Knowledge, Resources and Partnership!

This Spring marks the first year a meeting was held with all Nevada County Youth Services organizations in an effort to integrate services and bring stakeholders together to identify common goals, find potential gaps in the service, and plan action steps to better serve the Nevada County Youth population. The event was funded by the Coalition for Nevada County Youth and the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools.

The Nevada County Coalition for Nevada County Youth recently rebranded themselves from the Nevada County Drug Free Council. The reason for the rebranding was inspired by the fact that although they advocate for a drug free Nevada County they provide a host of other services for youth and found themselves typecast into a DARE kind of program when in fact they offer a robust and diverse set of services.

This all-day event was divided into two sections: keynote speakers from the community spoke for half of the day to inform attendees about current programs, challenges that they find in the community and what they are currently doing to promote a healthier environment. The second half of the training provided an insightful approach where small workgroups came up with challenges and opportunities they see. The top few were chosen from each table and then placed on a large working board for the facilitator, in partnership from the group, would place them in working categories. By grouping these talking points together a cohesion of thought began to emerge. After creating categories of challenges and opportunities, the categories were labeled. As a final step, definitive action steps outlined as to how these issues might be addressed.

Of course, there is a big gap between identifying issues and solving them, but this approach was helpful in many ways and opened the door to the next working steps for the community to be able to take real and actionable strides towards making creating a structure that is better and preventing environments
Annual Meet Your Match Job Fair

The *Meet Your Match Job Fair* is a community effort, one that mirrors the level of commitment many local organizations have for this community. The involved parties include The Union Newspaper, Nevada County Association of Realtors (NCAOR), Nevada County Regional Chambers of Commerce, The Business and Career Network, and various volunteers.

The event was held on March 28, 2019 at the Grass Valley Veterans Memorial Building with nearly 20 employers from a variety of sectors in attendance. These included Chapa-De Indian Health, various assisted living facilities, North Star Services, Comfort Keepers, Caltrans, the County of Nevada, The United States Air Force, Akima LLC - as well as several other companies.

The Business and Career Network had their own tables set up to help job seekers learn more about services available to them and helping them connect with appropriate departments. Job listings were handed out to the job seekers helping them realize how many jobs are really available in this area.

Employers were able to connect with a diverse group of job seekers with varying skill sets. Over 180 job seekers attended this year’s event. Businesses and job seekers alike agree this was a success once again.
On May 30, AFWD Business Service Staff attended a unique opportunity to meet Nevada County Manufacturers, and representatives from agencies whose mission is to help small to mid-sized manufacturing companies grow and thrive. Approximately 50 Nevada County Manufacturers, as well as representatives from the State of California and the Nevada County Tech Connection were in attendance and engaged in discussion about growth opportunities, challenges to business plans, and the unique needs associated with doing business in Nevada County.

The event was organized and facilitated by Shavati Karki-Pearl, Founding Director of NCTech (Nevada County Tech Connection); Jonathan Palmer, CEO of Autometrix, Inc., a leading provider of pattern development software to the industrial fabric markets; Gil Gonzales, Director of Strategic Development Northern California, CMTC (California Manufacturing Technology Consulting); Erika Kosina, Outreach Program Manager for NCTech; and, Dean Packham, Executive Director, SVMI (Sacramento Valley Manufacturing Initiative).

AFWD Business Service Representatives were able to engage in a dialogue with representatives from numerous Nevada County businesses during round-table discussions. In this setting employers were able to share with AFWD and other service providers, the unique challenges their businesses face in areas such as recruiting, taxes, labor market availability, housing, and a variety of other factors. Facilitators from NCTech, CMTC, SVMI, and Autometrix steered the conversation in a solutions-oriented direction.

This meeting was the beginning of a conversation, and will continue on June 19, where participants will begin directly addressing the unique needs of Nevada County Manufacturers. This is a great opportunity for Alliance for Workforce Development to foster collaborative efforts in support of the job growth the manufacturing industry brings to Nevada County.
Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) staff attended this year’s California Workforce Association WORKCON 2019 in Anaheim, California May 15-17, 2019. This year’s theme was Fueling Curiosity, with many sessions, discussions and presentations focused on helping workforce, agencies and boards understand how they could broaden and deepen services provided to their respective areas, by tapping into new and creative ideas and strategies. Joey Zumaya, Public Sector Manager for LinkedIn, presented the keynote address at the opening plenary, setting the theme of Fueling Curiosity as a tone for the next three days. On Thursday morning, Keynote Speaker Diane Kander, author of *The Curiosity Muscle* further highlighted the idea, and shared some strategies as well as personal experiences pertaining to using curiosity to promote one’s professional best.

There were a variety of insightful workshops on current topics in the Workforce industry. Toni White, from Ascend Program, Inc. gave her thoughts on methods to reduce recidivism. Larry Robbin, Executive Director of Robbin & Associates, offered ways to eliminate barriers to employment. South Bay Workforce Investment Board presenters touched on creating pathways for the ex-offenders to help fill those skilled positions in their talk *A Strategic Approach to Serving Adults on Parole.*

At the Thursday award luncheon, The Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC) and AFWD were presented with the 2019 Charlie Brown Workforce Development Professional Award, for the significant work they have contributed for the Camp Fire Recovery. Many members of NoRTEC and AFWD executive teams were present, as well as AFWD staff from all six service counties. Traci Holt, Executive Director, shared a moving slide show and touching remarks as she gracefully accepted the award.

The CWA WorkCon Conference gives AFWD a yearly opportunity to connect with peers across the state, to learn from their successes, and to share our own *pathways to success.* In our own service counties, our work this year has undoubtedly been affected by the Camp Fire in countless ways. However, winning the prestigious Charlie Brown Award, and hearing such heartfelt testimonials from coworkers and colleagues across the state, is a powerful reminder that the work we do is important and well worth the effort.
A Fitting Job

Mr. Stevenson had a goal in mind; to find a job that could work around his children’s schedule. He came in to the Grass Valley AJCC to receive job search assistance and work on his resume, hoping to land a job quickly. He worked on his resume just about daily until he had all he needed to show his excellent skills in the Culinary profession.

Mr. Stevenson returned about a week later to let us know he was hired “on the spot” for a full-time position at a local restaurant with hours that fit his schedule. Mr. Stevenson stated his employer was very impressed with his resume which showed all his excellent skills, and felt it was the main reason he was hired.

Mr. Stevenson was very grateful for the help he received at AFWD, and stated he was impressed with the knowledgeable staff, computer lab and workspace to perfect his resume.

Great job Mr. Stevenson! We wish you all the best!

Developing Partnerships

Chamber Ambassadors are business leaders committed to helping the Chamber of Commerce fulfill its mission of representing businesses and providing leadership to enhance the quality of our local community. They meet to discuss current chamber events and matters.

Ambassadors are in steady contact with local business owners and are great advocates for available resources.

The Nevada Business and Career Network’s Business Service Representative, Malwina Grant, was invited to speak about employer services during a Greater Grass Valley Chambers of Commerce Ambassador’s meeting. Attendees were provided an overview of the no cost services and programs available: On-The-Job- Training Program, Human Resource Support, Customized Employee Recruitment, Layoff Assistance and more.

This knowledge will be shared as business visits and conversation opportunities arise, helping to build a stronger understanding of the Business and Career Network’s business and job seeker services. Developing partnerships, strengthening businesses with resource information and building a business team for Nevada County.
From Volunteer to Career

Michael Quatela was enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program in November 2018 after his seasonal volunteer firefighter position ended at Ophir Hill Fire Protection District in Grass Valley.

Michael had a high school diploma, but lacked formal training as a firefighter. His experience as a volunteer firefighter led him to this occupation as a career choice, however, his lack of fire fighter certification was a barrier to him and kept him from year round employment as a fire fighter.

He established a short term goal to obtain the necessary training and certification to become a firefighter. He enrolled in the Sierra College Fire Academy to obtain the necessary certification and complete his goal.

The Ophir Hill Fire Protection District had introduced the Forest Firefighter occupation to Michael and this led him to a new career path. Michael was very successful in his training. He graduated at the top of his class with 95.7% success. Michael completed the firefighting training at Sierra College on May 10, 2019 and had an interview with the US Forest Service, US Department of Agriculture. He was quickly hired and began his career as a forest firefighter in June 2019.

Michael met his goal to become a firefighter.
One Step at a Time...

Robert Dugger visited Alliance for Workforce Development in Grass Valley, seeking our services for Unemployment Insurance and Job Search Assistance. Robert is a determined individual who realized he needed to take action and be his own advocate to succeed.

After a quick assessment by AFWD staff, it was determined that the ‘first step’ would be for Robert to apply for Unemployment Insurance (UI), in order to help with financial responsibilities. Robert thought he was not eligible for UI but with assistance from our Resource Staff on the state UI Online website and the EDD phone interview process, Robert was awarded UI benefits. This was a relief to Robert as he has a dependent mother at home that he helps provide for.

Getting UI benefits allowed Robert to focus on ‘the next step’, his resume. Robert has limited computer skills and was grateful for all the support he received crafting a resume that focused on his considerable job skills. Robert’s own actions and the support offered by our Grass Valley staff resulted in five job offers in one week! He accepted two of the jobs and came into the AJCC to acknowledge his appreciation for excellent service and reassuring support.

Way to go Robert!

Working Her Way to the Top

Jessica was referred to the Grass Valley AJCC by a potential employer. She was a single mother in need of full-time employment, a self-sustaining wage and opportunity for advancement. Sierra Nevada Children's Services (SNCS) reached out to the Grass Valley center to determine if Jessica would be a good fit for our On the Job program (OJT), as she did not have sufficient experience or education to be hired for the position without additional training.

Jessica was assessed by a career center advisor and determined she would be a great candidate for an OJT, as she would benefit from additional training while on the job. Jessica began her position at Sierra Nevada Children's Services under the auspices of this OJT, gradually working her way into a permanent position by learning all the necessary programs to ensure her clients received
AFWD America’s Job Center of California

Statistics
PY 2018-2019

**Nevada County**

*Total Visitors*

10,155

**Nevada County**

*Business Services*

- Business Served: 149
- Service Provided: 841

**AFWD**

*Total Clients Enrolled:*

1,766

**Unemployment Rate**

(As of: May 2019)

- Butte: 4.3%
- Lassen: 4.0%
- Modoc: 5.8%
- Nevada: 3.0%
- Plumas: 6.3%
- Sierra: 4.7%

Nevada County Business and Career Network
988 McCourtney Drive
Grass Valley, CA 95949
(530) 265-7088

Nevada County Business and Career Network
10075 Levon Avenue
Truckee, CA 96161
(530) 550-3015