviewed for a fictional camp counselor position. Little did they know that the hiring manager for the Grizzly Creek Ranch was listening to the training. She was so impressed with one of the attendee’s responses that she offered her a job for the upcoming season!

The event concluded with a presentation by Regina Louise. Her life story is one of a child who prevails against all odds. It was an emotional presentation that resonated with all in attendance. The youth participants were also entered into a drawing for educational prizes. Laptops and tablets were awarded to many. The group was in high spirits as they broke camp and headed home; visions of next year’s event clearly in their minds.
Lassen County encompasses 4,720 square miles of which 4,541 square miles is land that is traversed with six major thoroughfares, US Route 395S, State Routes 36E, 44E, 299E, 70S, and 139N. The vast miles of roadway for maintenance and unfortunately emergency response situations created a daily challenge to the Caltrans-Susanville maintenance yards.

The Winter of 2017 brought tremendous rain and snow storms in a very narrow window of time which caused extensive damage and adverse impacts to these travel routes. Lassen County was declared a “State of Emergency” due to the devastation created by these storms. Alliance for Workforce Development Inc., (AFWD) received funding from the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) Storm Project - 2017, which was to assist public or private non-profit facilities with clean-up and repair due to the storms.

The Caltrans - Susanville yard has benefited from the placement of eight temporary maintenance workers through the course of the cleanup and repair in the Susanville yards jurisdiction. These crews began addressing the projects with the most hazardous risks to public safety first with repair to pot holes, culvert obstructions, roadside hazards, roadside washouts, clearing of debris and movement of tons of material.

Ben McDonald, Area Superintendent shared, “The workers we have had the opportunity to have on our crews have allowed us to cover more territory and complete projects in a timely manner. I’m happy to say there have been 4 workers who have been successful with the application procedure for Caltrans positions and several are in the hiring process right now.”

While the projects are coming to an end the exposure to this line of work has been invaluable to the participants. Jeremy McLain, crew member shared, “I have had such a great time working here and for me to get an interview for a permanent position speaks volumes to my supervisors and other crew members. I’m very happy with this program and the help we have received.”
Looking to Move Forward

Ryan Diamond came to the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc.’s (AFWD) Lassen Business and Career Network (BCN) looking to move ahead with his job skills and experience. He began as a Painter’s Foreman and learned while working for the business many aspects of providing quality service to patrons on orders that the company received for painter projects, exterior and interior. He managed and worked with customers on color, supplying workers with equipment, scheduling and many other things. He obtained this position as a start to learning more about the Construction Trades. Unfortunately, the position was not able to offer further growth.

After much research and time spent with a Career Center Advisor (CCA), Ryan decided to look into a position with Nobles Construction. Nobles Construction falls under the Manufacturing sector, of NoRTEC’s Labor Market Research study, as an industry that will provide growth and job opportunities. We looked into qualifying Ryan for Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) services and our Business Service Representative (BSR) reached out to Nobles Construction Components for a potential On-the-Job Training (OJT) opportunity.

Once we received word that Nobles Construction would like to have Ryan as a full-time Carpenter’s Assistant, building wall and flooring system, Nobles Construction responded and felt the OJT would be the best way to bring Ryan onboard with the company. Ryan began his position and the OJT in July 2018 and completed the training in November 2018. Ryan’s Training Supervisor indicated that Ryan has one of the fastest production tables and is an excellent employee. Ryan thanked AFWD for the assistance and is very happy and pleased with his new full-time position with Nobles Construction Components in Susanville, CA.
Finding Her Niche

“If everybody is going one way, there’s a good chance you can find your niche by going exactly in the opposite direction.” – Sam Walton

Elizabeth Knigge knew from the beginning that she wanted and needed a certain work environment. She had come to the Lassen Business and Career Network (BCN) looking for help with employment. She had last worked as an In Home Support Services caregiver and before that, a cashier. She wanted to work in a quiet environment where she could help others. Eligible for the Youth Program, she worked with her Career Center Advisor (CCA) on developing a resume and interviewing skills. By completing personal and career assessments and discussions with her CCA, they both believed that Elizabeth might benefit from an internship at the Lassen Library. Last spring, she completed an internship there. She was adept at the Dewey Decimal System and helped the library develop some of their special programs. She enjoyed the mentorship of her worksite supervisors.

Following completion of that internship, Elizabeth attended Lassen’s Boot Camp for Summer Training and Employment Program. Elizabeth thoroughly enjoyed the two-week training in pre-employment skills, financial literacy, and personal skill development such as self-esteem, time management, and healthy living. Elizabeth took notes and often stayed after asking questions and offering her insights.

Following completion of the Boot Camp, Elizabeth interviewed with Margie’s Book Nook for another internship. Although Elizabeth enjoyed her work at the library, she had not had the chance to develop interpersonal skills to work with patrons and customers. At a small retail book store like Margie’s, Elizabeth would have the opportunity to again work in a quieter, less stressful environment, plus have the mentorship to foster her abilities to interact with customers. Elizabeth successfully completed her internship at Margie’s, never missing a day of work.

Once the internship was complete, Elizabeth and her CCA began the task of finding the right employment niche. Her CCA had been talking with human resources personnel at Walmart. They were in need of an overnight stock clerk. Elizabeth was very much interested in work like that. She had originally balked at working for Walmart. A large busy store was not a work situation in which she would feel comfortable or successful. At night, when the store was closed, she could work with a small group of people and use her organizational skills. She loved the work hours, as she is very much a night person. Elizabeth applied, interviewed, and was offered the position. Walmart felt the skills that she gleaned from her previous internships would make her the right person for the job. It was a process, but she is extremely satisfied having found her niche.
Demonstrating Exemplary Work

Kori had been working in the Emergency Department at Banner Lassen Medical Center (BLMC) for several years as a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) and was the sole source of support for her family. However, she was unable to find full-time employment earning a wage sufficient to support her household. Kori was looking to upgrade her skills to make her more employable, with the potential to promote as well. CNA to Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) is a career pathway in the Healthcare industry with such promotion potential. Assessments showed Kori’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. Kori completed the LVN program at Feather River College at the end of August, 2017, with the assistance of Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD). She went on to successfully attain her LVN licensure through the Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians. She received her LVN License on November 28, 2017.

Unfortunately, her employer, BLMC was not hiring for LVN positions. Kori really hoped to continue to work in the Susanville area. Kori’s Career Center Advisor (CCA) knew that Northeastern Rural Health Clinics (NRHC) was hiring LVNs, and suggested Kori apply there. With the help of her CCA, she created a new resume and completed the application process with NRHC. They were looking for experienced LVNs, but still felt she had potential, although she had never worked in the LVN capacity previously. She was offered an LVN position, with the agreement she would participate through AFWD in an On-the-Job Training (OJT), as assessments indicated the need for training assistance. AFWD, NRHC, and Kori worked to develop an OJT plan that would enable her to learn the position well enough that she could eventually perform the job independently.

Kori recently completed her OJT with NRHC successfully. Over the training, her supervisors continually stressed she “continues to demonstrate exemplary work as a new LVN.” Kori stated her CCA was “super helpful” throughout all of her training, and in helping her find this job.

Congratulations, Kori! All of your hard work and sacrifices are truly making a difference for your family.
A Successful Career Change

Tyler had been working as a Ranch Hand/Ranch manager for over seventeen years. He was laid off, and decided to make a career change, as there were no similar openings in the local area. He also wanted to find steady employment with the opportunity for promotion. Tyler applied for a position as a Property Manager with CM Cottages, and was offered the job, although he had no prior Property Management experience. He was referred to Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc.’s (AFWD) Lassen Business and Career Network (BCN) office in Susanville for potential Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) services and assistance with an On-the-Job Training (OJT), as CM Cottages had heard of the program. Tyler met with a Career Center Advisor (CCA) at the BCN to determine his need for assistance with an OJT. Together they completed assessments to determine his need for support and his likelihood of success in completing the training.

Tyler’s assessments showed his work preferences were compatible with Property Management positions in the Real Estate/Property Management sector, making him an outstanding match for the WIOA Dislocated Worker program. It was determined an OJT would be beneficial for Tyler to learn the specific and technical aspects of the position and to be able to perform them on his own. AFWD, Tyler, and CM Cottages worked together to develop an OJT employment plan including job specific criteria to determine his success over the length of the OJT. Per his plan, Tyler was required to meet these job specific goals in order to complete his training successfully.

Tyler started working in May of 2018 as a Property Manager with CM Cottages, and completed his training this fall. Throughout the training, his supervisor noted his “consistency, maturity, and reliability,” and his ability to identify important tasks with little direction.

Great job, Tyler!
Impressions are Important

D’Arcy had been working as Assistant Manager of Customer Talk/One Stop Office, and was laid off when they went out of business. Her former employer referred her to the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) Lassen Business and Career Network (BCN) to see what services were available. There, D’Arcy met with a Career Center Advisor (CCA) and was enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program. The assessments completed indicated she would be a good fit for jobs requiring social skills and project management. D’Arcy decided she wanted to change her career path. She was interested in upgrading her resume and learning interview skills. While D’Arcy was eligible to receive Unemployment, she was eager to find a new and rewarding career, and began her job search immediately.

D’Arcy was extremely motivated, with a passion for customer service. She wanted to apply for many positions requiring that strength. Then D’Arcy was approached by the Lassen County Chamber of Commerce for an Executive Assistant position, as they remembered her great customer service skills from her position at Customer Talk. She interviewed, and it was determined, although she had exceptional customer service skills, which are a must for the position, she was lacking in the other skills required to perform the position independently. The Chamber and AFWD determined an On-the-Job Training (OJT) would be appropriate in order for D’Arcy to build upon her skills and work to become a successful Executive Assistant. Assessments were completed, and an OJT plan was created to ensure D’Arcy’s success.

D’Arcy began her OJT as an Executive Assistant near the end of June, 2018. Her supervisor commented, “D’Arcy has great people skills and works well with everyone. She is a nice addition to the Visitor’s Center and greets everyone with a smile,” and “she has the most important skills, which are people skills.” At the end of her training her supervisor stated, “D’Arcy is a great addition to the office. She has great potential to be a great representative for her community.”

D’Arcy completed her OJT in October, and says she loves it at the Lassen County Chamber of Commerce. She has mastered many new administrative and office skills, and she enjoys working in the community. The positive impressions she made in the past helped her to get this great new position.

Way to make a great first impression, D’Arcy!
In early 2018 the Lassen Technical Assistance program was launched to assist local microenterprise businesses (5 or fewer employees) and entrepreneurs with customized business services. These services are tailored to each individual and their requested and identified needs including: finding a niche, choosing a target audience, creating a business plan, marketing and sale strategies, developing accounting and operating systems and more.

As outreach began in Lassen County, Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) contacted Heather Arter, a previous participant, to see if she was interested in joining the program again. Heather is a talented, creative baker, and no stranger to hard work. Previously she participated in the Technical Assistance program and turned her passion for baking into Merry Morsels, a thriving cottage industry with a large social media following.

When we spoke with Heather about participating this year, she jumped at the chance for assistance taking her business to the next level - opening a retail location. Heather recognized that while she excels at putting her ideas into action, she also struggles with a few common entrepreneurial challenges - too many ideas, lack of focus, and over-implementation. When we began working with Heather, she was juggling so many things that it was hard to manage her time. Growing a business while singlehandedly raising five kids was taking its toll..

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Working with the consultants, Heather learned how to focus on tasks that would give her the most leverage and momentum. She calculated operating expenses, break-even points, and set financial goals. She learned how to calculate production costs and implement a tracking system to determine which products are her best sellers and which have the highest profit margin. Using this information helps her determine pricing, production, and inventory strategies.

In the summer of 2018, Heather found a great Main Street location with a commercial kitchen, negotiated a lease agreement, worked hard to prepare the space, and opened Merry Morsels to the public in September. With her killer promotional skills and delicious products, Merry Morsels averaging sales are good and she supplements sales by leasing space to other bakers and vendors. In an adjoining space, she teaches classes, as well as leasing it out for parties when she isn’t using it.

“Having a business consultant provided an objective perspective, and a CPA to review income and expenses is just what I needed,” explained Heather. “They have helped me create a step-by-step check and balance process that lets me see where I need to invest my time, energy, and money.” Never one to sit on her laurels, she has plans in place to create part-time positions with Workability, and has her sights set on a Food Processing Facility certification so she can ship products worldwide!

We are so proud of Heather, who is well on her way to creating the empire of her dreams that will enable her to support her family, provide jobs for others, and continue giving back to the community in true Heather-style: with free custom cakes and party packs for families who can’t afford them.
AFWD America’s Job Center of California

Statistics
PY 2018 -2019

**Lassen County**

**Total Visitors**

6,779

**Lassen County Business Services**

- Businesses Served: 70
- Services Provided: 454

**AFWD**

**Total Clients Enrolled**

988

**Unemployment Rate**
(As of: November 2018)

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