

WIB E-NEWS APRIL 2024

Sonoma Workforce Investment Board
Email Newsletter



SUCCESSFUL JOB AND RESOURCE FAIR FOR THE UNHOUSED OR AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

by Antonio Vigil

I wanted to share with all of you how successful this event was! Here are some of the amazing things that the Homeless Employment Workgroup and Job Link were able to accomplish.

1. There were 29 employers and all want to attend in the future.
2. 40 Providers ranging from housing, mental health, free phones, health care, including Ruthless Kindness that help with pets and many other service providers who offered important resources to our unhoused or at risk and we got immediate feedback that they loved the event and connected and helped many of those who attended.

We provided 393 \$25 gift cards for all that engaged with 4 providers. These gift cards were possible through some

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generous donations of our many sponsors.

- 443 individuals attended the event topping last years number of 350 attendees.
- Close to 400 meals were generously made by Sunrise Rotary Club of Santa Rosa (the ingredients were donated by a local food distributor) and Ula Delicatessen donated 100 Peanut Butter and Jelly sandwiches (yummy).
- Approximately 100 haircuts were provided by volunteer barbers and stylists (West Coast Cuts, Oak and Ivy Salon, Dolce Vida Salon).
- 23 resume's were written for our guests at the event with the help of DOR and Goodwill staff along with Job Link staff. And 6 mock (practice) interviews were done to get our guests ready for upcoming interviews.
- One employer said they had 35 apply for positions with them!
- The mayor of Santa Rosa was there to provide some great advice to our guests.
- We had a Creole interpreter for the many refugees that attended.

It was a great event! We had 64 interested people sign in at my table, and we spoke with many more.

Carol S. Catron

*Workforce Planning Specialist
USPS California 1 District*



HCP NURSING ASSISTANTS GRADUATE IN SONOMA COUNTY

by Maureen Fifer

As the first HCP Nursing Assistants graduate in Sonoma County at Fox Home Health Vocational Training, they embody resilience, determination, and compassion, epitomizing the transformative impact of education, support, and collaboration in enriching lives and strengthening communities.

Partnerships with Senior Advocacy Services, Sonoma County Job Link, and Fox Home Health Vocational Training brought Healthcare Career Pathway (HCP) to Sonoma County, providing crucial support to students, including food assistance through organizations like Sonoma Family Meals and the Redwood Empire Food Bank.

The inaugural cohort of HCP Nursing Assistants, established in Contra Costa County, is a collaborative effort by Empowered Aging, Mt. Diablo Adult Education, and Opportunity Junction, initially supported by the John Muir Community Health Foundation. The program's success drew praise from the California Master Plan for Aging in 2020, recognizing it as a local caregiving model amidst a growing elderly population.



In 2021, the state allocated \$5 million to expand HCP's training into six more counties. Empowered Aging led this expansion, extending the program's impact beyond Contra Costa County. Amid healthcare workforce shortages, the Healthcare Career Pathway (HCP) emerges as a beacon, exemplified by its success in Sonoma County.

Dodi Zotigh, Director of Healthcare Career Pathway at Empowered Aging, succinctly expresses the program's goal: "Our aim is to empower individuals for success in healthcare." By removing barriers and offering holistic support, HCP fosters a new generation of healthcare professionals ready to make a difference.



BUSINESS SERVICES

By Chris Willover

Job Link Business Services has had a busy first quarter of 2024. Our Business Services team hosted two successful "Employer Spotlight" events at the career center. These events function like mini job fairs, inviting businesses to set up tables and connect directly with job seekers. This unique format allows employers to:

- -Engage with potential hires
- -Enhance brand recognition
- -Strengthen their workforce

Beyond the Employer Spotlights, the Business Services team participated in two additional job fairs:

- The North Bay Job Fair at the Luther Burbank Center
- Our second annual Job/Resource Fair for individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness

The Job/Resource Fair, held on March 20th, was a major success. Our team recruited a record-breaking 29 employers to participate, even having to create a waitlist. Businesses from a wide range of sectors joined the event, including Chick-fil-A, Oliver's Market, the United States Postal Service, County of Sonoma, Target, Ivy Park of Santa Rosa, and more.