The Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. would like to welcome Meredith Marasco as a Career Center Advisor with our Business & Career Network team in Plumas County. Meredith has lived in Quincy for the past two years where she was working with Feather River College, most recently in the Admissions & Records Office. Meredith attended college in the Midwest and received her Bachelor’s degree from the University of Michigan. She remained in Michigan after graduation and lived in Detroit for a number of years. While living in Michigan Meredith held a number of different positions, working both with non-profit agencies as well as with local businesses. This combined experience in both the private and public sectors will be a beneficial addition to our agency.

When Meredith is not at work she likes to take advantage of everything Quincy and Plumas County has to offer. She enjoys hiking with her dogs, making trips to local lakes and rivers and was able to enjoy whitewater kayaking and rafting this spring through the Outdoor Recreation Leadership Program at Feather River College. Meredith also enjoys attending concerts and art openings in the community.
AFWD Works With a Growing “Green” Business in Plumas County

With the Business and Career Networks in both Plumas and Sierra Counties working together, The Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. has continued to assist Simple Fuels, a local biodiesel producer in Chilcoot, Plumas County, California.

Recently, Simple Fuels wanted to hire a Biodiesel Administrative Clerk to assist President, Jamie Lutch with many of the administrative tasks that are so important to the smooth operation of his growing “green” business.

Karen Robinson, from nearby Vinton, proved to be an excellent choice for this position. For several years Karen worked for a company in Reno until she was laid off when it closed in February 2010. Since that time she has tried to find work locally so she was delighted to be offered the position with Simple Fuels.

Through “On the Job” funding from the National Emergency Grant, AFWD is supporting Simple Fuels by reimbursing 90 percent of Karen’s wages during her initial training period. Karen is eager to gain the necessary skills and knowledge about the biodiesel industry to become a valuable asset to this company.

Jamie has commented that, “With the help of AFWD I now have a workforce of eight compared to just myself at the beginning of the OJT program”.

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Participant Report

Plumas County WIA participants have been busy since July 1st 2011

From July 1st to September 30th 2011 a total of eighteen Dislocated Workers, Adults and Youth entered employment. Two participants were creative and recently opened their own businesses that are, to date, doing well. Five “On the Job” trainings have ended successfully and the participants have entered employment with their training sites. Two new “On the Job” trainings have also begun. Fourteen WIA participants are in, or have completed, a training program.
On September 20th 2011 AFWD staff, Tina Stetler and Lisa Sanchez were among the many invited guests at the Feather River College Career Fair. This annual event assists senior high school students with their career planning and their understanding of the educational requirements needed to fulfill their goals. Tina and Lisa set up a booth highlighting current trends in careers. Included in this information were career field salary averages and the level of education required to obtain these career choices. Approximately 260 students from all areas of Plumas County, and neighboring Sierra County, attended this event. They had the opportunity to visit booths from several California community and university colleges along with out of state colleges. Vocational schools were also represented. In addition, local businesses, community service programs and career information booths presented students with local information about community resources and education. During the fair Tina and Lisa had the opportunity to speak with individual students about career questions, hand out career specific information and discuss AFWD programs.
The Candy Shoppe in Chester is located at 134 Willow St. in Chester, a centralized location where locals and tourists can go to enjoy a large variety of candies, including retro favorites such as jaw breakers, Zots, and Nerds. Owner, Vicki also has a back room chilled to a perfect temperature to house her chocolate specialties. These chocolates are “real,” made the old fashioned way. The liquor chocolates are made with all natural ingredients and are hand fashioned in the Bay Area.

Amongst the many delicacies one can find toffee bars, pecan caramel patties and fun shaped chocolate gift bars. Vicki also stocks specialty licorice from Holland and Australia and offers gift boxes for special occasions.

Recently, Vicki was presented with the opportunity to hire one of our AFWD clients. This placement was both helpful to the employee as well as to Vicki in that she needed some temporary assistance and AFWD staff were able to facilitate this arrangement. In addition, Vicki is looking forward to one of AFWD’s Economic Gardening Workshops being offered in the fall. Vicki reports she has been very pleased with our services and hopes to continue her partnership with AFWD in the future.
On September 28th and 29th the Plumas Business and Career Network hosted the first two, in a series of four, Economic Gardening Workshops for Plumas County small business owners and entrepreneurs. Susan Brown, of Susan Brown Consulting, presented both workshops to attendees who represented many different types of businesses from all parts of Plumas County.

This series of workshops offers free technical assistance training to meet the expressed needs of local businesses. The first workshop entitled, “Increasing Sales: Getting Noticed in Print and Online,” highlighted the many ways a business can advertise and gain publicity both locally and on the Internet. The second workshop, entitled, “From the Horse’s Mouth: Learn from the Pros”, featured a panel of local business owners who shared their wealth of knowledge and experience. This prompted a lively discussion and gave everyone in attendance an excellent insight into running a business, particularly in a rural economy such as Plumas County. We look forward to hosting the next workshops on October 11th and 12th.

"Excellent presentation, Susan did a great job!" Roni Halverson, Portola
“Very informative, great presenter, excellent panel…very diverse,” Dean Tedford, Quincy
“Great learning experience, panel was extremely helpful with sharing information,” Cindi Fegley, Graeagle
“Excellent ideas, great panel. I learned a lot!” Pat Wilkerson, Cromberg
“Loved today’s great information,” Todd Andersen, Crescent Mills
In follow up to a previous community coordinator article, we are excited to report, David Massey, has successfully completed a six month On-the-Job training with employer, Simple Fuels.

Simple Fuels is an up and coming biodiesel production company in Chilcoot, CA. Clients of the Business and Career Networks in both Plumas and Sierra Counties have had the opportunity to gain valuable hands on experience, skills and education in the biodiesel production industry at Simple Fuels. President, Jamie Lutch, has provided his time, energy and mentoring to help ensure successful outcomes.

David Massey came to us with a limited amount of work experience and otherwise, would not have been chosen for the Plant/Wash Technician position. This is the design and benefit of the OJT program. David was able to be hired on with the intent of being retained upon successful completion.

David worked hard over the six months to gradually increase his skills and knowledge. Examples of skills attained include; measure and monitor crude biodiesel fuel and polished biodiesel coming in and out of the process, monitor pressure, temperature and flow of biodiesel through the purifying columns and determine washed fuel quality and record data such as biodiesel quality results and quantity of fuel consumed including water content, soap content and acid value.

David received a Certificate of Occupational Skills Achievement and has been retained as a full time permanent employee. David has also gained experience and skills that will benefit him in future employment. David Massey is another Plumas County success story.
Grow your business…

FREE Workshops

The Plumas Business & Career Network is offering a series of Economic Gardening Workshops bringing technical assistance to Plumas County entrepreneurs and businesses free of charge.

Workshops for Plumas County Entrepreneurs and Businesses

September 28th 1:00pm-5:00pm *
Increasing Sales: Getting Noticed in Print and Online

September 29th 8:30am-12:30pm *
From the Horse’s Mouth: Learn From the Pros –Succeeding in a Rural Economy

October 11th 1:00pm-5:00pm *
Try It, You’ll Like It: Bookkeeping and QuickBooks

October 12th 8:30am-12:30pm *
Increase Those Profits: Financial Reports Made Easy

* The final hour of each workshop will be a Q & A session

To register for any, or all of these FREE workshops please phone Jan or Lisa at 283-1606 Call today - limited spaces available
Responding to RFPs - Request for Proposal

Learn the techniques of putting together winning proposals

October 25, 2011 - 9 am to 12 noon

Venue: Public Health Large Conference Room

270 County Hospital Road, Second Floor
Quincy, CA 95971

This class will cover:

• How to locate government RFPs
• How to review RFPs and decide whether or not to develop a proposal
• Key elements of proposal formats
• Developing a “requirements matrix”
• How to develop a proposal team
• How to coordinate subcontractor proposals
• Defining the scope of work
• Understanding the administrative tasks of non-complex and complex proposals
• How to finalize the proposal
• How to prepare for negotiation
• How to get valuable feedback after the contract has been awarded