



TRINITY COUNTY EDITION



America's **JobCenter**  
of California<sup>SM</sup>

## COMMUNITY COORDINATOR REPORT

April - May 2025

### WORKCON 2025 – Strength in Change: Resilience for the Future



SMART staff was proud to attend WORKCON 2025, the California Workforce Association's Annual Workforce Practitioners Conference, held from April 29 to May 1 at the Hilton Costa Mesa in Orange County. The conference theme, *Strength in Change: Resilience for the Future*, resonated deeply with our mission as we joined workforce development professionals, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and WIOA partners from across the state. This dynamic event provided an outstanding platform to engage with innovative programs and strategic collaborations that are shaping the future of workforce services in California.

Throughout the three-day event, our team participated in a range of workshops and sessions focused on emerging trends, including the integration of AI and technology in the workforce, the use of WIOA and other strategic funds, statewide advocacy efforts to improve accessibility of the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), and other best practices in program design to bring our client services to the next level. The conference's four dedicated tracks—Youth Workforce Services, Administrative Services, Case Management, and Business Services—allowed us to tailor our learning and bring back actionable insights to improve our services and outcomes.

We're excited to apply what we learned and continue building resilient, inclusive programs that help individuals thrive in a rapidly evolving job market.

#### Inside This Issue

Trinity County College and Career Expo  
Page 3



## Co-location Best Practices Shared with County of Merced



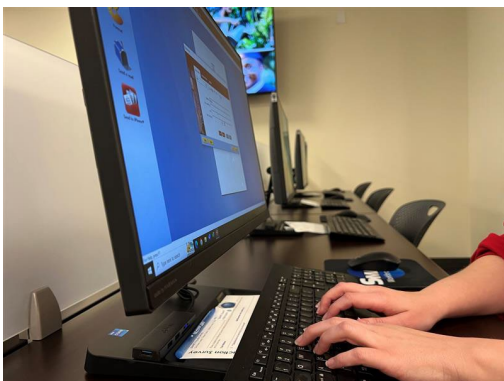
SMART has always recognized one fundamental truth: community partnership is vital to our strength as an organization. One of the most tangible examples of this is our journey to co-location.

What began as a foot in the door created by necessity quickly and powerfully paved the way for ongoing collaboration with our community partners. This is especially evident with our community college partners Shasta College and College of the Siskiyous, who now share two permanent job center locations with SMART. Shasta College and College of the Siskiyous are now also sharing a Director of Employer Partnership (DEP) who is housed in the shared College of the Siskiyous/SMART Job Center in Weed.

SMART was proud to share our knowledge of what has worked and lessons learned along the way with our friend at Worknet Merced County. Executive Director Rigo Medina personally travelled to Shasta, Siskiyou, and Trinity Counties to observe our co-location job centers. Rigo was a wealth of workforce knowledge and we enjoyed spending the week with him and connecting on best practices and sharing aligned hopes for the future of a collaborative world of workforce development.



## SMART Adapts Rapid Response Services to Reach Rural Communities



As federal funding cuts continue to impact organizations across the country, SMART Workforce Center has expanded its Rapid Response efforts to ensure that critical services remain accessible. This is especially crucial for impacted individuals here in the rural North State, where public transportation is extremely limited and reliable access to in-person services can be a major hurdle. With an expansive service area that spans Del Norte, Shasta, Siskiyou, and Trinity Counties, reaching job seekers efficiently and equitably requires creative, adaptive solutions.

To meet this challenge, SMART has launched weekly *Virtual Rapid Response* sessions designed to bring essential support directly to those affected by layoffs or business closures, no matter where they live. These virtual events connect participants to job search resources, resume assistance, and paid On The Job Training opportunities. We have also partnered with local EDD representatives who attend to provide information regarding unemployment benefits and EDD services. By removing transportation and distance as barriers, SMART ensures that workers across the region can access the tools they need to recover and thrive.

## Logan's Journey: From Job Seeker to U.S. Forest Service Supervisor

In the spring of 2015, Logan walked into the SMART Workforce Center in Weaverville, California, seeking assistance with employment. After enrolling into the Youth Program, SMART reached out to the U.S. Forest Service to inquire about potential summer work opportunities. As a result, Logan participated in a paid summer Work Experience (WEX) through a partnership between SMART and the U.S. Forest Service.

At the end of the WEX, there were no job openings with the U.S. Forest Service, so SMART staff continued to work with Logan, and he was enrolled in the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) under the Drought Grant, which supported those affected by drought conditions in Shasta and Trinity Counties. Through this grant, Logan was placed with the Trinity County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD), where he gained valuable hands-on experience in forest repair and conservation work and added to the experience he gained with the U.S. Forest Service.

After completing his NDWG assignment with TCRCD, Logan updated his resume to showcase the new skills he had developed, including transferable skills in land restoration and resource management. He then applied for a seasonal position with the U.S. Forest Service and, in the spring of 2016, was hired as a GS-3 Recreation Aid.

Over the next few years, Logan progressed steadily through seasonal roles. He advanced to a GS-4 Recreation Technician, and later to both GS-5 Recreation Technician and WG-5 Maintenance Worker positions. With years of accumulated experience, Logan secured a permanent GS-5 role in Holden, Oklahoma. While in Oklahoma, he refined his skills in plumbing, carpentry, and learned electrical work.



"On days after work, I thought how my life would have been so different if I never had walked into the SMART Center"  
– Logan

In the summer of 2021, Logan returned to Weaverville by applying for and accepting a permanent GS-6 position—back in what he called his "original forest." He now serves as a GS-7 Recreation Technician Supervisor.

*Continued on next page...*

## Logan's Story Continued....

Since taking on this role, Logan has worked closely with SMART and the U.S. Forest Service in Trinity County to place participants in temporary positions focused on repair and restoration of public lands damaged by natural disasters. These efforts included work under grants related to:

- August 2020 Wildfires
- September 2020 Wildfires
- 2021 Summer Wildfires
- 2023 Severe Winter Storms

Read more about our National Dislocated Worker Grants on Page 7!

Logan has played a vital role in supervising crews performing cleanup and repair work under the Developed Recreation Department. This has included repairing campgrounds, trail systems, and public lands to their pre-damaged conditions.

Logan reflects on the success of these projects and the participants' growth, stating:

"The participants' willingness to learn forest practices and the confidence to uphold these standards in a professional manner has been a renowned success."

### On-The-Job Training and Work Experience Partners:

- CGI Technical Services, Inc.
- Cinders Woodfired Pizza
- County of Del Norte
- County of Trinity
- Dee Stover State Farm
- Del Norte Child Care Council
- Del Norte County Fairgrounds
- Del Norte Mission Impossible
- Emerald Ridge Construction
- Frank Johnston Upholstery
- Joy's Yard & Ground Maintenance
- Kindred Hearts
- Los Compadres Mexican Restaurant
- Mama Llama Eatery and Café
- Orcas Heating & Refrigeration
- Pro Garage Doors
- Rumiano Cheese
- Rural Human Services
- Shasta Caverns
- Shasta Family YMCA
- Shiloh Flower Farms
- Southern Oregon Goodwill
- Steve's Custom Upholstery
- Summit Lofts
- Taste & See Creamery
- Trinity County Fairgrounds & Events
- Turtle Bay Exploration Park
- US Forest Service
- Zephyrs Books and Coffee



## Careers, Colleges, and Connections: Trinity County Shows Up Big for 2025 College and Career Expo

The 2025 Trinity County College & Career Expo, held on April 30 at Shasta College's Trinity Campus, brought together students, job seekers, educators, and employers for a vibrant day of exploration and connection!

The event aimed to showcase diverse educational and career pathways available across Northern California. Attendees had access to 43 vendor booths, staffed by 80 representatives from diverse organizations such as Shasta College, Cal Poly Humboldt, Southern Oregon University, the U.S. Forest Service, the Watershed Research & Training Center, and the California Conservation Corps.



Many booths featured hands-on demonstrations and interactive exhibits that allowed participants to experience different professions up close—from anatomical models in healthcare to career booths in environmental science, skilled trades, and public service. These immersive experiences not only provided practical knowledge but also inspired attendees to consider various career options they might not have previously explored.

"The students were engaged and asked great questions. Loved the event"  
-Lewiston Stamps

A major highlight was the **career panel**, where local professionals shared their personal career journeys and answered questions from students. The panel included:

- Mikki Butler, Physical Therapy Manager at Trinity Hospital
- Greg Aikins, Construction Operations Manager for the Yurok Tribe
- Nicole Bradford, Mental Health Clinician II at the Trinity County Office of Education
- Steve Aikins, First Officer for Southwest Airlines
- Billy Miller, Dean of Extended Education at Shasta College and North State Together



Students also took part in a “passport” activity, collecting stamps at each booth to enter a raffle for prizes. Delicious food was provided by the Clampers, who served hot dogs and hamburgers (with vegetarian options), while UpNorth Confectionary topped off the day with scoops of chocolate and vanilla ice cream.

The event was made possible through the incredible collaboration of SMART Workforce Center, Shasta College, and Trinity Together: A Cradle to Career Partnership, along with crucial support from the Trinity County Health and Human Services Department’s Expanded Subsidized Employment Program. These partnerships ensured the Expo was a meaningful and memorable experience for all.

This year’s Expo was a testament to the power of community collaboration and the strong commitment to workforce development in Trinity County. We’re incredibly grateful to everyone who helped make this event such a success—and we’re already looking forward to doing it again next year!

“Good event, great flow and engagement from the students, great hospitality for vendors!”  
– Southern Oregon University

### SMART Professional Development

- Protecting Against Wage & Hour Disputes
- Wage and Hour – Most Common Violations
- Workplace Safety- Avoiding the Cal/OSHA Fines
- Best Practices -LMI & Occupational Data
- Conflict Resolution
- Shasta County CalWorks Employment Services
- Redding Area Bus Authority
- Nation’s Finest Veteran Services
- REALM Grant Planning Workgroup
- Shasta College A\$ET Program
- Regional Data Report from EDD Data Analyst Back
- Safety in Office Environments
- Fire Prevention & Fire Extinguisher Use
- Situational Awareness
- And More!

## Storm Recovery Program Surpasses Expectations

In the wake of the devastating 2023 severe winter storms, Trinity County became a key site for recovery and workforce revitalization through a federally funded initiative designed to restore public lands and reconnect long-term unemployed individuals with meaningful employment. The program, part of the broader 2023 Severe Winter Storms Workforce Recovery initiative, officially launched its first enrollments in Trinity on October 20, 2023, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and The Watershed Research and Training Center.



Though the original goal across all counties was to enroll 44 participants, the program ultimately exceeded expectations, enrolling 68 individuals—a 50% increase beyond the target. Trinity County played a crucial role in this success, contributing both in numbers and impact.

Funded through three rounds of grants, the program directed \$188,798 specifically toward Trinity County participants, covering wages, pre-employment requirements such as drug testing and background checks, and critical supportive services. These services ensured participants were fully equipped for fieldwork, supplying them with hard hats, gloves, rain gear, boots, and other necessary safety equipment. These investments allowed workers to safely and confidently take on essential cleanup and repair work on storm-damaged lands across the county.

The initiative served a dual purpose—supporting storm recovery efforts on public lands while helping individuals reenter the workforce. Participants gained hands-on experience in environmental restoration, debris removal, and land rehabilitation, all while developing work habits, transferable skills, and renewed confidence. Many of the individuals involved had been out of work for extended periods, and this program offered them a pathway back into employment through structured, supportive, and meaningful job placements.



The partnership with local and federal organizations ensured that the recovery work not only met immediate community needs but also aligned with long-term environmental and employment goals. The U.S. Forest Service's involvement enabled work on federal lands, while The Watershed Research and Training Center provided local expertise and mentoring for participants.



The impact of the program in Trinity County extends beyond physical recovery. It provided an economic boost to struggling households, gave purpose and structure to jobseekers, and fostered a renewed connection between the workforce and the land.

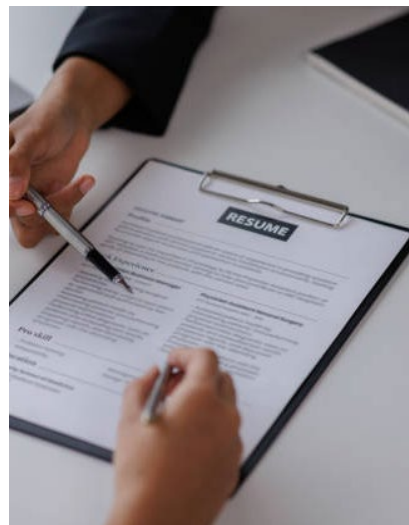
As Trinity County continues to rebuild from the 2023 storms, the program stands as a model for how workforce recovery initiatives can produce real results—strengthening both people and places through thoughtful investment and partnership.

## Elijah Powers Forward with First Steps to Success

Elijah came to SMART seeking support in finding his first full-time job. As a justice-involved youth experiencing homelessness, Elijah faced several barriers, including lack of work experience and reliable transportation. Though he had held some part-time and volunteer positions, he had never held a full-time position. His goal: secure stable employment in HVAC or the general labor field. SMART, thanks to the HIRE grant, was able to enroll Elijah to help make that goal a reality.

After completing a comprehensive assessment, SMART staff identified Elijah's needs and began building a tailored plan for his success. He received interview prep materials and was scheduled for a mock interview. With guidance and encouragement, Elijah began building the skills and confidence needed to succeed in the workforce. SMART also ensured that he was aware of the supportive services available through the HIRE grant, such as help getting work clothing or addressing transportation barriers.

Elijah is now actively engaged, committing to his goals, and well on his way to launching his career. His story reflects how with the right support, challenges both internal and external can be overcome!



## Second Chances Lead to Strong Future for Rico



Rico connected with SMART Workforce Center (SMART) through a probation referral, he was eager to turn a new page and rebuild his life. Recently released from incarceration, he faced challenges common to many returning citizens—unstable employment history, financial hardship, and limited support. Despite these obstacles, Rico brought a strong work ethic and diverse experience to the table, having worked as a cook, firefighter, landscaper, and glazier. While incarcerated, he continued to develop his skills by serving as a Wildland Firefighter, gaining discipline, resilience, and teamwork experience. With the guidance and support of SMART, Rico received personalized job search assistance, resume help, and encouragement every step of the way.

Today, Rico is proud to be working with a local family-owned cheese manufacturing company, a major milestone in his journey toward stability and independence. His determination and persistence paid off, and his new position not only provides steady income but also a renewed sense of purpose. Being employed has allowed Rico to take meaningful steps toward self-sufficiency. His success is a testament to the power of second chances and the impact of community programs like the HIRE grant in helping individuals like Rico build brighter futures.





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](http://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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