



SMART
Workforce Center

America's **JobCenter**
of CaliforniaSM

COMMUNITY COORDINATOR REPORT

October - December 2024

SHASTA COUNTY EDITION

SMART Bridging the Gap in Rural Healthcare

In the rural communities of Del Norte, Siskiyou, Shasta, and Trinity counties, healthcare represents a critical gap. There is limited access to trained professionals and quality care. SMART is dedicated to closing this gap by building a pipeline of skilled, "home-grown" healthcare professionals who can meet local needs both now and in the future.



SMART is proud to lead a range of healthcare initiatives that help achieve this goal. Through dynamic partnerships with educational institutions, healthcare providers, and employers, SMART tackles this challenge on multiple fronts. We work to spark interest in healthcare careers early by engaging high school students in Career Technical Education (CTE) programs and participants in our Experience, Education, Employment (E3) Summer Internship Program. For adults pursuing healthcare education at institutions like West Harbor Training Center or within the California Community Colleges system, SMART offers tuition and supportive services to alleviate financial barriers and ensure their success.

SMART also supports job seekers entering the healthcare workforce by partnering with employers such as Trinity Hospital and Mayers Memorial to facilitate recruitment through NorthStateJobs.com, in-person Job Fairs, and targeted outreach. Additionally, our On the Job Training program helps healthcare facilities like Copper Ridge Care

Center equip new hires with the skills they need to thrive in their roles, creating lasting solutions for rural healthcare staffing needs.

Read this quarter's edition to discover more about the California Opportunity Youth Apprenticeship (COYA) Grant, which will open new pathways for individuals to build rewarding careers in healthcare.

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Multilingual Manufacturing Employees Supported through REALM

Through the Rural Access for English Language Learners in Manufacturing (REALM) grant, SMART provides English language learners with essential digital literacy training and pathways into manufacturing jobs. This initiative builds foundational technology skills crucial for success in manufacturing roles, helping participants transition into high-demand positions within priority sectors. REALM also fosters partnerships with manufacturing employers who value a multilingual workforce, ensuring SMART's programs are tailored to local industry requirements.

SMART also expands career pathways in non-traditional sectors like trades, accounting, and logging through strategic pre-apprenticeship workshops. By partnering with local agencies, SMART offers pre-apprenticeship training that prepares participants for hands-on learning in trades such as electrical work and carpentry, which are in high demand. Additionally, the program supports Accounting Apprenticeships and Logging Apprenticeships to meet the unique workforce needs of the region, providing structured entry points into these specialized fields.

California Opportunity Youth Apprenticeship (COYA) Grant

To address the high demand for certified nursing assistants (CNAs) and meet California Apprenticeship standards, SMART is working in our NoRTEC region on a planning grant called California Youth Opportunity Apprenticeship (COYA) initiative. This planning grant is focused on creating a sustainable pipeline of CNA professionals by aligning training with regional needs and apprenticeship standards. By closely collaborating with healthcare providers, training institutions, and youth referral partners, SMART ensures participants gain the practical skills and certifications essential for healthcare careers in Northern California, effectively supporting the rural population's needs.

SMART is committed to support this career path and assist individuals with training related costs and supportive services to help cover minimal costs associated with scrubs and state licensing fees to become a state licensed CNA. In addition, we partner with these local facilities hiring CNAs to do structured On the Job trainings for individuals needing the skills to work as a CNA. This enables more people to enter the healthcare field without facing significant financial barriers, facilitating their transition into stable employment in a critical industry.



As mentioned above, programs that provide in-house industry training alongside employment opportunities play a crucial role in encouraging individuals to pursue independent career pathways, such as becoming licensed Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs). This integrated education and training model not only equips individuals with essential skills but also allows them to gain hands-on experience while earning a paycheck.

This model has been successfully implemented in our serving region and is foundational to our efforts in establishing apprenticeships for youth (18-24) CNAs in the NoRTEC region. By integrating training with employment, we provide them not only with the necessary skills but also with valuable work experience that enhances their employability in the healthcare sector.

Junior Overcomes Struggle to Find Stability



Junior came to SMART seeking help in finding a job after finishing a temporary summer forestry position. He struggled to secure employment due to his limited work experience and homelessness in Shasta County. After joining the Young Adult program, Junior worked on his resume and developed other skills including interviewing. Through this program, he secured an On the Job Training position with Fasteners Inc., where he learned organizational, stocking, and packing skills. Junior has been very successful in his training and now he has secured his own permanent living space and transportation.

Lisa Builds a Brighter Future through CNA Training

Lisa came to SMART ready to find a career where she could be financially self-sufficient. Lisa hadn't held a job in over ten years, she had been bouncing from one of her adult children's homes to the next for as long as she could remember. Lisa is a natural caretaker and felt that becoming a CNA would be a good career fit for her, she decided to enroll with West Harbor Training Center. From the first week in the program Lisa's self-esteem flourished as she was excelling in the training. She passed her state licensing exam with flying colors and began working at an assisted living facility. Lisa said that when she received her first paycheck it brought her to tears. It had been so long since she earned her own money, and she had a huge sense of pride in her accomplishment. Lisa reaches out regularly thanking SMART for assisting her and making it possible for her to start her new path in life. Lisa loves her job and her coworkers and is excited for what her future holds.

Somsak's Successfully Shifts Gears

Somsak visited the Redding SMART office to inquire about truck school and obtaining his Class A license. After spending 10 years unemployed to care for his elderly parents, he expressed his readiness to return to the workforce.

With a passion for truck driving rooted in his previous experience as a delivery driver, Somsak pursued his goal, though he shared mixed emotions about leaving his parents in his sister's care to focus on his career. With SMART's support, he enrolled in and completed a 160-hour training program at the 160 Driving Academy and secured a job with FRSH, a regional trucking company. His new position allows him to stay close to his parents while pursuing his dream.



Veteran Eric's Journey Leads to CalVet Job

Eric, a veteran of the United States Air Force, walked through the doors of the SMART Job Center looking for help with his job search. SMART staff helped him to update his resume and apply for local openings that met his skills and interest. He eagerly started a part time job with CalVet doing security at the CalVet Cemetery, but continued to seek further employment to make ends meet. Not long after starting with CalVet, Eric was recognized for going above and beyond. His supervisor encouraged him to apply for a full-time position. Eric returned to SMART to share the good news and ask for another mock interview. Confident after further interview preparation from SMART, Eric applied for a full-time position. After nailing his interview, Eric received a full-time position with CalVet. Eric expresses his gratitude to SMART for all the help!

On the Job Training and Work Experience Partners:

- County of Del Norte
- Turtle Bay Exploration Park
- County of Del Norte
- Kimes & Foutch Construction
- Fasteners Inc.
- The UPS Store
- Los Compadres Mexican Restaurant
- City of Weed
- Shasta YMCA
- Rural Human Services
- US-Offsite Holdings, Inc.
- Redwood Park Conservancy
- New Life Discovery Center
- Sharrah Dunlap Sawyer
- Copper Ridge Care Center
- Baez Childcare
- Dr. Staszal
- The Watershed Research and Training Center

Networking for Success: A\$ET Apprenticeship Mixer Connects Talent with Opportunity

SMART Workforce Center staff recently participated in the Young Professionals Business & Finance Mixer, hosted by the A\$ET apprenticeship program at Shasta College. The event was a resounding success, drawing a strong turnout of students, instructors, and college staff. At their networking table, SMART staff engaged with A\$ET students and employer partners, fostering connections and career opportunities.

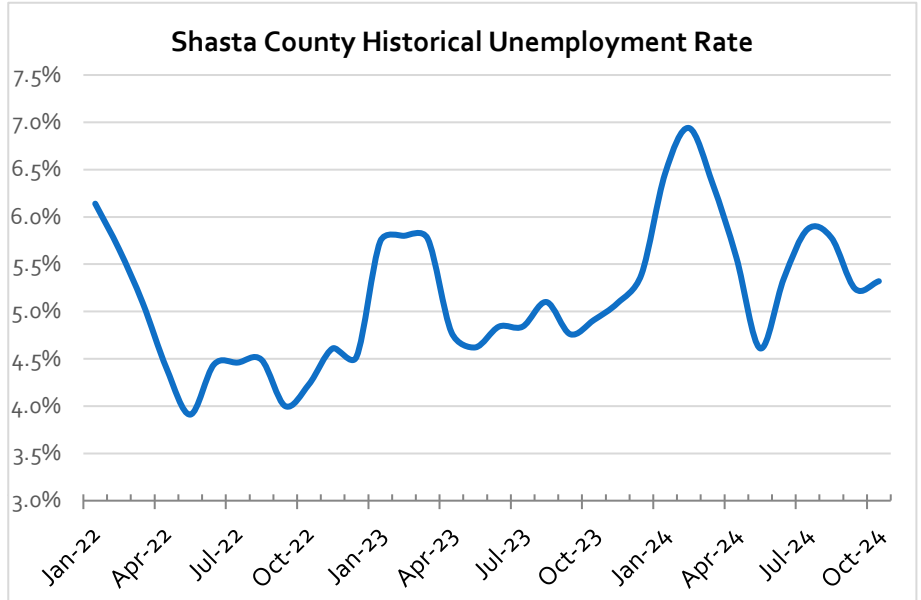
Students impressed attendees by showcasing their skills and professionalism while networking with employers, faculty, and peers. Local businesses actively supported the event, encouraging aspiring finance and accounting professionals to build their careers in the North State. The mixer underscored the strong link between emerging talent and the local workforce, paving the way for a brighter future in the industry.



Shasta County Labor Market Update:

As of October 2024, the civilian workforce in Shasta County was 74,900. This includes everyone that is working and everyone that is looking for work. Of those, 70,900 are currently employed, continuing a slow growth trend over the last two years.

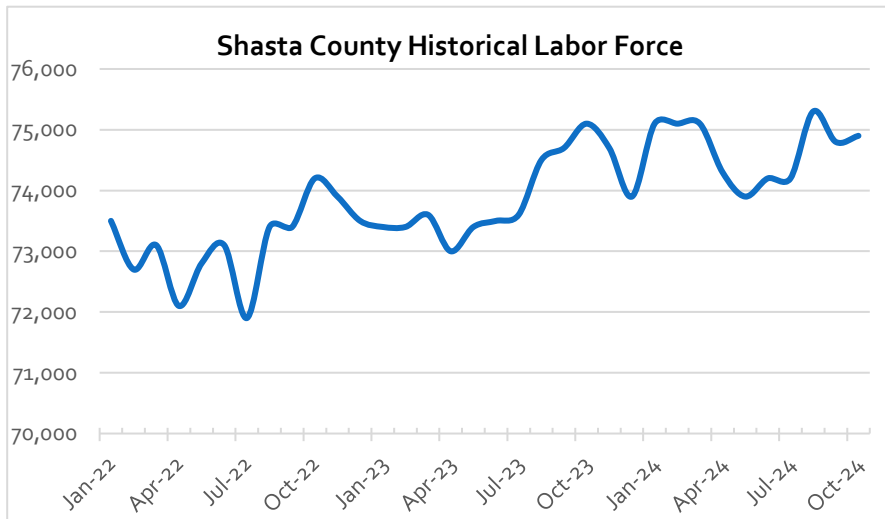
The unemployment rate is 5.3% for October. This is up from 4.9% at the same time last year, but down from a peak earlier in the year. In raw numbers, there are approximately 4,000 people currently considered unemployed in the county. This is slightly higher than the same time last year.



Source www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov

With unemployment being only slightly higher than last year, businesses may find it difficult to fill labor needs. Fortunately, SMART offers assistance through funded On The Job Training reimbursements and employee training programs. Through these programs, SMART helps employers reduce the risks associated with hiring new employees and establishes a strong foundation that promotes the long-term success of a new hire. As this labor shortage creates complications for employers in the county, SMART is here to help them navigate these challenges.

Employers may also need to rethink their recruitment strategy. There are untapped labor pools not traditionally counted in the unemployment numbers. Retirees looking for something to do, college students just about to enter the labor pool, parolees who have just completed their prison terms, and homemakers thinking about reentering the work force are not included in the unemployed numbers. Businesses can tap into those resources but will likely need to adjust their thinking of what the job demands. For example, retirees or students may not want or be able to accommodate a 40 hour a week position. Similarly, perhaps someone may lack the skills needed to perform the work but possess strong motivation to learn.



Source www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov

This is where SMART can help! We can connect businesses to candidates that employers may not have had access to, or even knew were options. SMART clients come from all walks of life and are looking for careers today. As the county’s pool of candidates continues to shrink, SMART can assist businesses in meeting their labor needs.



Cultural, Acceptance, Respect, Equity (C.A.R.E.) Training for All Staff

SMART Staff gathered for a half-day virtual Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) training on December 10th that reflects SMART's commitment to creating an inclusive and equitable work environment.

This session presented via The Training Place at Butte College was titled *C.A.R.E. (Cultural, Acceptance, Respect, Equity)*. It focused on understanding and addressing unfair treatment in the workplace, while promoting respect for the diverse backgrounds and experiences that shape our team and the clients we serve. The training, facilitated by HR Professional Desiree Sadler of Saddler Consulting Group, Inc. explored a range of topics, from the impact of biases and assumptions to the ways we can better support marginalized individuals. It's an opportunity for us to learn and grow together, ensuring we continue to build a culture of acceptance and respect for all.

SMART is proud to support the continuous growth of staff through trainings like this one!

SMART Professional Development:

- North Valley Employer Advisory Council- 2025 Labor Law Updates
- Best Practices- LMI & Occupational Data- NORTEC
- AFWD/SMART Best Practices
- SMART/EDD cross training
- Essential Communication Skills
- Anti-Harassment Training for Employees- CA
- Ethics in the Workplace
- Mandated Reporter Training
- Cultural, Acceptance, Respect & Equity in the Workplace
- Office Workstation Ergonomics
- Watching Out for One Another
- Workplace Stress
- On the Job Training webinar
- SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) Conference
- Information Security

UPS Store Grand Opening

SMART attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for the grand opening of the new UPS store in south Redding. This is the second UPS store in Redding opened by power couple Ben and Heidi Bradshaw. The ribbon cutting was covered live by Q97 and saw attendance from many local members of the Redding Chamber of commerce. SMART helped Ben and Heidi bring on some new staff for the location and assisted with training those staff through our amazing Work Experience Programs!



As part of the grand opening Ben and Heidi provided exciting giveaways and freebies to the public. Including free shipping for care packages to active-duty troops stationed overseas! SMART staff won 100 free photocopies, some other assorted goodies, as well as an opportunity to check in with some of the new staff at the new location. We think that all parties involved can agree it was a successful first day for our new UPS store!



Shasta Fall 2024 Job Fair

SMART Workforce Center, Simpson University, and Shasta College held a highly successful and well attended Fall Job Fair held at Simpson University Grant Gym on Thursday, October 10, 2024, from 11 AM to 2 PM.

Job seekers had the opportunity to meet with hiring employers from various industries, including healthcare, local government, manufacturing, and more. They learned about job opportunities and career paths in different sectors. They discovered resources and services to improve your job search skills, including resume writing, interviewing, and networking. And they connected with other job seekers to expand their professional network.



This job fair was open to all job seekers, regardless of age, experience level, or industry background. Whether they were a recent graduate looking for their first job, a seasoned professional seeking a career change, or someone who has been out of the workforce and wanted to get back in, you were welcome to attend. Job seekers were encouraged to show up with resumes in hand, for on the spot interviews.

The SMART Workforce Center is dedicated to helping job seekers find meaningful employment and providing employers with the skilled workforce they need to grow their businesses. We're committed to offering resources, training, and support to help you succeed in your job search and career goals.

SHRM Northstate's 8th Annual HR Summit

SMART attended the 2024 Northstate SHRM HR Summit held on October 22nd at the Gaia Hotel and Spa. This annual summit, aimed at HR professionals and industry experts, is a day full of insightful presentations and networking. SMART, along with our friends at Job Training Center, tabled the event to connect with local employers to advise them of available business services available through the AJCC system.



The keynote speaker Merlyna Valentine, M.A. Education, delivered an inspiring keynote speech titled "I Didn't Choose Change, Change Chose Me." Other notable speakers included Ann Wick, JD, who explored the future of HR regulations and accommodations, and Dr. Irene Salter, who led an interactive session focused on using science to navigate uncertainty and change in the workplace. SMART is always glad to attend to learn updates on HR regulations, learn about different perspectives and approaches, and connect with our community to help fulfill their workforce needs.

A Message From Our CEO Wendy Zanutelli:

As we close out another year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible honor it has been for our SMART Workforce Center team to be able to help our community in so many ways.

This year, we successfully completed several major initiatives, funded through 21 grants (an all-time high for SMART) that helped to address some of the most pressing workforce needs in our region. We facilitated several National Dislocated Worker Grants focusing on helping our communities recover from localized disasters, including multiple storms and wildfires. We initiated second-chance grants focusing on helping our justice-involved population re-enter the workforce and reduce recidivism. We also had additional grants responding to the specific needs in each of the four counties we serve. We are extremely grateful to our partners in those grants in every county and are very proud of the impact we have made together.



I want to recognize each member of the SMART team for making this all possible. SMART passed all audits and monitorings with flying colors, meeting or exceeding performance metrics for every program for the fiscal year. This demonstrates SMART's unwavering commitment to excellence, while never losing focus on why we do this important work or who we serve.

This year we continued our commitment to the power of collaboration. Co-location with Southern Oregon Goodwill in Yreka, College of the Siskiyous in Weed, and Shasta College in Weaverville and Redding continue to be integral to our success. Our community and County partners in all four of our counties have been gracious hosts that have enabled us to reach our most rural job seekers through pop up job centers, job fairs, and resource events.

To the community members and businesses we serve, thank you for trusting SMART to be your partner in workforce development. Together, we've built pathways to opportunity and growth, and we look forward to continuing this vital work in the coming year. Here's to another year of collaboration, innovation, and making a positive difference in the NorthState.



SMART Workforce Center is a
Proud Partner of:

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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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