A team from Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) were in attendance for an event held on January 10, 2019 at the Sheraton Redding Hotel. Exploring the NextGen of Workforce, Education & Community Engagement was the focus of the agenda for this year’s session.

Chico State University President, Dr. Gayle Hutchinson welcomed the attendees, and introduced Robert Eyler, Ph.D., President and Head of Research at Economic Forensics and Analytics, and Dean of the School of Extended and International Education at Sonoma State University. Robert provided the group Economic information, specific to the North state Counties and the anticipated population growth.

NextGen Sector Partnership overview was provided by Lindsey Woolsey, President and Principal Consultant of the Woolsey Group, LLC. Lindsey facilitated the 3 Panel format for the rest of the event.

Panel 1: NextGen Sector Partnerships; we heard about local NextGen sector partnership models and how they’re changing the face of community economic development.

Panel 2: The Triple Bottom Line: People, Planet, Profit; why company culture and social responsibility are critical factors in building a successful younger workforce.

Panel 3: Passing The Torch: A Live Focus Group Featuring Today’s Young Professionals; listening to today’s young professionals about how they’ve succeeded in the North State, what it will take to keep them here, and more.

Conversations and ideas were opened and shared during the day which have been continuous as staff assist employers and job seekers on the path to success.
2019 Labor Law Update Workshop

Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. (AFWD) in partnership with Butte College - The Training Place offered employers the annual Labor Law Update Workshop with Ann M. Wicks, Attorney at Law presenting the California Labor Law updates for 2019. Participants could attend in person at the Training Place or via live webinar. This workshop assisted local businesses in becoming familiar with how the new California labor laws affect their business, their employees, and ultimately themselves.

The topics covered included:

- Wage and Hour changes – Minimum wage increase impacts
- The new laws in response to #MeToo Movement
- New Sexual Harassment Training Prevention Requirements

Ann revisited laws involving:

- Ban the Box Clarification
- Affordable Care Act

Participants in the webinar were able to type in their questions and all were able to hear the question and answers. This allowed participants to obtain clarification on complex issues such as the determination of independent contractors vs. employee status. Several questions were raised when discussing the more than 20 “tests” used to make this determination.

AFWD services support the growth of local businesses and their success in our rural communities. Offering professional led workshops like the Labor Law Update provides businesses with the information and resources necessary to help guide them in operating their business in compliance with California law.
In February, staff members from the eleven county Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC) gathered in Anderson, CA for training in the Ascend method for working with criminal offenders after release. Criminal defense attorneys and Ascend founders, Christine Morse and Toni White presented the principles of the Ascend Program during the riveting two-day training.

Christine and Toni created the program after watching their clients over the years continually return to the criminal justice and prison systems. They reported that the recidivism rate for offenders in California is 67%, the highest in the nation! Frustrated by that statistic and their client’s experiences, they created a curriculum which addressed the causes of criminal behavior with input from psychologists and researchers at Sacramento State University. Ascend utilizes science-backed practices to help people effect change. The curriculum includes cognitive behavioral therapy, legal education, life-skills training, challenging physical activities, yoga, meditation, and career counseling. Ascend graduates to date have a reported success rate of 75%!

The training initially focused on the six criminogenic risk factors that threaten the success of rehabilitation for an offender after release. These risk factors, which cause or are likely to cause criminal behavior included:

- Anti-Social Network
  (The Leading Risk Factor)
- Anti-Social Beliefs
- Family Dysfunction
- Addiction
- Lack of Job/Education
- Poor Impulse Control

“...When the gates of the prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life.”

George W. Bush

(continued next page)
The second focus area of the training was the importance of recognizing when our brains are experiencing “Decision Fatigue” and how to rectify it. “Decision Fatigue” leads to a tendency to procrastinate and to make reckless decisions which can be detrimental for ex-offenders. Glucose and rest are the antidotes to “Decision Fatigue” and help to maintain the ability to use rational thought in decision making.

The third focus area of the training delved into the laws where a person can accidentally become involved in illegal behavior or “guilt by association” crimes. These include Aiding/Abetting, Conspiracy, and Constructive Possession crimes. These crimes often ensnare innocent people who make the mistake of associating with people involved in criminal behavior. It is the most common reason that offenders are charged with new crimes and/or violate probation/parole and it often plunges them back into the cycle of the criminal justice and prison system.

Additionally, a series of role playing exercises and games were utilized by Christine and Toni to reinforce the focus areas and to allow participants to experience the Ascend method first hand. Participants were also able to imagine walking in a client’s shoes while role playing through everyday scenarios that ex-offenders face in life. Christine and Toni concluded the training by emphasizing the importance of Workforce staff utilizing the Ascend method to work with clients. Christine stated, “When Ascend comes together with Workforce, we don’t feel so alone and we have a much greater impact.”

Gaia Hotel Conference Room, Anderson, CA

Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc. participants

NORTEC

Alliance For Workforce Development, Inc.
Providing pathways to success
### AFWD America’s Job Center of California

#### Statistics

**PY 2018 - 2019**

**Sierra County**

**Total Visitors**

189

**Sierra County Business Services**

- Businesses Served: 3
- Services Provided: 16

**AFWD**

**Total Clients Enrolled**

1,439

**Unemployment Rate**
(As of: February 2019)

- Butte: 6.1%
- Lassen: 6.2%
- Modoc: 10.9%
- Nevada: 3.9%
- Plumas: 12.5%
- Sierra: 7.8%

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