AFWD Partners in Storm Clean-up with PRS

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) received National Dislocated Worker Grant – Storm (NDWG-Storm) funding to assist public entities and non-profits organizations impacted by the flooding of 2017. The Storm program provides unemployed individuals the opportunity to gain skills and employment during the repair and cleanup efforts.

Plumas Rural Services (PRS) identified storm related damage to their Jackson Street location. This facility houses offices and temporary housing apartments. The staff was forced to relocate until necessary repairs were completed. A couple of sheds even slide off their foundations by the force of the flood waters. The storm caused flood waters to enter the building and in some rooms rising to 3 feet. This meant walls would need to be torn down to the studs and replaced with new dry wall. The cleanup task was significant.

The NDWG-Storm grant enabled PRS to secure workers to help with the extensive labor needed to clean up and repair the buildings and property. The participants selected ranged from no work experience to seasoned laborers with various skills sets. These storm participants performed a variety of skilled and unskilled labor, tearing out walls, replacing drywall and painting the various rooms with community donated paint.
Kent Barrett, site supervisor on the project, was very happy to get hard working maintenance crew. Kent remarked, “Without these laborers, PRS would not be able to meet the various deadlines. The crew is hard working and has good attention to detail.”

Michelle Piller, Executive Director for PRS remarked, “We are grateful for AFWD’s recruitment efforts. We could not accomplish all we have without AFWD’s assistance.” The PRS staff members are looking forward to returning to their newly renovated offices sometime this spring.
Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) once again hosted the next Healthcare Workshop for Plumas District Hospital. Staff participating in last year’s Healthcare Workshops of 2017 thought the trainings were so impactful that they wanted to augment those trainings with more soft skill trainings in 2018. In January, AFWD facilitated having The Training Place conduct an in depth soft skill workshop for Plumas District Hospital (PDH). The management staff at PDH saw a need to improve communication skills between departments ultimately resulting in better patient care. Several team leaders attended, such as Patricia Everhart, the Chief Nursing Officer. Patricia reflected “These session enhance our team’s ability to work together on all levels within the organization. The techniques taught carry over to patient care, our primary focus here at PDH.”

PDH staff members commented that AFWD’s hosting this type of learning based workshop enhanced staff ability to provide better patient care. All departments benefitted from targeted soft skill training. Tiffany Leonhardt, Director of Patient Experience and Staff Development, mentioned, “This type of training grows the culture of teamwork within the departments but also enhances positive patient interaction. With AFWD’s facilitating this needed type of workshop, we are better able to serve the needs of our rural community. Having this level of coursework in a rural community is advantageous for everyone.”

Small rural communities do not often get the opportunity to participate in this level of training. With AFWD’s coordinating the workshops, PDH was able to obtain a high level of training. Plumas District Hospital was grateful to AFWD for hosting The Training Place and hopes to continue future trainings.
Katie Wood and her family made the transition to Quincy in early February 2018. For the past 16 years, Katie has been a pre-school teacher, but recently made the decision to move to a small town where her and her husband can raise their daughter in a tight knit community. Katie had fallen in love with the town of Quincy 14 years ago, and has finally gotten her dream come true of living among the mountains.

Having a history of working with non-profit child care facilities, she found the opportunity to join another non-profit in the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) team at the Plumas Business and Career Network in Quincy in February 2018 as a receptionist. She is looking forward to applying her knowledge and skills in human and customer service to further her dedication of helping others. She believes AFWD will help facilitate that goal.

In her spare time Katie spends time out in nature walking, exploring, and breathing the fresh mountain air. She has a passion for cooking, exploring photography, reading, and spending time with her family and friends. Katie is looking forward to her new life adventures with the AFWD team and small town mountain living in Quincy.
Heraclitus’ quote, “The Only Thing That Is Constant Is Change” certainly holds true for Labor Laws and Employer/Employee relations. On January 24, 2018 employers, managers, community members, and Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) staff attended, in person or via webinar, Butte College, The Training Place – Labor Law Update 2018 workshop facilitated by Ann M. Wick, Attorney at Law. Ann has more than 20+ years of experience advising companies of all sizes in matters involving employment and labor law.

2018 offered a first with the webinar arrangement, as this allowed callers from Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, and Sierra Counties to participate without having to deal with the winter driving conditions.

Ann provided brief overviews of significant labor and employment legislation taking effect in 2018 and court decision from 2017 that affect employers. New law subjects discussed encompassed:

- New Hire Changes-Ban the Box and Salary History Issues
- Immigration Worker Protection Act
- New Parental Leave Law
- Human Trafficking Issue

Ann revisited laws involving:
- Harassment Training Requirements
- California Sick Leave Law
- Increase in Minimum Wage
- Changes to NLRB Enforcement Policies

Kevin Williams, from Plumas Pines Resort commented “This is an excellent way to learn the Labor Law changes in California. The presenter made it easy to understand. I attend every year and would not miss this”. Aly Davis- Kinney of ReThink Industries, said “As a new business owner, understanding the Labor Law is very important. I just started to hire my first employees and knowing what we can and cannot do is essential”.
Due to the storms that caused severe flooding in January and February 2017 there was quite a bit of damage throughout Plumas County as well as many other Northern CA Counties. Plumas County was a declared a disaster affected area due to the devastation that was a result from the immense flooding throughout Plumas County. 

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) received aid from the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) Storm Project/2017. This Grant program would help with repair and clean-up for private/public non-profit companies and state agencies.

One of the state agencies that AFWD partnered with was Caltrans in Chester, CA. This area of Plumas County was quite impacted by the damage done to the roads and highways. This Temporary Job Creation (TJC) grant permitted long term unemployed clients to participate in a temporary job that would enable them to earn an income while adding to their skill set and closing the gap in their work histories, which will make them more marketable for future permanent employment.

Because of the damage that was done to the roads and highways, AFWD in Plumas County was able to provide four different employees over a 10 to 12 month time period working 29 hours a week. They assisted in cleaning out plugged drainage systems, repairing guideposts and guard rail damage. They replaced signs damaged by the storms with the correct and current signage as well as learning and participating in proper flagging procedures. Caltrans in Chester has been extremely pleased with the clients the have been employed through the NDWG-TJC storm grant. All the employees received on the job training and were able to add a litany of skills to their own resumes while earning a livable wage. In turn, this will assist them in their future endeavors.
AFWD America’s Job Center of California

Statistics
PY 2017 -2018

**Plumas County**

*Total Visitors*

2,590

*Plumas County Business Services*

Businesses Served  105
Services Provided  650

**AFWD**

*Total Clients Enrolled*

721

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

- Butte  5.7%
- Lassen  6.3%
- Modoc  10.5%
- Nevada  3.9%
- Plumas  11.7%
- Sierra  7.8%

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