

SMART Workforce Center Community Coordinator Report



www.thesmartcenter.biz

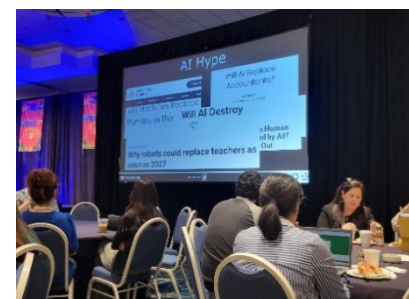
Q2-2024

DEL NORTE COUNTY EDITION



CWA WORKCON Conference- Bridging the Gap 2024

On May 29-31, CWA (California Workforce Association) held the WORKCON 2024 Bridging the Gap Conference at Omni Rancho Las Palmas, Palm Springs CA. This event provided a rich opportunity for learning and brainstorming. Conference coordinators invited participants to stretch and deepen their understanding of workforce trends and strategies. Several SMART managers and staff from the Shasta & Del Norte offices attended. Much valuable networking happened organically all throughout the three days of conference. Professional development workshops abounded, offering a chance to thoughtfully engage and expand horizons. Many interesting topics were covered in the workshops that the SMART staff attended, including Harnessing Innovation for Workforce Resilience in a Changing Climate, The Apprentice Voice: Real Stories from the Valley, Multigeneration Workplaces, Charting the Course from Incarceration to Employment, and The Five Big Ideas of AI; Leading And Learning in an AI-Infused World.



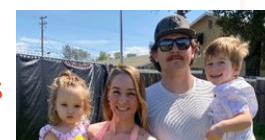
The climate change workshop was compelling in its' statistics, showing how \$100 billion annually is lost globally from heat-induced drops in productivity. The presenter stressed that meaningful action to reduce emissions/and adapt to extreme heat is crucial in trying to keep a handle on any increasing warming. Renewable energies, carbon storage, rebuilding power grids, and advanced technology in Fire prediction were all worthy topics up for discussion in the class. Job growth in response to climate changes continues to progress in green technologies such as solar. "Resilience grants" are being offered through WIOA in the US.



Inside This Issue

Young Adult Highlights

Page 4



CWA WORKCON Conference- *Continued from Page 1*

There has been a drop in recent years for people moving into the construction trades. The Apprentice Voice workshop featured men and women who share their journey through WIOA and are now union workers, as Roofers/Water proofers, Plumbers & Pipefitters, and IBEW Electrical. They got their start by attending the WIOA sponsored Valley Build MC3 Pre-apprenticeship program and now work as union apprentices across the CA Central Valley.

They received the support of WIOA with wraparound services such as mileage, childcare, and even a gym membership to stay physically active and ready for the demands of the occupations. The three speak to new classes with the goal of encouraging people to consider construction trades in their career futures. The union jobs pay well and include pensions and medical insurance.

And finally, one of our SMART staff had the opportunity to attend the Ven

tura County Bridges 2 Work workshop, a program dedicated to preparing inmates for life after release. Designed for individuals 20 to 180 days from release, the program equips them with the skills, training, and resources needed to secure employment immediately upon reentry. This proactive engagement, starting well before release, maximizes the time available for inmates to develop necessary skills and secure employment opportunities, thereby reducing recidivism rates and supporting successful reintegration into society. Through partnerships with the Del Norte County Probation Department and an upcoming meeting with the Sheriff, her

2024 E3 Summer Youth Program



SMART goal is to establish similar services that prepare inmates for transitional jobs upon release. The E3 Summer Youth Program, a partnership between the Smart Workforce Center and Del Norte County Office of Education, is available to high school sophomores, juniors and seniors again this summer. The program was created to give Del Norte

teens an opportunity for a paid summer internship, where they can learn what it is like to be a good employee, while earning money and up to 10 high school elective credits. This year, 70 teens applied to be a part of the program! All were invited to attend our workshop week, where they had an opportunity to interview with the various worksites participating in the program. In the end, the program was able to provide 47 teens with internships! Worksites this summer include Crescent City/Del Norte Chamber of Commerce, IT Department (School District), City of Crescent City, County of Del Norte, Del Norte Fairgrounds, Nutrition Services (School District), Family Resource Center of the Redwoods and Community Food Council, Hambro Forest Products, Instrument Repair for the Music Department (School District), Pulikla Tribe of Yurok People, Redwood Parks Conservancy, Rumiano Cheese Company, Sutter Coast Hospital and Tri County Independent Living. The summer internships can last up to 6 weeks or 120 hours. This program is being funded by the Del Norte County Office of Education and Klamath Promise Neighborhood.



Spring Del Norte County Job Fair

The Spring Del Norte County Job Fair was a resounding success, drawing a vibrant crowd of job seekers and employers. Held at the Del Norte County Fairgrounds, the event featured close to 50 local businesses and organizations eager to connect with talented individuals looking for new career opportunities.

This event was held in partnership with the County of Del Norte Expanded Subsidized Employment Program. Attendees had the chance to engage directly with hiring managers, submit resumes, and even participate in on-the-spot interviews. The energy was palpable as approximately 130 job seekers explored a wide range of industries, from healthcare and education to technology and hospitality. The positive feedback from both job seekers and employers underscores the importance of such events in fostering local employment and community growth. We are thrilled with the turnout and success of this year's job fair and look forward to continuing to support our community with future events. Thank you to everyone who participated and contributed to making the Spring Del Norte County Job Fair a memorable event!



Dislocated Worker Success Stories



In recent months, the Del Norte Senior Center has faced significant challenges in finding quality staff to meet their needs. However, their partnership with the SMART program has proven to be a game-changer. Through this collaboration, the senior center has successfully integrated two participants into transitional jobs, both of whom have been retained and continue to excel in their roles. This partnership not only addresses the staffing needs of the center but also provides meaningful employment opportunities for individuals in the community. The stories of Sheryl and Abigail exemplify the positive impact of this initiative, highlighting the mutual benefits of such community-focused programs.

After dedicating 20 years to the hospitality industry, Sheryl found herself unemployed when the restaurant she worked at closed permanently due to COVID-19. Through the SMART program, she was placed at the Del Norte Senior Center, where she trained as a receptionist. Her supervisor praises her as a perfect fit for the front desk, describing her as friendly, spunky, and capable of handling even the toughest clientele. Sheryl is thrilled with her new role and expresses deep gratitude to the SMART staff for helping her find

the perfect job. She loves her work and looks forward to continuing to serve the community at the Senior Center.

Abigail turned to SMART for assistance with her job search after losing her job of 10 years as a Fitness Instructor/Manager when the business closed due to decreased clientele following COVID-19. Despite applying to hundreds of jobs on Indeed, her background posed a significant barrier to securing employment. Relocating to Crescent City brought additional challenges as she navigated the difficulties of being justice-involved. However, a turning point came when she interviewed with the Del Norte Senior Center for a position in the Nutrition Department. They welcomed her into a transitional job training program, and upon its conclusion, she was retained as a permanent employee. Her supervisor praises Abigail for her ease to work with and her willingness to take on additional duties, making her a valuable asset to the department. Abigail expresses her gratitude for the opportunity, stating she truly enjoys her role at the Senior Center. She is also thrilled to volunteer as a fitness instructor, allowing her to return to her passion for teaching, which she holds dear to her heart.



Young Adult Highlight: SMART Young Adult Program

Young Adult Highlight: SMART Young Adult Program

One of the hidden gems in the workforce is the young adult population—students, recent graduates, and young parents eager to grow but often unsure where to start. These young people are now faced with the pivotal decision of determining what they want to be in the world, a decision that can feel daunting and overwhelming. It takes just one person in their corner to help forge a pathway, and that's where the SMART Young Adult Program comes in. Through partnership,



teamwork, and an encouraging push of accountability, SMART youth have found success in a variety of ways.

Peter's Journey

Peter, at 18 years old, had no idea what he wanted to do. He had never held a job and struggled with nerves. Working with his career advisor, Peter discovered a love for the gym, which led to a work experience at the YMCA. He went from being unable to work an eight-hour shift due to nerves to now working full-time and attending Shasta College.

Jordan and Taylor's Story

Jordan and Taylor, two young parents, came to SMART looking for an opportunity to do more for their son. Through career exploration and supportive services, Jordan obtained her driver's license and an AA from Shasta College. She now works as an Environmental Service Specialist.

Taylor received assistance through IOT and became an HVAC technician. Both parents have created a positive generational impact by showing their son that dreams are possible with hard work.

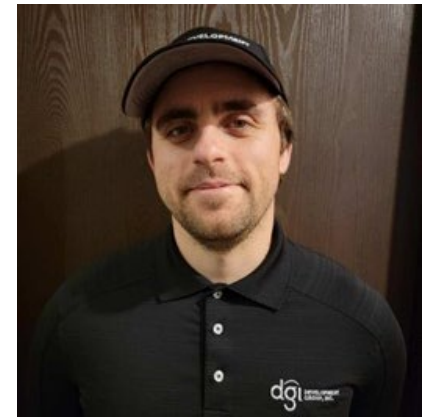
Micheal's Achievement

Micheal had always dreamed of working in IT but had no idea where to start. With resume and interview assistance from SMART, he landed his dream job as an IT specialist.

Sophia's Success

Sophia, through obtaining her first job, was able to afford her first apartment for herself and her daughter.

For many young adults, the journey to discovering their place in the world begins with a single step—guided by the support of a dedicated career advisor. From resume assistance to job searches, interview tips, referrals, and being the supportive voice on the other end of the phone, these are the stories and impacts of our career advisors. Every day in the youth program is a great day to change a life!



On the Job Training and Work Experience Partners:

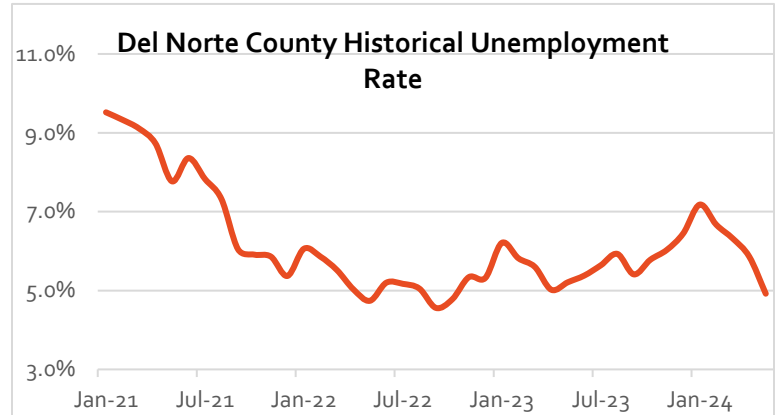
- US Forest Service
- Cary's Redding Tire and Auto
- Emerald Ridge Construction
- County of Del Norte
- Plotzke Ace Hardware
- Mayers Memorial Hospital District
- Fasteners Inc
- Sunseekers
- County of Trinity Animal Shelter
- Burney Water District
- Berry Curtis Insurance
- US-Offsite Holdings, Inc.
- ALC Gifts & Antiques
- Western Valuation Services
- Renewed Life Medical Group
- Hat Creek Lumber
- Turtle Bay Exploration Park
- Del Norte Senior Center
- Los Compadres Mexican Restaurant
- Shasta Public Library- Redding
- Shasta YMCA
- Boundary Waters
- Shasta Regional Transportation Agency



Del Norte County Labor Market Update:

As of May 2024, In Del Norte County, the civilian work force contracted last quarter to 8,980 this includes everyone that is working, and everyone that is looking for work. This is the lowest recorded labor force in the available data since 1990. Of those in the labor force, 8,540 are currently employed.

The unemployment rate is 4.9% for May, this is down from 5.2% in the same time last year, and down since a peak earlier in the year.



Fastest Growing Occupations

Del Norte County

Nurse Practitioners
Cooks, Restaurant
Manicurists and Pedicurists
Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors
Hosts, Hostesses, Restaurant, and Coffee Shop
Optometrists
Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Service Workers
Logisticians
Life and Social Science Technicians, All Other
Tile and Marble Setters
Commercial Pilots
Medical and Health Services Managers
Bartenders
Physician Assistants
Coaches and Scouts
Chefs and Head Cooks
Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Other
Dining Room, Cafeteria, and Bartender Helpers
Nurse Practitioners

In raw numbers there are approximately 440 people currently considered unemployed in Del Norte County. This is slightly lower than the same time last year.

With the labor force currently shrinking, and the unemployment rate being low, businesses may find it difficult to fill labor needs. Fortunately, SMART offers assistance to businesses, in the form of On-The-Job training reimbursement and training programs for their employees.

Through SMART’s funded On the Job Training programs we can help reduce risk when hiring a new employee. As this labor shortage creates complications for employers in the county, SMART can be there to help employers navigate it.

Employers may also need to rethink how they recruit and fill their labor needs. There are untapped labor pools not traditionally counted in the unemployed numbers. Retirees looking for something to do, college students just about to enter the labor pool, parolees who have just completed their prison terms, and homemakers thinking about reentering the work force are not included in the unemployed numbers. Businesses can tap those resources but will likely need to adjust their thinking of what the job demands. Retirees or students may not want or be able to accommodate a 40 hour a week position. Perhaps someone lacks the skills needed to perform the work but has strong motivation to learn.

This is where SMART can help. We can connect businesses to candidates that employers may not have had access to, or even knew were options. SMART clients come from all walks of life and are looking for careers today. As the county’s pool of candidates to hire continues to shrink, SMART can assist businesses filling their labor needs.

NoRTEC Summit: Remember Your Why

Last month, SMART had the opportunity to attend the first annual NoRTEC Workforce Summit, an engaging all-day event that provided opportunities for networking with our incredible partners, including the Alliance for Workforce Development and Job Training Center. The day was filled with remarkable presentations, including:



- **How to Incorporate and Grow Apprenticeship Programs** by Eric Flora
- **Where the Agencies Are Going and a Celebration of Success** by Wendy Zanotelli, Kristine Zuazua, and Carrie Ferchaud
- **Using AI to Advance Our Job Centers** by Jeffrey Harrington
- **Making Our AJCCs Accessible to the Communities We Serve** by Connie Ocampo

Attendees also had the chance to hear inspiring remarks from Michael Cross, Executive Director of NoRTEC.

One of the most impactful presentations of the day was given by SMART's very own Rachelle Guevara. Rachelle serves as the Program Supervisor for Shasta County and has been instrumental in the growth of the young adult program due to her heart for youth. Her presentation provided attendees with an overview of the young adult program and brought focus back to the "WHY" behind our work. During her presentation, Rachelle highlighted both seasoned individuals who had worked in this field for 15 years and newcomers, including an employee who had started just three days prior. She asked each of them their "why," and almost all answered with a call to serve and a desire to make a difference in those around them.

With changing requirements, mountains of paperwork, and working with populations facing barriers, it can be easy to forget why we do what we do and the incredible ripple effect that can occur by just believing in one person. One of the standout moments of the presentation was a picture of a youth wall, showcasing the various "whys" that young adults had for participating in SMART programs and highlighting where these youth are today. The presentation also included humor, highlighting areas of growth the young adult program has experienced through trial and error in adapting to the youths' needs.

Overall, attendees were left with a renewed sense of the "why" behind their work and the overarching belief that if you firmly and wholeheartedly believe in what you do and who you are serving, success will follow.

Thank you to NoRTEC for putting on an incredible and inspiring event!

SMART Professional Development:

- California Workforce Association/WORKCON
- SMART April Safety Training- Participating in a Positive Work Culture
- SMART May Safety Training- Computer Workstation Safety
- SMART June Safety Training- Heat Illness Prevention
- NORTEC- Equity & Access Committee
- Shasta Adult School- Lunch & Learn Event
- North Valley EAC-Cal/OSHA Workplace Safety: Avoiding the Fines
- Simpson University- Healthcare Programs
- CA Dept. of Rehabilitation- Pathways to Success
- Best Practices- LMI & Occupational Data- NORTEC
- NORTEC Workforce Summit
- AFWD/SMART Best Practice
- SMART/in house cross training/California Indian Manpower Consortium
- Essential Communication Skills Training

The SMART Workforce Center is a 501c3 non-profit committed to providing job seekers with resources, training, education, job development, and job placement to help them not only receive living wage jobs, but to grow in their careers. We also help businesses grow by educating employers about available tax credits, alternative labor pools, and helping with recruiting, interviewing, and hiring, as well as offsetting wages for work experience and on the job training programs. SMART is a proud partner of America's Job Center of California and the NoRTEC Workforce Development Board. We have locations in Crescent City, Redding, Weaverville, and Weed. For more information visit the SMART website at <http://www.thesmartcenter.biz>.

Equal Opportunity Employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities. TTY 711.

Del Norte County:
707.464.8347
875 5th Street
Crescent City, CA 95531

Shasta County:
530.246.7911
760 Cypress Ave Suite 210
Redding, CA 96001



Trinity County: 530.623.5538
30 Arbuckle Ct
Weaverville, CA 96093

Siskiyou County:
530.657.0139
800 College Ave
Weed, CA 96094