

Community Coordinator

Report

Plumas County

APRIL—JUNE

2022

LAKE ALMANOR AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SPRING JOB FAIR

Lake Almanor Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a spring job fair and Alliance for Workforce Development (AFWD) was happy to help host this event with them. More than 23 business and organizations were on hand to make their pitch to potential employees and AFWD was at the front door to assist job seekers. From your first day in Chester to the day you start your new job, Alliance for Workforce Development will be there.

Everyone is hiring, as it is an employee's market right now and the employers know this. Job Seekers showed up with applications ready and smiles on their faces. It was truly a great turnout for businesses.

Several job-seekers turned out for this event ready to sign up for potential jobs. Schools sent students who were undecided to give them an opportunity to find out about they might want to do before college.

AFWD is here in the Chester community to help rebuild and help local job seekers gain long-term employment!

Pictured from left to right: Valerie Bourque, Resource & Referral Coordinator; Joshua Bradley, Career Center Advisor; Melissa Smith, Business Service Representative



RE-BUILDING A COMMUNITY

Priscilla Flores is a Greenville resident whose home was luckily spared by the fire, though her community was severely damaged. Shortly following the fire, Priscilla was laid off from her position with Plumas County, and in the aftermath of the Dixie Fire found it difficult to obtain self-sufficient employment in the area. In order to address many of the problems that have arisen for the survivors of this fire, Plumas Rural Services has created positions to work for the people. One position, the Disaster Resource Specialist, caught Priscilla's eye. Priscilla had prior experience in the Public Health/Social Service sector, but did not have the particular experience needed for the position. Alliance for Workforce Development reached out to Plumas Rural Services recommending her, and let them know that AFWD could assist through a Work Experience, so Priscilla could gain experience in that type of position. Plumas Rural Services gladly accepted the offer and welcomed Priscilla on board for the Re-Building Greenville Resource Center! Landing this position not only opened the door to working for Plumas Rural Services, but also has provided her with valuable experience to increase her marketability in the Public Health, Social Services, and Disaster Response sectors.



During her Work Experience, AFWD covered all of her wages and stayed close to ensure that she was succeeding in the position. Week after week, Priscilla was getting better and more knowledgeable at her job. Come the last month of the Work Experience, impressed with Priscilla's achievements, Plumas Rural Services even raised her wages. As her time working with AFWD comes to an end, Plumas Rural Services has announced that they will hire her on full-time as a Disaster Case Manager. Priscilla has come a long way since last year, from being turned upside down by the fire to now helping those that were affected. Thanks to this Work Experience and all of Priscilla's hard work, Priscilla has stable and well-paid work that will continue to increase her opportunities for the future!



Plumas Rural Services
Serving people, Strengthening families, Building communities

A VALLEY OF HOPE

SAWMILL RIBBON CUTTING EVENT

The Ribbon Cutting in Plumas County on May 18, 2022, was a hopeful day; Crescent Mills officially has a working mill! A few hundred people showed up at the new mill run by J&C Enterprises in partnership with Sierra Institute and so many Indian Valley residents were there to celebrate the grand opening of the mill.

J&C Enterprise is a fourth-generation family-owned timber harvesting company and Class A California Licensed Timber Operator based in the beautiful Indian Valley of Plumas County, California. Representatives from the Alliance for Workforce and Development – Dixie Fire Recovery Team – Melissa Smith and Josh Bradley were there to help support the grand opening. The Executive Director for the Sierra Institute for Community and Environment, Jonathon Kusel, spoke at the podium to share his vision of hope as the community is in process of rebuilding from the aftermath of the Dixie Fire.

Open ceremonies started with a land acknowledgment (dedication of land) from Greenville Rancheria's Assistant Fire Chief and Chair of Roundhouse Council, Danny Manning. Everyone then stood and removed their hats for the majestic trumpet sound, "God Bless America" played by Bob Crowl.

A moving speech was made by California's Secretary for Natural Resources, Wade Crowfoot. Next was Eric Byous, U.S EPA Pacific Southwest Region 9, Brownfield Project Manager, and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Executive Director, Angela Avery. Plumas County Board of Supervisor Chair, Kevin Goss thanked everyone for their outstanding passion & dedication and how much this meant to all the communities. Jerry Pew and J&C Enterprises closed the speakers' forum with heartfelt and a compassionate, "Thank you" to make this Lumber Company happen and the hope it will bring to all who face a catastrophic event. It can happen and we made it happen.



DISLOCATED BY PANDEMIC SHUTDOWNS

As jobs slowly shut down and employers reduced their staff, many employers were even forced to close up shop altogether, causing an influx of unemployed workers with no way of covering their bills, such as rent, car payments, and many other responsibilities. Joel Hinton fell into the category of losing his housing and was forced to relocate. Joel was very blessed (as he says) that his sister in Susanville was more than happy to open her home to her brother. The pandemic caused a lot of workers to rethink the way they lived and worked. Joel went from working as a parking lot sweeper/maintenance worker to having no job and no home. Once he arrived at his sister's home, he reached out to AFWD and asked for help with his job search. AFWD helped Joel get his resume updated and went to work to find a job.

Joel's main goal is to work for the County of Lassen, staff worked hard to find a position that he desired, but very few positions in the county were open that matched Joel's skillset. Joel was very active in his job search and he and AFWD staff submitted his resume to a great many businesses. Joel was very active in participating in mock interviews and learning about "virtual interviews" through Zoom and MS Teams, these were all very new to him. He got through them with only a few hiccups. He was appreciative of learning these new ways of post-pandemic interview techniques. In the end, Joel was hired by North Bay Transit as a driver for medical transport. He was determined and is now able to earn an income and support himself once again!



SIERRA CYCLE SUCCESS



Benjamin Piper came to Plumas AFWD after being laid off from his job as a laborer landscaper in Susanville in July of 2020. In the meantime, he had struggled with finding another job due to the onset

of the pandemic and some justice-involved setbacks. It was determined that Benjamin was a Dislocated Worker and a great candidate for the On the Job Training (OJT) Program. He had a basic understanding of small engines and has had some customer service experience, but not enough to jump into just any customer service position. Benjamin is a kind and soft-spoken young man with a personal goal to build a better future for himself. That is where the Sierra Cycle of Quincy California comes in!

Sierra Cycle has participated in our OJT program before, the training they provide is exceptional and greatly appreciated for the work they do in helping our young workforce in learning and or upgrading a valuable skill set. Benjamin is one of those who get to take advantage of Sierra Cycles' great teaching opportunity. Since working with Sierra Cycle, Benjamin has added to his skill set when it comes to working on small engine repair. When the business owner was asked "how is Ben doing?" the response was a very enthusiastic "I can't keep up with the paperwork as fast as he repairs engines!" When Benjamin was asked, "do like working here at Sierra Cycle?" His face lit up and his smile broadened and all he said was, "Yes, I do!" Win-win for everyone!



TURNING DISASTER INTO A NEW OPPORTUNITY

Dakota Smith is a Greenville resident whose property and trailer were destroyed by the Dixie Fire. In the aftermath of the devastation, jobs were hard to come by in the area. Dakota was forced to extend his job search to Quincy and Chester, but as gas prices and everything else were rising, things were becoming tighter and Dakota could no longer get by on part-time work. Dakota has had years of experience truck driving and performing various labor positions. His goal was to gain employment in a field where he could develop skills in Heavy Equipment Operation. One day he will be a Tractor Operator, but first he needed an opportunity to get technical experience working more with heavy equipment. Upon seeking out AFWD, we were able to help support Dakota through his job search, assisting him with supportive services, including rent assistance.

When he learned of an entry position for Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI), Dakota jumped on it, knowing that they are the type of company that could give him a serious foothold into the type of work that he desired. He did his work to apply, and soon he was asked to interview! Upon getting word that he would be hired on full-time with SPI, AFWD was here to help him purchase his work boots that were needed for the position. Now back in the workforce, fully employed, and making a self-sufficient wage, Dakota has the breathing room to rebuild his life following the fire. Not long after starting his job, CalTrans reached out to him regarding the resume AFWD referred to them and the application he had put in before being hired with SPI. Dakota has now taken another step forward and has accepted a Heavy Equipment Operator Position with CalTrans. Dakota has made a lot of progress in his time working with AFWD, and deserves recognition for all the hard work he put in. Sometimes all anyone needs is some extra support.



WOMEN'S BUSINESS SUMMIT—SBA



This March, AFD had the opportunity to witness the first ever Small Business Administration's Women's Business Summit! The Small Business Administration (SBA) is a cabinet-level federal agency dedicated to igniting change and sparking action so small businesses can confidently start, grow, expand or recover. This first

annual event featured prominent Women in business, such as Assistant SBA Administrator, Natalie Madeira Cofield; SBA Administrator, Isabella Casillas Guzman; Deb Haaland, Secretary of the Interior; Vice President of the United States, Kamala Harris, and so many more.

Day one of the event was full of inspiring and eye-opening discussions. Executive Director Nicola Corzine with the Nasdaq Entrepreneurial Center delivered stellar statistics on women in business. She reported, "there are 114% more women entrepreneurs today than there were twenty years ago". Also, 64% of businesses started last year are owned by women of color. Additionally, women-owned US businesses generate \$1.8 trillion each year and employ 9.4 million people.

VP Kamala Harris spoke as well on day one. She addressed the challenges of women in business, particularly minority-women-owned businesses, in terms of wealth disparities, access to capital loans and banking services, and the like. VP Harris talked about the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act to protect women-owned businesses of Asiatic, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander descent. One quote from VP Harris that stuck with me was a tribute to those who have "the ambition to see what can be without the burden of what has been". She revealed plans to expand access to banking services, community lenders, business development funds, affordable childcare, paid leave, and more.

Continued on next page.

WOMEN'S BUSINESS SUMMIT—SBA



Day one culminated with excellent discussions. Mellody Hobson, Co-CEO and President of Ariel Investments, discussed the 3P's of investment: People, Purchasing, and Philanthropy. A panel discussion on Building an Equitable Recovery Framework for Women Entrepreneurs featured strategies to mend the disproportionately female-affected economic recovery from business closures and job loss. Another panel discussion, "From Essential Worker to Essential Entrepreneur: CARE Economy Entrepreneurship Opportunities" addressed issues and opportunities in the caregiving industry and revealed a goal to secure \$1 billion in funding for childcare for moms. Other important topics included Innovation and Investment, Contracting Opportunities for Women-led Firms, Exporting & E-commerce, and the Changing Landscape of

the Entertainment Industry.

Day two of the Women's Business Summit featured excellent "Ask An Expert" sessions on several topics, including Innovation and Investment, Certification and Contracting, Accessing SBA Resource Providers, International Trade, and Accessing Loans & Micro Finance.

The entire event was recorded and is available online, along with resource links and relevant information. Visit https://thecenter.nasdaq.org/womens-business-summit-sba-nec/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery to watch this epic event.

AFWD's mission of providing pathways to success and meeting the needs of job seekers and employers is fully aligned with the mission of the SBA, and women in business has long been a focus of our efforts. AFWD is proud to partner with SBA and was honored to attend this wonderful conference.



Photo top left: Vice President Kamala Harris; Photo bottom left: Natalie Madeira Cofield, Assistant Administrator of SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership



AFWD - America's Job Center of California

Unemployment Rates

(As of: JUNE 2022)

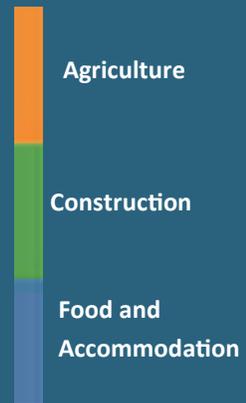
California 4%

Plumas 4.8%

Unemployment Information



Top 3 Affected Industry Sectors - Plumas County



Plumas County - Through 4th Quarter

One-Stop Visitors: 962

Businesses Served: 154

AFWD

Clients Enrolled: 1,009

Plumas Business & Career Network

7 Quincy Junction Rd. Quincy, CA

530-283-1606

Dixie Fire Recovery Office

328 Main St. Suite 3 Chester, CA

530-258-3866

A proud partner of

America's **JobCenter**
of CaliforniaSM