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## **Discussion Paper:** **Briefing on the Alliance for Workforce Development, Inc. operations in Nevada County**

**1. Purpose:** It is with pleasure that I take this opportunity to update you on the activities at the AFWD Nevada Business and Career Networks, your local America's Job Centers of California (AJCC). Our mission is to serve as a common point of access for job seekers, employers and community members for the purpose of education, training, employment, referral and other supportive services. AFWD delivers federal and state Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth of Nevada County.

**2. Discussion:** AFWD is one of four service providers for the Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC) providing various workforce development programs in six of NoRTEC's 11 counties; Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas and Sierra. I would like to recognize Supervisor Scofield, who continues to represent Nevada County on the NoRTEC Governing Board. AFWD's purpose is to create a productive atmosphere for job seekers and employers – A place where they can succeed in all endeavors by using the services available to them in a single point of contact. We continue to put an emphasis on our "business first" philosophy, as embraced by NoRTEC and by WIOA legislation, which emphasizes focus on business outreach and requires that businesses be in the forefront of our service delivery models.

Staff continue to work with job seekers and local businesses to ensure that employers find the most qualified individuals for the job, and our job seeking customers obtain sustainable, long term employment. All efforts are tied to enhancing workforce development, promoting economic vitality, and fostering a *stable and prosperous business community* throughout Nevada County.

In July 2018 NoRTEC launched NoRTECJobs.org, providing a valuable search engine to connect job seekers with jobs in our local communities. This site provides easy access to employer's job positions in a user-friendly program across the 11-county consortium.

- Nevada County's unemployment rate for September of 2019 stood at **2.6%**, while California's overall unemployment rate was at **4.0%**. At the end of Program Year 18-19, Nevada county unemployment stood at **3.0%**, showing a steady decline to date. According to EDD data, this growth in employment can be attributed in large part to higher worker demand in the Education, Government, Hospitality and Construction sectors, as well as more modest, but significant hiring in the Manufacturing and Professional Service Sectors. The EDD projects Construction and Hospitality to be the fastest growing private sector industries for Nevada County, in forecasts as far as 2026.

- Customers July 1, 2018– June 30, 2019: A total of **10,155** individuals utilized the various services available through the Nevada County Business & Career Networks in Grass Valley and Truckee.
- Business Services: In Program Year 18/19 we provided **149** Nevada County unique businesses with a range of services including; business retention, expansion, recruitment, job postings, labor market information, human resource support, layoff assistance and access to interviewing and meeting space. A total of **841** services were provided to these businesses, indicating that multiple contacts/services are being provided to these employers. This demonstrates that AFWD is succeeding in what WIOA envisioned, which is the development of long-term relationships with our local employers to better understand their workforce needs.

Rapid Response Activities: From July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, we responded to **3** business layoff or closure notices, affecting **354 employees**. These individuals were offered career advising, job search assistance and potential retraining or upskilling opportunities through WIOA services. Of the three affected businesses, only one faced permanent closure. **Arbormetrics laid off 30 workers due to an ended contract with PG&E. Ritz Carlton-Highlands Court in Truckee**, rehired employees after a temporary 2-week layoff. **Tahoe Mountain Club** in Truckee was purchased in February by **Paradigm8** and remains open. Early program year 19/20 has also seen some unfortunate layoff activity in Nevada County: Ensemble Design laid off 23 individuals in August 2019, 18 of which have been enrolled with AFWD, and are receiving WIOA services. DBI Beverage in Truckee laid off two workers, both of whom were relocated to Reyes Beverage Group.

### **3. Program Highlights:**

California Workforce Association (CWA)-Charlie Brown Award: In May 2019 the California Workforce Association presented the Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC) and AFWD with the 2019 Charlie Brown Award for the significant work that our staff contributed to Camp Fire recovery. Charlie Brown was the Executive Director of NoRTEC for almost a quarter of a century and “the Charlie Brown Workforce Professional of the Year Award” was established by CWA for recognition of individuals who embody the same spirit, innovation, dedication and service to their communities. The devastation of the fire was historic in nature, but so too was this acknowledgment of our efforts. This was the first time CWA recognized an entire organization with such an honor.

Employer Based Training: AFWD worked with numerous employers throughout the county to provide employer-based training to individuals who lacked all the necessary skills for their new jobs. The On-the-Job Training (OJT) program reimburses employers a percentage of an individual’s wages to assist with the costs associated with the additional training. A total of **20** clients were placed in OJTs in PY 18-19, totaling **\$105,584** going back to the employers in wage reimbursements.

Numerous businesses also hosted internship opportunities for individuals to be exposed to and explore various career fields. Our internship program supports all costs of an individual’s wages and liability coverage. This program included the National Dislocated Worker Grant

(NDWG) related to the 2017 Storms, and 2017 Wildfires. These grants created temporary jobs for the cleanup and repair of damage caused by these disasters. In total, **\$338,932** was paid out in wages for **44** participants/workers.

Classroom Training: Many of our clients require additional training and or certifications in a specific field in order to obtain full-time employment. In the 18/19 program year, we served clients with classroom training/certification programs. Although most of our clients attended training in the healthcare field, other certifications included Welding, Firefighting, Law Enforcement, HVAC and truck driving, to name a few. The total amount funded for certifications this year totaled **\$14,574**.

New Business Growth: AFWD coordinated and/or participated in several job/hiring fairs in response to new businesses coming to Nevada County, and for businesses looking to expand their workforce. Among these were **Beale Airforce Base**, **Caltrans**, and the **US Census Bureau**. We also participated in the **Nevada County Chamber of Commerce Meet Your Match Job Fair** in March 2019, and the inaugural **Truckee Jobs Collective Meetup** in June. AFWD continues to maintain an active presence in Nevada County employer recruiting and retention assistance. We maintain active partnership with the **Nevada County Chamber of Commerce**, the **Nevada County Tech Connection (NCTECH)**, the **Nevada County Economic Resource Council (NC ERC)**, and the **Truckee Jobs Collective**. In September 2019, we partnered with **NCTECH** and the **NC ERC** in representing Nevada County Construction and Engineering employers at the **CSU Chico College of Engineering Technical Career Fair**. At this event, we collected over 100 resumes for graduating or current students looking for entry level engineering or tech jobs or internships in Nevada County.

**4. Conclusion:** AFWD is pleased to continue offering Workforce Development services in Nevada County and providing valuable services to both businesses and job seekers. All of our efforts are geared towards creating a solid workforce, economic vitality and a stable and prosperous business community throughout Nevada County. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (530) 961-5125.

For more information about AFWD activities, please visit our website, [www.afwd.org](http://www.afwd.org) and click on CC Reports. Here you will find quarterly reports for each of AFWD's county operations.

Thank you for your time.

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