



WIB E-NEWS SEPT 2024

Sonoma Workforce Investment Board
Email Newsletter

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Job Link Helps Break Recidivism Cycle with Job/Resource Fair

By Carole McHale and Chris Willover

Sonoma County made history on July 17th, 2024 with the first-ever Second Chance Job and Resource Fair held inside the Main Adult Detention Center. This groundbreaking event connected over 90 incarcerated individuals with potential employers, training programs, and essential community services.

While the lead time was short to prepare for the event, Job Link, Sonoma County Sherriff & Probation department reinvigorated their long history of collaboration this spring, and from there, the Job Fair idea was born!

With the collaborative effort between multiple county departments, the fair aimed to equip participants with the tools needed for successful reintegration into society. With the support of 24 local organizations, including Oliver's Market, Costeaux Bakery, Sonoma County Library, Buckelew Programs, SRJC second chance program amongst others, the event provided hope and opportunity to those nearing release.

Job Link staff played a crucial role in preparing participants, helping them build resumes and practice interview skills. The positive feedback from both job seekers and employers underscores the impact of this initiative in building a stronger community.

Special thanks to the Job Link team for organizing this successful event: Carol McHale, Chris Willover, George Garcia, Vanessa Hernandez, and Domenica Plancarte.

E&T SONOMA COUNTY YOUTH ECOLOGY CORPS

By Lilian Vieyra Torres, E&T Program Planning & Evaluation Analyst

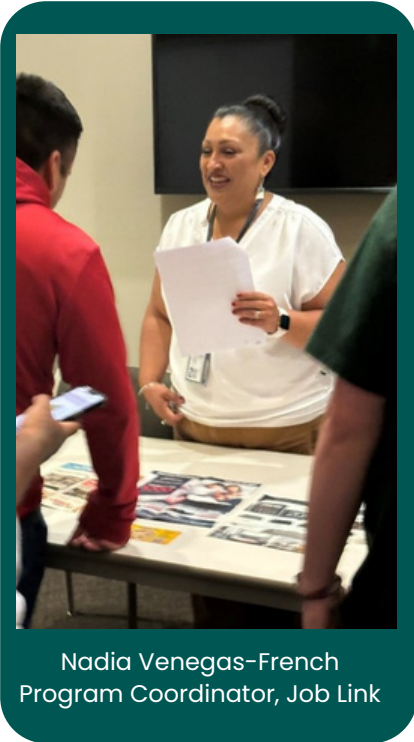
On June 12th, Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps (SCYEC) crew members participated in a unique education experience- The Bite of Reality financial literacy event, put on in partnership with Redwood Credit Union.

This event takes a creative approach to teaching financial literacy. Each crew member was assigned a character or persona with a profession and family, specific income, expenses, and financial goals. Crew members “shopped” for housing, child care, transportation, etc., experiencing and learning how to navigate the challenges of managing their character’s finances, prioritizing needs over wants, creating a spending plan, and saving for the future.

SCYEC participants learned to make informed decisions about money, and learned literacy skills that are essential for navigating the real world of work. One participant shared “It as nice and fun, getting to learn new skills of the real world”.

Thanks to our partners at Redwood Credit Union, Conservation Corps North Bay and all the volunteers that worked hard to make this an enjoyable and successful event!

The Sonoma Youth Ecology Corps provides youth and young adults from across the county with meaningful, paid work experience, environmental education, and the opportunity to explore careers and develop work-readiness skills. To learn more, or refer young people to one of E&T’s youth programs, please reach out to Lilian Vieyra Torres lvieyatorres@schsd.org.



Nadia Venegas-French
Program Coordinator, Job Link



Homeless Employment Group Earns Recognition from Board of Supervisors

By Chris Willover

Sonoma County Job Link's Homeless Employment Group is shining bright after receiving a prestigious Gold Resolution from the Board of Supervisors! This fantastic group, comprised of 18 dedicated Stakeholders including our very own Job Link team, has been making serious waves in the fight against homelessness.

Formed in 2021, the group took a revolutionary approach, creating a collaborative model that connects unsheltered individuals with local job opportunities and training programs.

Remember those massive Job and Resource Fairs in Santa Rosa and Petaluma? That was them – over 1,000 people attended, connecting with employers, service providers, resume help, and even getting free haircuts and lunch!

Their efforts haven't gone unnoticed. Not only is this model considered a statewide best practice, but it's also garnered incredible local support. A huge shoutout to the Sunrise Rotary Club who donated over \$25,000 for the Fairs, providing not just resources but also mock interviews to prepare job seekers for success.

But the results speak for themselves. By utilizing Job Link funding, the group has secured 75 placements for individuals experiencing homelessness, offering valuable programs like Temporary Work Experience and Individual Training Accounts. Talk about a win-win!

The Board's recognition is a well-deserved tribute to the tireless work of the Homeless Employment Group. We're incredibly proud to be a part of this amazing team, and we can't wait to see what the future holds for their mission to empower our community!

Special Shoutout to Job Link staff in the workgroup: Antonio Vigil (retired) Chris Willover, Eric Rittenhouse, Lupe Castaneda, Dawn Montgomery, Anahi Ruiz, and Sarahi Martin.



watch the board item: https://sonoma-county.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=1539_time_stamp_5:20

