



DEL NORTE COUNTY EDITION



America's **JobCenter**
of CaliforniaSM

COMMUNITY COORDINATOR REPORT

July - Sept 2026

CWA Meeting of the Minds

SMART leadership staff attended the California Workforce Association's (CWA) Meeting of the Minds 2026 conference, held September 8–10 in Monterey, California. The conference brought together workforce development executives, local workforce board members, policymakers, and other leaders from across the state to discuss the future of California's workforce system.

This year's conference focused on preparing California's workforce system for its next 30 years. Building on the lessons and accomplishments of CWA's first three decades, the conference explored emerging challenges and opportunities, including artificial intelligence, changing labor markets, evolving employer needs, and the importance of stronger regional partnerships.

A key takeaway from the conference was the recognition that workforce development is more than a collection of employment programs. It is a strategic ecosystem that depends on collaboration among government agencies, employers, education and training providers, community organizations, and workforce development leaders.

For SMART leadership, the conference also provided an opportunity to strengthen relationships, connect with colleagues outside the office, and build a stronger sense of shared purpose. The knowledge and connections gained through events like Meeting of the Minds help SMART continue strengthening workforce services and creating meaningful opportunities throughout the four-county region we serve.



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HIRE Grant Milestone Event

In late August, SMART hosted a HIRE Grant Milestone Event at the Redding Library for enrolled clients. The event provided an opportunity to recognize and celebrate clients' efforts, accomplishments, and commitment to working toward their personal and professional goals.

Guest speakers from Vynca, Legal Services of Northern California, Redding Housing Authority, US Offsite, and Hope City Redding shared information about services and resources available to support clients along their career journeys.

The event was a meaningful opportunity to connect clients with community resources while recognizing the hard work and progress they have made toward building brighter, more stable futures.

SMART Connects with Families at the 3rd Annual Building Bridges Family Summit

SMART was proud to participate in the 3rd Annual Building Bridges Family Summit, bringing together hundreds of children and families with schools, community organizations, and local resources to help support students throughout the school year.

The event provided families with an opportunity to meet school principals and staff, receive school supplies, and connect directly with a variety of services and community partners. Resources available included transportation, nutrition services, Indian Education Programs & Supports, and organizations providing services to families throughout



Del Norte County.

As a community partner, SMART was pleased to be part of an event focused on making connections and helping families learn about the resources available to them. Having schools, service providers, and community organizations together in one location made it easier for families to ask questions, explore available services, and build relationships with the people and organizations supporting their communities.

E3 Summer Youth Program Wraps Up

The E3 Summer Youth Program, a partnership between the SMART Workforce Center and the Del Norte County Office of Education (DNCOE), had a fantastic summer in 2026! Through the support of local businesses, agencies, and community partners, 55 local teens gained valuable paid work experience in our community.



This summer's worksites included Blueberry Hill Farm, the City of Crescent City, County of Del Norte, Del Norte Fairgrounds, Del Norte County School District, Family Resource Center of the Redwoods, DNATL Community Food Council, Hambro Forest Products, Open Door Community Health Center, Redwood Wonder Forge, Sea Wolf Surf, Sierra Service Project, Sutter Coast Hospital and True North Trillium Teen Center.



One worksite supervisor shared why they chose to participate in E3:

"We love to mentor young people and feel that providing this opportunity is very important, especially in a small, rural community."

The program provided teens with more than a summer job—it gave them an opportunity to develop workplace skills, build confidence, explore careers, and connect with local employers. Most participants returned to high school after the summer, while others headed off to their first year of college. Several worksites were so impressed with their E3 interns that they chose to hire them after the program ended.



Overall, the 2026 E3 Summer Youth Program was a tremendous success! We are grateful to all of the local worksites, supervisors, partners, and students who made the program possible.

The E3 Summer Youth Program was funded by the Del Norte County Office of Education and Klamath Promise Neighborhood.



Heidi's Success Story

Heide's journey to becoming an LVN was filled with determination, perseverance, and more challenges than she ever expected. After graduating from nursing school, she spent a year and a half searching for the right opportunity, one that would allow her to pursue the career she worked so hard for while still being present for her young child. Along the way, Heide faced heartbreaking losses, including the passing of a family member and a nursing school peer. Despite these hardships, she continued moving forward. She received several job offers but made the difficult decision to turn them down because she knew what she was looking for and remained committed to finding the right fit for her family and her future. Through countless hours of career coaching, encouragement, and job-search support, Heide never gave up. Her persistence finally paid off when she was offered her dream position as a full-time, LVN at Pelican Bay State Prison. Heide's story is a beautiful reminder that sometimes the right opportunity takes time, and that staying true to your goals, even through life's hardest moments, can lead to something truly worth the wait.

SMART Youth Services - DHHS Partner Outreach

SMART presented to the ILP (Independent Living Program) class in Del Norte County to introduce youth to the employment and career-development services available through SMART. The presentation provided an opportunity to explain how SMART can support young people as they begin planning for life after school and working toward their education, career, and personal goals.

We discussed the range of services available to youth, including assistance with job searching, resume development, interview preparation, career exploration, and setting realistic career goals. We also highlighted opportunities for occupational training, work experience, and other employment-related support designed to help youth gain the skills, confidence, and experience they need to successfully enter the workforce.

The presentation also reinforced the importance of collaboration between SMART and DHHS partners. By connecting youth with employment and career resources while they are still engaged with support services, we can help them build a stronger foundation for independence and long-term success. SMART appreciates the opportunity to work alongside DHHS and other community partners to make sure youth are aware of the resources available to them and have access to support as they transition toward education, employment, and greater self-sufficiency.



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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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