WOTC-EDD Informational Seminar

Staff members from all six Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc., (AFWD) counties attended the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) seminar in Chico on September 13, 2016. The information that was provided will assist in furthering AFWD’s goal to increase employment and assist local businesses. The WOTC for employers varies from $2400.00 to $9600.00 per qualifying employee, depending on which Eligibility Group the employee falls in.

The WOTC has two purposes:

To promote the hiring of individuals who qualify as a member of a target group.

To provide a federal tax credit to employers who hire these individuals.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Veterans
TANF Recipients
SNAP (Cal Fresh) Recipients
Designated Community Residents
Vocational Rehabilitation Referral
Ex-Felons
Supplemental Security Income Recipients
Summer Youth Employees
It was announced that a new eligibility group had been added to the program on December 18, 2015, which is “Qualified Long-Term Unemployment”.

The WOTC Program has been re-authorized to continue through December 31, 2019 and new online processing has been introduced via eWOTC at https://www.dolea.gov/wotc. All employers with an emphasis on smaller employers with 24 employees or less, without agent/consultant representation, are also encouraged to submit new applications online. In addition, they still have the option to mail in the applications.

**The Positive Aspects of the WOTC:**

- Reduces an employer’s cost of doing business
- Requires little paperwork
- Applying for WOTC is simple
- WOTC can reduce an employer’s federal income tax liability by as much as $9,600 per eligible employee hired.
- No limit on the number of new employees that can qualify for the tax credit, if the employees are eligible
- Certain tax-exempt organizations can take advantage of WOTC by hiring eligible veterans and receiving a credit against the employer’s share of Social Security taxes.

The Employment Development Department is the WOTC certifying agency for California employers.
Earlier this year, Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) conducted a “State of the Workforce” community input session in Modoc County. The outcomes from the session clearly demonstrated the need for work based learning, soft skills development and work readiness training. This substantiates AFWD’s belief that these are the core of the challenges to finding a qualified workforce.

The Modoc Adult Education project nearly mirrors AFWD’s WIOA processes for Adults. The WIOA Program (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) went into law on July 22, 2014. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to be successful in business. The Adult Education project goal is to serve 20 clients for the 2016/2017 fiscal year in a variety of work readiness, job training and certification and basic skills training. The project will be solution based, with the goal of meeting or exceeding the performance measures. Services will be individualized to ensure each client receives the most appropriate assistance to address their barriers.

AFWD will offer participants complete employment preparation services, either directly or through collaborative agreements with partners such as Cal Works, TEACH and others. Participants will be offered comprehensive employment preparation services by assessing the participant’s need for employment preparation and working with them to address personal obstacles to employment. AFWD is committed to giving clients the support necessary to establish a productive life by providing a range of employment skills training.
Adult Education participants will be provided with the following sequence of services:

- Informative Interview
- Client Focused Case Management
- Assessment Services
- Training Programs
- Follow Up Services
- Performance Measures

A keystone element of the Adult Education program involves a collaborative agreement with CalWORKs to bring Job Readiness workshops to Modoc County. Workshops are available to both CalWORKs and AFWD clients as well as the general public. The month long workshop series are presented by AFWD staff. The workshop topics are presented through Powerpoint Presentations, Activities and Short Videos. Topics include Customer Service, Resume Writing, Interviewing Skills, Communication, Mock Interviewing and more.
CalWORKs Workshops

Erika Mariscal, Career Center Advisor has had the opportunity to partner with CalWORKs to conduct public workshops since the beginning of October. They consist of a series of 8 Workshops twice a week that cover a variety of topics such as AFWD services, Assessments, Soft Skill, Communication, Interpersonal Skills, Resume Building, Master Application Building, Interviewing, Proper Interview Attire, Telephone Etiquette and Mock Interviews.

To get, and keep, a job you typically need a repertoire of technical skills. Soft skills are extremely important for employees to have. Which employees do you retain when times are lean? The one who is pleasant and takes time to answer your questions; or the one who treats people like numbers in a long line? How about the one whose attitude is positive and upbeat, and who is always willing to help; or the one is inflexible and has a hard time admitting mistakes?

In these situations, and all the others like them, it’s the soft skills employees possess that matter. With good soft skills you can excel as a leader. Problem solving, delegating, motivating, and team building are all much easier if you have good soft skills. Knowing how to get along with people and displaying a positive attitude are crucial for success.

People don’t receive adequate soft skills training they need to maintain employment. That’s why workshops like these are great for helping people build great people-skills. Soft skills are becoming the hard skills of today’s workforce. Developing the softer, interpersonal and relationship building skills will help people to communicate and collaborate effectively. These workshops teach people who are participating, skills they need for a happy and successful career, and this is just one of many tools and resources that will help them.
The first month we had a total of three people who did fantastic. We are now in our second month of workshops and we have a total of five people participating.

We had the opportunity to have local business owner Stan Yagi from Antoni’s Cucina Italiana help us with the mock interviews. He reviewed questions he uses when hiring and provided feedback on the answers. Stan also mentioned some of the things he looks for when people are applying at his restaurant, such as dress code and general hygiene.

He also had this advice, “I look beyond the face piercings and tattoos. If you come in for a prescreen interview, I will review all the questions. At the end, I will tell you if I will do a second interview and if you have face piercings I will ask you to remove them during work hours. If you have tattoos that are racist, gang related or inappropriate, I will ask you to have them covered during work hours. But that does not mean I will not give you a chance. I look for honesty. If you’ve been in trouble before and have a record, I would like for you to tell me in advance if a probation officer will be coming to the restaurant to test you or whatever else it may be. Be honest from the beginning with me. We all deserve a second chance and I will give you that chance, if you meet me halfway”.

The feedback we had from people participating and businesses has been amazingly positive. Everyone has enjoyed the information and has recommended for other friends and family to join future workshops. This has been an exciting and positive experience, to be working with such fantastic partnering agencies whose main interest is to help people find self-sufficient employment to help them provide for their families.

Thank you all participants, Stan and CalWORKs!!
AutoCAD (Computer-Aided Design) Training
MCLAUS XI Special Grant

Wade Teuscher initially visited the Modoc Business and Career Network in November of 2015 seeking information about the California Training Benefits Program through EDD (Economic Development Department). Wade expressed interest in a training opportunity to learn to operate AutoCAD (Computer-Aided Design) software. He possessed years of combined experience as both a building inspector and an engineering technician with some experience drafting by hand. But, the drafting field had changed dramatically over his career and Wade found that AutoCAD experience was necessary to be competitive in finding employment in this field. Wade’s goal was to combine his transferrable skills and work experience with modern AutoCAD technology to become employed as an Architectural Drafter.

Wade was evaluated for eligibility and enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program. Assessments indicated that Architectural Drafting would be a compatible career path for Wade given his interests, transferrable skills, previous work experience and the local need for services. After researching training possibilities, Wade was registered in an online Architectural CAD Technology Certificate Program through the Cadteacher-Virtual Design and Construction Institute. The Cadteacher training program consisted of nine months of online course instruction and covered courses in Blueprint Reading, AutoCAD software, 3D Modeling with SketchUp software and a Certificate of Completion Practical where Wade designed a building from scratch. Wade successfully completed the certificate program in November 2016.

The Cadteacher AutoCAD training was funded by the MCLAUS XI (Multiple Closures, Layoffs, and Unemployment Services) Special Grant. This grant provides enhanced career and training services to individuals who have lost their jobs due to a business closure or layoff.

Since completing the course, Wade has received a number of promising employment opportunities.

Congratulations, Wade!
The Amazing Intern

Lorenzo Viera came to Modoc Business and Career Network the end of August 2016. He was referred to us by a previous youth client who had participated in the AFWD Youth program a few years back.

Lorenzo was unemployed and had recently relocated from National City, CA to Alturas and was looking for a chance to become independent. Lorenzo had been unable to find self-sufficient employment in the area and was looking for help reaching his long term goal of a career in Law Enforcement.

Lorenzo has been enrolled in the AFWD Youth Program since September. He has participated in a range of workshops to help him improve his soft skills. The purpose of the array of workshops was to help him get a step closer to his career goal.

Lorenzo Viera was given the opportunity to participate in a 12 week Internship with Modoc County Sheriff’s Office. He started mid-September 2016.

He has been job shadowing several Deputies with the goal of obtaining a Full Time position in Law Enforcement. Lorenzo is currently working towards becoming a Correctional Officer. He has been training with the best to help him get a glimpse at the responsibilities a Correctional Officer has.

“Some of the things I’ve learned throughout my internship is that they are a big family who support each other in good and in very unfortunate times. They lean on each other to protect the public and each other. They have taken me in as one of their own. I have been given an opportunity to meet and work with so many great men and woman who are devoted to their jobs. They have though me so much about team work, family and responsibility.

Thank you to Business and Career and the Sheriff’s, I feel extremely blessed to have been given this opportunity. I wouldn’t change it for the world”.

Once Lorenzo’s internship is done he will be starting an On-The-Job Training as a Correctional Officer with the Modoc Sheriff’s Office.
**AFWD America’s Job Center of California**

**Statistics**

### Modoc County

**Total Visitors**  
1,085

### Modoc County Business Services

- Business Served: 78
- Service Provided: 357
- Positions Filled: 106

### AFWD

**Total Clients Enrolled:** 504

### Unemployment Rate

(As of: 11/30/2016)

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