



SISKIYOU COUNTY EDITION

SMART
Workforce Center

America's **JobCenter**
of CaliforniaSM

COMMUNITY
COORDINATOR
REPORT

January – March 2025

SMART Supports Digital Literacy for English Language Learners in Rural NorCal

SMART is excited to help our English Language Learner (ELL) job seekers find career success in manufacturing through the Rural Access for English Learners Manufacturing (REALM) grant!

SMART surveyed local businesses about their current and future business needs, their willingness to engage with this labor pool, and any barriers in the workplace that this population may face.

One critical barrier identified was digital literacy. Many job applications, onboarding processes, and workplace communications are conducted online, requiring a basic understanding of digital platforms. Additionally, manufacturing jobs increasingly require the use of digital tools for tasks such as operating machinery, tracking inventory, and communicating within a team.

To address this crucial need, SMART is connecting ELL job seekers to NoRTEC's Access Points Digital Literacy Project. Through Access Points, ELL job seekers will receive personalized assistance to gain those essential skills needed to navigate modern workplace technologies.



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Environmental Careers through California Conservation Corps



SMART staff recently visited the California Conservation Corps (CCC) for a tour of their facility, exploring opportunities to support Corpsmembers as they take the next steps in their careers. The CCC, which serves counties across Northern California provides young adults with hands-on training in wildland firefighting, habitat restoration, and trail maintenance. For many participants, the CCC is a challenging but rewarding experience, offering valuable skills in operating heavy equipment, chainsaws, and forklifts while working on critical conservation projects.

Given Siskiyou County's rugged landscape and wildfire risks, the CCC plays a vital role in developing a workforce skilled in natural resource management and emergency response. Many local participants go on to careers in forestry, conservation, and public safety, helping to protect and maintain the region's natural environment. During the visit, SMART staff met with CCC directors to share information on job search resources available to Corpsmembers as they transition into the next phase of their careers.

SMART Professional Development

- Employee Handbook
- Worker's Compensation: Key Do's and Don'ts for Employers
- Protecting Your Small Business Against Embezzlement
- Best Practices – LMI & Occupational Data
- North State Together Summit
- AFWD/SMART Best Practices
- Shasta College Veterans Services
- Shasta College Contract and Community Education
- Back Safety in Office Environments
- EDD Partnership Best Practices
- NFN Career Compass Summit
- Winter Safety
- MIP training
- REALM Grant Planning Workgroup
- First 5 Programs
- Economic Forecast Conference
- Effective Outreach and Recruitment of Underserved Populations
- And more!

A Second Chance Built to Last: Travis' Path to Employment with SMART

Travis was referred to SMART by US Offsite, a company that builds Accessible Dwelling Units (or ADUs) that can be found throughout the North State, such as at Cave Springs in Dunsmuir. They were interested in hiring him but felt he would benefit from some additional training. Travis didn't graduate from high school and had been in

and out of prison for the last 25 years. Travis is newly married with two young children; he was driven to find stable employment where they would be financially secure. The SMART Center was able to assist with a four-month On-The-Job Training at US Offsite where Travis flourished gaining knowledge and skills in a construction labor position. His supervisor stated, "I wish I had 100 more employees just like Travis. We are so lucky to have

"I wish I had 100 more employees just like Travis. We are so lucky to have him."
-Travis' Supervisor

him.” Travis successfully completed the On-The-Job Training and is beyond thankful for the opportunities The SMART Center was able to provide him and his family.

Dedication Makes Jonathan a Deputy Sheriff: A College of the Siskiyou Cadet’s Story to Success

In 2024, while enrolled in school, Jonathan took a significant step toward his career in law enforcement by joining the Law Enforcement Academy at College of the Siskiyous. As a self-sponsored Cadet, he demonstrated dedication and perseverance, commuting daily from Redding to complete his training. With support from SMART, Jonathan received assistance with training uniforms, essential supplies, and mileage costs.

His hard work paid off when he secured employment as a Deputy with the Shasta County Sheriff’s Office. On December 13, 2024, Jonathan proudly graduated from the Law Enforcement Academy, and just three days later, on December 16, he was officially sworn in as a Deputy Sheriff. That same day, he began his field training with the department, marking the beginning of his career in service to the community.



Congratulations to the new Deputy Sheriff on this incredible achievement! SMART is honored to have played a role in supporting your journey. We wish you continued success in your law enforcement career!

On-The-Job Training and Work Experience Partners:

- County of Del Norte
- Dee Stover State Farm
- Del Norte Fairgrounds
- Joy’s Yard & Ground Maintenance
- Del Norte Child Care Council
- The UPS Store
- Los Compadres Mexican Restaurant
- Summit Lofts
- CGI Technical Services, Inc.
- Rural Human Services
- US-Offsite Holdings, Inc.
- Shasta Caverns
- New Life Discovery Project
- Frank Johnson’s Upholstery
- County of Trinity Health and Human Services
- Emerald Ridge Construction
- Rumiano Cheese Company
- Watershed Research & Training Center
- Del Norte Senior Center
- Baez Childcare
- Catalyst Neuromedical
- US Forest Service

Turning Over a New Leaf: Jeremy's Journey to Stable Employment

Jeremy came to SMART Workforce Center seeking workforce support and was enrolled as a SMART client. Despite prior justice-involvement, his commitment to bettering his life was evident. With some prior experience in fast food and laborer roles, Jeremy was eager to develop new skills and secure stable employment.

Through the enrollment process, Jeremy was identified as a great candidate for a Transitional Job opportunity with Joy's Yard & Grounds Maintenance. A Transitional Job helps relieve some financial burden from employers while the clients receive hands-on training from an employer. Joy's Yard & Grounds Maintenance, a business that actively partners with SMART Workforce to provide employment opportunities for individuals looking for a second chance, saw the potential in Jeremy and offered him a position as a Laborer, training under John Wilson, the company's owner.

In a short period, Jeremy has proven to be a reliable, hardworking, and dedicated employee. He consistently shows up to work, even in harsh weather conditions, demonstrating a strong work ethic and commitment to learning. John Wilson has been impressed with Jeremy's ability to quickly grasp new techniques and apply them effectively. Under John's guidance, Jeremy has gained valuable skills and confidence, positioning him for long-term success.

Due to Jeremy's impressive progress and commitment, John Wilson plans to hire him as a permanent, full-time employee at the end of the Transitional Job period. This success story highlights the positive outcomes that result when local businesses and workforce programs collaborate to invest in community members.

SMART Workforce Center and Joy's Yard & Grounds Maintenance are excited to continue their partnership, providing meaningful opportunities for justice-involved individuals to build independence, gain valuable skills, and contribute positively to their communities.

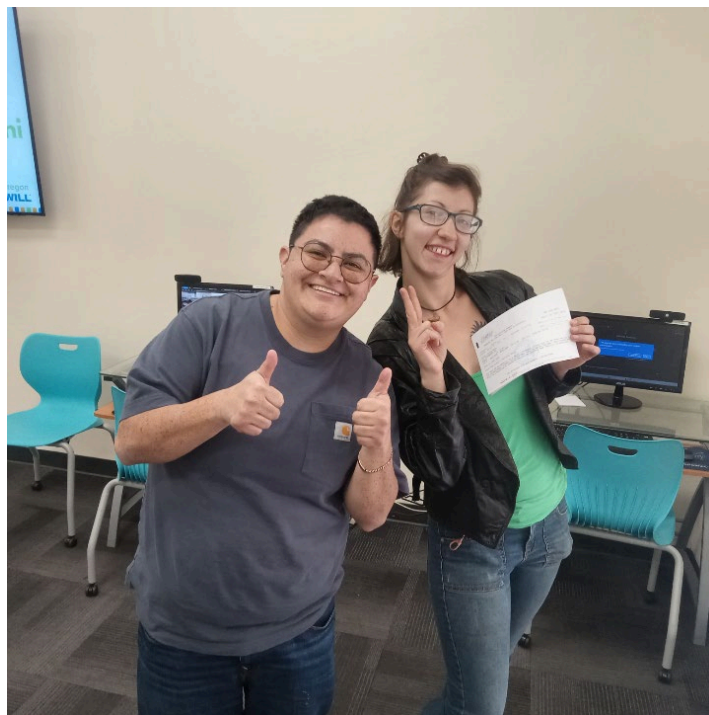


Client Success Highlight: Leona's Journey to Success

Leona's journey with SMART Workforce Center is a powerful example of dedication and growth. When she first came to SMART, she believed her career options were limited. *"That took a dramatic shift for me in recent months,"* Leona shared. Through hard work and consistent effort, she transformed her outlook and opportunities.

Leona was enrolled in SMART's services. Her Career Advisor recognized her potential and encouraged her to pursue office work, pushing her to explore jobs outside her comfort zone. They worked extensively on interviewing skills, resume and cover letter development, and conducted mock shopping trips where Leona practiced identifying appropriate professional attire. *"I can now comprise resumes and cover letters for myself, which is something I never thought I'd be able to do,"* Leona said proudly.

One major barrier Leona faced was not having her driver's license, which limited her employment options. To address this, Leona and her Career Advisor set a SMART goal in December of a five-week study plan. Meeting up to three times a week, Leona successfully completed her goal within her set timeframe, earning her driving permit. *"The sessions were easy to grasp and well explained. I couldn't have had a better tutor,"* Leona said about the support she received while preparing for the permit test.



Above: Leona showing off her new permit!

On coming to SMART:

"Hands down the best decision I ever made career-wise, and I feel honored to be a success story with your fine establishment," - Leona

Her hard work paid off when she applied for positions beyond what she thought she was limited to and secured a seasonal receptionist position. This role is providing her with valuable office experience and serves as a stepping stone toward her goal of securing full-time office work. *"Hands down the best decision I ever made career-wise, and I feel honored to be a success story with your fine establishment,"* Leona expressed with gratitude.

Leona's commitment to her success was evident—she never missed a case management meeting, always came prepared, and was often 30 minutes early. Her dedication and openness to feedback have been key factors in her growth.

SMART Workforce Center is proud to celebrate Leona's achievements. Her story is a testament to how persistence and support can open new doors and lead to a brighter future.

North State Together 2025 Summit “The Sustainability Blueprint: Tools for Long-Term Success”

Photos in this article courtesy of North State Together



Above: Dr. Kevin O'Rorke, CEO of North State Together

The 8th Annual North State Together Summit, themed "The Sustainability Blueprint: Tools for Long-Term Success," took place on March 13, 2025, at the Sheraton Redding Hotel at the Sundial Bridge in Redding, California. This highly anticipated event brought together educators, policymakers, industry leaders, and community members to discuss and develop strategies for building sustainable cradle-to-career pathways in the North State region.

The summit began with a keynote address by Michael Wiafe, Assistant Deputy Cabinet Secretary in the Office of California



Above: Michael Wiafe, Assistant Deputy Cabinet Secretary at the Office of California Gov. Gavin Newsom

Governor Gavin Newsom. He spoke about the state's Master Plan for Career Education, which aims to expand equitable access to living-wage jobs by strengthening education and job training pathways. Following the keynote, Kate Gordon, CEO of CA FWD, led a session on "Place-Based Economics," where she emphasized the significance of building partnerships to foster shared prosperity across the North State and throughout California.



Above: Kate Gordon, CEO of CA FWD

A series of breakout sessions provided attendees with opportunities to explore specific aspects of sustainability and collaboration. In "Electrifying Youth Leadership," Bode Gower and Dr. Karen Schreder highlighted the disparities rural youth face and discussed strategies to elevate and engage their voices in shaping policies and education. In "Bridging the Gap," Courtney Farrell introduced initiatives like North State Jobs First and the K-16 Collaborative, which aim to unite education, workforce development, and industry to create a resilient economy while sustaining the region's working lands. Additionally, Rosemary Mitchell and Joy Garcia led a session on "Community Schools," explaining how this model functions as both a school reform effort and a community development strategy by integrating local supports and collaborative leadership.

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Above: Heather Hadwick, Assemblywoman District 1, California State Assembly

During the afternoon, Assemblywoman Heather Hadwick shared her personal journey of overcoming adversity with the help of dedicated educators. She emphasized the essential tools educators need to ensure students' long-term success and discussed strategies for building relationships with legislators to advocate for impactful educational policies.

The summit concluded with a "Celebration of Progress," where regional directors highlighted accomplishments and ongoing initiatives within their counties. This closing session reinforced the collective commitment to fostering sustainable educational and economic opportunities throughout the North State region. Overall, the event facilitated meaningful discussions, shared best practices, and introduced forward-thinking solutions to empower long-term success in education, workforce development, and community impact.



SMART Participates in Community Workshop Series to Help Recharge the Weed Economy

SMART staff recently participated in the ROCE (Rural Opportunity and Community Engagement) Workshop Series hosted by Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) and organized locally by the Siskiyou County Economic Development Council. The in-person sessions in Weed, California brought together community leaders, residents, and entrepreneurs to explore strategies to revitalize the local economy.

The workshops focused on mapping community assets, evaluating local wealth, and identifying new economic opportunities. These collaborative sessions are designed to cultivate leadership, build ownership, and spark momentum for turning innovative ideas into actionable solutions.

This multi-day series marks an exciting step toward long-term economic resilience for Weed, and SMART is proud to be part of this effort. We look forward to continuing our participation and supporting strategies that help Weed thrive!



SMART Workforce Center is a
Proud Partner of:



Proudly serving our community since 1979, SMART Workforce Center is a 501c3 non-profit committed to helping job seekers find jobs, increase training and skills, and increase earnings. We also invest in our local economy by helping businesses grow. To learn more, visit our website: www.thesmartcenter.biz

SMART Workforce Center is an equal opportunity employer.

Auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities. CA Relay TTY 7-1-1

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