Moving Modoc Forward!

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) and Superior California Economic Development (SCED) hosted the “Moving Modoc Forward” mixer on August 25th at the new Lazy B restaurant in Alturas. The outdoor event allowed fourteen business champions from Modoc County to network with each other and hear from their economic development collaborative partners. Attendees included Board of Supervisor and City Council members, small business owners and non-profit, local and federal government and education representatives.

SCED is located in Redding and their mission is to facilitate business and job growth in Northern California through collaborating with and assisting local cities and counties. SCED has been hosting monthly meetings with the Modoc business community through Zoom to support Modoc County resiliency. The in-person mixer was suggested by AFWD Business Service Director, Amy Velazquez as an opportunity for SCED staff to meet the Modoc business community in person and discuss ideas for moving Modoc businesses forward.

Staff from SCED posed questions for the group to discuss including: If you relocated to Modoc County, what was it about the area that brought you here? With a four hour timeframe available, what places/activities would you recommend to visitors? What do you see as the greatest issues that Modoc County faces with economic development? Issues such as Broadband, Housing and Gentrification were also discussed. Determining a vision for the community and a balance between growth and maintaining Modoc values were important to all in attendance.

Thank you to Luvina and the Lazy B restaurant staff for providing a wonderful outdoor meeting area and delicious food!
Ricardo was referred to the Prison to Employment (P2E) program by Probation. While incarcerated in the Modoc County jail, he participated in their JAG program which gave him a brief exposure to culinary and building maintenance job duties. After he was released, he continued his work in building maintenance by volunteering on some of the same building maintenance projects. The Chief Administrative Officer was so impressed with his dedication and hard work that he wanted to give Ricardo an opportunity to work for the County. Ricardo was ready to tread down a different path than the one in his past. Although he had some exposure to building maintenance, he didn’t have a lot of work experience in that area and would need a significant amount of training. After discussion with the Business Service Representation and the CAO, it was decided that the best course of action would be to initiate an On-the-Job training for Ricardo.

Ricardo started his On-the-Job training with Modoc County Public Works as a Maintenance and Repair Worker at the end of May. Since then he has learned many professional building trade techniques and has received high praise from his supervisor. He is looking forward to continuing his training and moving on to more complex projects in the future. He is also looking forward to being a positive role model to others. Congratulations, Ricardo!
Modoc Natural Resource Partnership member Laura Snell contacted the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) office in Alturas inquiring about assistance with recruitment and marketing for a variety of upcoming Natural Resource positions. The partnership agencies involved included the Modoc National Forest, Modoc County Farm Bureau, University of CA Cooperative Extension (UCCE), and Modoc County.

Utilizing the streamlined job posting process through the AFWD website, Laura was able to quickly post the open jobs on the North State Jobs website. Once the jobs were posted, AFWD Business Service staff went into action to help market the jobs through a variety of means including email to community partners, social media outreach through AFWD’s weekly Modoc County Hot Jobs posting, and display for job seekers on the Hot Jobs wall at the Alturas AFWD Office. AFWD staff also assisted the Partnership by creating a flyer showcasing the job positions for marketing usage in newspaper ads and on social media. Additionally, AFWD staff collected resumes and forwarded them to the Partnership for review and also referred candidates from AFWD’s Applicant Pool with matching career interests.

These business services are available to all Modoc County businesses free of cost in an effort to help our business community to thrive. The marketing outreach was deemed a success with all of the needed positions being filled. Laura commented, “Thank you, thank you, thank you! You are doing amazing work!” Mission accomplished!
Healthcare Succeeds with an OJT!

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) offers services in six Northern California counties which include Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas , and Sierra counties. The challenges and importance of the Healthcare sector is recognized by AFWD as a priority sector for our counties. The AFWD Business Service team assists the Healthcare sector on many levels including recruitment assistance, candidate referrals and On-The-Job Training (OJT) partnerships. The AFWD office in Alturas recently worked with Modoc Medical Center to set up an OJT for Lassen Community College LVN graduate, Crystal Abordo. Crystal’s hiring by Modoc Medical Center was the culmination of her career path goal to work as a full-time LVN in Modoc County.

Crystal had been receiving assistance from a Career Center Advisor from the AFWD office in Lassen County while she attended the LVN program at Lassen Community College. She had no prior work experience in Healthcare and was interested in relocating to Alturas once her LVN schooling was completed. She was encouraged by AFWD staff in Lassen County to attend the virtual Healthcare Heroes hiring event in April 2021. Crystal attended the virtual event and submitted a resume to Modoc Medical Center for hiring consideration after her LVN training ended in June. AFWD Business Service staff in Modoc County followed up with Modoc Medical Center to discuss the OJT program as an option for Crystal given her lack of healthcare experience beyond the LVN training program. Modoc Medical Center expressed interest in hiring Crystal and in partnering on an OJT. All that remained was for Crystal to pass the licensing exam which she did on her first try! Crystal began a 16-week OJT on August 2, 2021, and is enjoying her job. Modoc Medical Center Director of Nursing, Marci Clare reported that Crystal is a wonderful addition to their staff. Congratulations, Crystal!
The Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) office in Alturas is co-located with TEACH Adult Education at 701 N. Main Street in the Bear Creek Mall. In an effort to provide “wrap-around” services, AFWD and TEACH work together to share program information and refer clients when appropriate. TEACH Adult Ed offers assistance to High School Equivalency and Diploma students and also offers instruction through in-person classes for courses such as Computer Skills and English as a Second Language with more subjects coming in the fall.

Debbie Rogers is one AFWD client who was referred to TEACH Adult Ed for help in improving her computer skills. Debbie had visited the AFWD office in Alturas seeking assistance in finding a job. She had a strong background in customer service in the Hospitality sector and was seeking to bring those transferrable skills into a new career through helping people in an office setting. AFWD conducted assessments with Debbie which indicated that her career interests were a good match for this type of work, but her computer and typing skills were limited. Debbie was referred to TEACH Adult Ed and began taking Microsoft Office Suite classes in April. She has successfully completed the modules for Word, PowerPoint, and Excel and is working on the Access and Outlook programs to complete the suite. She has also worked diligently to improve her typing speed and accuracy. Debbie started out typing 17 words per minute and through practice at home and in the AFWD computer lab she recently achieved 35 words per minute with 97% accuracy on a five minute typing test.

TEACH Adult Ed recently had an opening for a part-time Office Assistant. AFWD immediately thought of Debbie for the position. The duties would include light office work, assisting with Basic computer classes and cleaning the office for approximately 18 hours a week total. This opportunity would provide Debbie with job experience in office work while she continues to seek a full-time position in this field. Debbie eagerly accepted the job offer. Congratulations, Debbie!
Each individual who seeks assistance from Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) has their own unique set of skills, interests, barriers and job experience. Getting to know the individual by assessing these areas provides their AFWD Career Center Advisor with the information necessary to help them achieve their career path goal of full-time employment.

Barriers can be the factor that makes finding employment seemingly impossible at times. Justice issues were a barrier which Jim Maupin has struggled to move forward from in order to find full-time, stable employment. This barrier has held him back in the past and continues to touch many areas of his life, in addition to employment. Areas such as housing, reputation and trust from the community are impacted.

With AFWD’s assistance, Jim was placed into a temporary internship position through a special disaster grant in August of 2020. As a Maintenance Worker with Modoc County, Jim was performing cleanup and repair duties due to impacts from storms in 2019. Jim successfully worked in this position for eight months. He was then offered the opportunity for employment with Modoc County as a Forest Conservation Worker through a 16-week On-The-Job Training (OJT) program through another special grant, this one through the P2E program. In this position Jim is learning important employment skills including: to operate a chainsaw and chipper, to construct fuel breaks, to identify diseased/undesirable trees for removal, crucial safety procedures for machine operation/maintenance and how to effectively work in a team environment.

Jim is nearing the end of the 16-week OJT training period and will continue to work for Modoc County clearing fuel breaks in the Cal Pines area. While Jim’s progress at times has been one step forward and two steps back, he continues to persevere with the support of AFWD. AFWD is appreciative of the ongoing partnership with Modoc County and their willingness to provide second chances and support to individuals facing barriers such as Jim.

Thank You, Modoc County and Congratulations, Jim!
Unemployment Information
Oct. 2020 - Sept. 2021

AFWD Region County Unemployment Claims

Weekly Initial Claims by Industry Sector

Top 3 Affected Industry Sectors - Modoc County
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting
- Healthcare and social assistance
- Educational Services

Modoc County - 1st Quarter
- One-Stop Visitors: 271
- Businesses Served: 23
- Business Services: 345
- AFWD Clients Enrolled: 578

AFWD-America’s Job Center of California
Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc.
Providing pathways to success

Unemployment Rates
(As of: Aug. 2021)
- California: 7.5%
- Modoc County: 5.8%