Hard Work Brings Success

Joshua Vieira came into the Plumas Business and Career Network (BCN) to see what jobs were available in the area. After a quick interview, he was introduced to the Youth Career Center Advisor (CCA) who reviewed the Youth Program with him. Joshua felt that the extra help would be beneficial to his job search. Joshua and his CCA went to work on creating his resume and application. While working together, they created a job search plan that would help Joshua be organized and focused.

While refining his job search, retention skills, and interview skills, Joshua felt more confident than ever in his ability to secure employment. He worked diligently with the CCA to learn more about financial literacy and how to budget. During this time, Joshua was able to purchase a vehicle for himself by realizing his priorities. Being able to get to appointments and the BCN made it exponentially easier to get tasks accomplished. Before long, Joshua contacted his CCA to let her know that he had an interview scheduled with the local Dollar General store. Not long after, he was offered a position!

Since starting his position at Dollar General, Joshua now has a financial stability that he had been missing. Joshua looks forward to working on his next goal, and moving forward is a great feeling. He has thanked everyone at the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) for their assistance, and support through his job search endeavor. Previously, he had been lost as where to begin his journey and having assistance has helped him gain the confidence he needed to find a path to success.
23rd Annual Plumas County Job Fair - 2019

April 9, 2019 marked the Plumas Business and Career Network’s (BCN) 23rd Annual Job Fair at Feather River College. As time drew near to open the doors, many job seekers were waiting with resumes and applications ready to present to local employers. While some job seekers knew what to expect from previous job fairs, for others this was a new experience. Many familiar faces had been into the BCN to update their resumes and applications in anticipation of the event.

One youth client received an offer from a local resort. This young man had been struggling with job search since December, 2018. Of the job fair and BCN, he said, “The Business and Career Network has been extremely helpful. In helping me to prepare for the job fair, it has made it possible for me to present myself in the best manner possible.” He was hired on the spot.

Another participant came up and exclaimed, “I have been offered four jobs today!” She had been in the office prior to the job fair, where she was able to create multiple resumes outlining specific job skill sets to present to the many different employers that attended the job fair. As a recent transplant to the Quincy area, she did say that the BCN and the job fair have been a huge help to her in her job exploration. She went on to say, “This is a great opportunity your company provides; not just for job seekers, but for local employers as well.”

The job fair has provided an opportunity for the many job seekers and employers in the surrounding area to come together as a community. Job seekers are able to present themselves to local employers for seasonal work to year-round employment. Employers are able to promote their business, services, and conduct interviews, making it possible to hire individuals on the spot. Upon following up with individuals who attended the job fair, it was extremely rewarding to hear from several individuals that they had secured employment at the fair or a few days following it.
Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) staff attended this year’s California Workforce Association (CWA) WORKCON 2019 held in Garden Grove, California May 15-17, 2019. This year’s theme was Fueling Curiosity with Joey Zumaya, from LinkedIn Learning, presenting the keynote address at the opening plenary. The entire three days were filled with a variety of content rich presentations for every workforce professional.

There were topics presented for every aspect of the workforce industry. Whether you operated in an urban or rural office there were insightful topics for all participants. 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. Currently, employers across the country are faced with the lowest unemployment rate since December 1969. Several talks addressed the challenges employers face finding skilled qualified staff. 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.

Bob Lanter, Executive Director of CWA, presented the State of the Workforce during the Wednesday plenary session where he shared the insights from a panel discussion about the many issues facing urban and rural communities alike.

At the Thursday luncheon, The Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC) and AFWD were presented with the 2019 Charlie Brown award for the significant work they have contributed for the Camp Fire survivors. The entire executive staff along with many other staff from all counties were on hand at the award luncheon. Traci Holt, Executive Director, shared phenomenal pictures and touching remarks as she gracefully accepted the award.
John Baker, retiring from CWA, gave a heartfelt talk of his time with the organization through a beautiful slide show. Later when asked about his thoughts regarding rural communities, he said “There are career paths in rural areas, but they look different than the larger communities. Understanding the needs unique to your community is important.” Several talks presented ideas for attracting skilled employees in a full economy. To attract and keep qualified employees, employers should understand what motivates each employee. Mr. Baker commented, “Find out why employees are attracted to the company and what keeps them there, it’s not always money. Understanding what motivates each employee is an important for employers to know.”

This conference gave us an opportunity to speak with industry experts and learn from other workforce professionals around the state. Winning the prestigious Charlie Brown award was humbling and made us realize our team efforts were recognized.
Quincy Junior/Senior High School

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc.’s (AFWD) Youth Program Supervisor and Youth Program Career Center Advisor (CCA) were able to present the Youth Program and career services to the senior graduating class at Quincy Junior Senior High. Some of the students had previously visited the Business and Career Network (BCN) and knew of the services provided but the majority of the graduating class were not aware of our office and the kind of resources AFWD has to offer. All students were encouraged to come to the office for a tour. Many were excited to hear about the job search assistance as they plan on staying in Plumas County and working before attending college.

The students had many questions. Gaining answers to their questions further piqued the young adults’ curiosity about the BCN. The students planning to leave the area were excited to hear about other offices located throughout California.

Since the visit to the high school, several students have come into the BCN, to look at the job board, utilize the computer lab, or to just to get a feel of what to expect after graduation. The students have made sure to thank the staff at the BCN for coming in and talking to them, as well as being available for any questions they expressed.
Fresh Start in a New Town

Matthew came into the Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc.’s (AFWD) Plumas Business and Career Network (BCN) in early December in a serious state of disarray. Not only was he looking for help with filing for unemployment but he also required assistance seeking new employment. Matthew had recently lived and worked full time in Paradise, CA. On November 8, 2018, the town of Paradise was devastated by the worst fire in California’s history, the Camp Fire. Matthew’s house had burned down, as well as his place of employment. He, his fiancé, and his child had to relocate. They came to Plumas County in hopes of being able to make a fresh start.

After meeting with a Career Center Advisor (CCA), Matthew was determined eligible for the, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program. To get some income coming in for the family, the CCA started by assisting Matthew with his Disaster Unemployment Insurance. They then continued by creating a standard application and resume for use in applying for local jobs.

Matthew started his job search at the local Sierra Pacific Mill. They hired him for a full time laborer position on the spot! Now he had a new job to start, and needed specific clothing to accommodate that work, having lost all of his clothing in the fire. AFWD was able to help him with purchasing work boots, work shirts, and a warm jacket for his new employment. What a huge help the supportive services were to this worker who was having to start over from scratch! Next, Matthew located a small home for himself and his family in the nearby town of Greenville. Since he would not receive his first paycheck for some time, AFWD determined that supportive services through the Additional Assistance Camp Fire Grant could also assist with his first months’ rent.

Matthew has been very grateful for the help that AFWD was able to give him through the Additional Assistance - Camp Fire grant. He feels invigorated with this opportunity to start anew after he and his family were able to survive the Camp Fire. We were happy to be able to help Matthew and his family in this very stressful time, and we wish Mathew and his family all the best. They have a fresh start in a new town.
From Part Time/Seasonal Work to a Full Time Career

Antonio came into the Plumas Business and Career Network (BCN) where he was given an overview of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services that were available in the Plumas County area. Antonio’s goal was full-time, gainful employment, as he was working in a part time/seasonal laborer position for a tree service company. In this current position, he had no opportunity for increased hours or position advancement.

He decided to come to the Plumas BCN seeking assistance in finding gainful employment in the form of a career. During his search, he found a job listing as a Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) technician that could give him permanent employment AND would provide a career path in a trade industry. With assistance from a Career Center Advisor (CCA), Antonio submitted his newly refreshed resume and application and was granted an interview with Integrity Heating & Air Conditioning.

After Integrity interviewed Antonio, the hiring staff conveyed an interest in a dedicated worker like himself, but expressed their concern for his lack of experience needed for the position. Upon learning of this situation, the CCA spoke with the Plumas Business Services Representative (BSR) about the situation. The BSR reached out to the owner of Integrity and discussed the possibility of doing an On-the-Job Training (OJT) as it would be crucial for Antonio to be able to accomplish the key functions of the position successfully. Participating in an OJT would allow the company to train Antonio to their standards and at the same time, save money on his wages during the training period. It would be a win/win for Antonio and Integrity! Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) staff worked together with Integrity Heating and Air Conditioning to develop an OJT for Antonio that would equip him with the skills and experience necessary to become a seasoned HVAC Technician.

After starting his new position, Antonio fit right in with his fellow work crew. His supervisor felt that he took to learning all facets of operations immediately and was impressed with his progress. His new employer stated: “Antonio is now a major block in our team. We can’t roll as well without him. I believe he has a great future in the HVAC trade and with this company.”

Way to go with your new career path, Antonio!
20,000 Lives Initiative, Youth, & Community

Recently, the Youth Program supervisor and the Youth Career Center Advisor (CCA) from Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) attended the Youth Prevention Group with the 20,000 Lives Initiative, designed for the youth and their needs in our community. Following the Youth Prevention Group, they attended the quarterly meeting for the 20,000 Lives Initiative. While in attendance the supervisor and CCA made connections throughout the community, which facilitates finding the agencies AFWD wants to partner with throughout Plumas County.

There were representatives from numerous county and non-profit organizations: Plumas County Department of Public Health, Behavioral Health, and Probation, Girls Circle, the Plumas County Gay-Straight Alliance, Sierra West End Educational Theatre (SWEET), SafeBase, Upward Bound-TriO, Plumas Crisis Intervention & Resource Center, Plumas County Office of Education, and Plumas County Tobacco Coordination. All of these organizations were there in support of cross communication to better serve our public. The goal is maximize the existing assets of the participating organizations to improve the health and well-being of our 20,000 residents. What a positive experience coming together as professionals to show support of the local youth as well as adults!

Everyone there is exceedingly interested in supporting our community, to share their knowledge and resources; or gain further knowledge on how to help others. 20,000 Lives is an amazing calibration of individuals, groups, and organizations, who have a genuine care for others; and they want to help. Being invited to attend, and to share a bit about the AFWD youth program and how we can assist our young people, was a positive experience that the CCA is excited to continue to be a part of. This event is also a great resource on upcoming events going on in and around the surrounding areas of Plumas County.
AFWD America’s Job Center of California
Statistics
PY 2018 -2019

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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%