

Job Fair Success Story



Tammy Ciocatto and Anabel Cervantes—Maxim Healthcare Services

Over the course of the summer, Sonoma County Job Link, in partnership with the Economic Development Board (EDB), hosted a series of job fairs for local employers who were seeking to expand their workforce. One employer who participated in three of our job fairs was Maxim Health.

Maxim Health, a national home health care company, has been in operation since 1988. Specializing in services for both pediatric and adult clients in the home, Maxim also provides respite for the clients' regular caregivers as well as companionship for the elderly. Maxim employs registered nurses, licensed vocational nurses, and certified nursing assistants.

Tammy Ciocatto, Maxim's Healthcare Recruiter, reached out to Job Link for help getting their name out into the community. Tammy says Maxim Health lacked local name recognition which made it difficult to recruit staff. After working with Heather LoBue, Business Services

Program Manager with the EDB, Tammy learned about the Job Fairs and asked to participate. Maxim Health's Santa Rosa Branch recruits for the whole North Bay region, so Job Link, with its commitment to improving the regional economy, is an ideal partner.

The biggest recruiting challenge for Maxim is attracting talented nursing staff. Many Maxim clients are covered by Medi-Cal (which has a very low reimbursement rate) as a result, Maxim cannot afford to pay nurses the higher salaries found in hospitals or clinics. This creates a hiring obstacle, which has forced Tammy to get creative when attracting talented nurses. She frequently posts openings on Craigslist and other sites. She also spends a lot of time cold calling, attending community events, as well as promoting Maxim's Novice Nurse Program.



Our experience with participating in the Job Link Job Fairs is fantastic! We hired two nurses from the first Job Fair we participated in. It all just came together perfectly. All because of your job fair. They would have never known Maxim; [Anabel] didn't even know our name. It's why we like to participate!



Tammy raves about her experience with job fairs. Maxim hired two nurses from the first Job Fair they attended. Tammy attributes her success in finding these two nurses completely to the Job Fair; without it, the nurses wouldn't have even known Maxim's name. This exposure is why Tammy finds value in participating. Maxim's recruitment success continues: At the second Job Fair they were able to hire two caregivers, and they are now in the process of vetting some candidates that they met at the Monolingual/Bilingual Job Fair.

Update from the Sonoma County EDB



The new website of the Sonoma County Economic Development Board focuses on dynamic visuals and engaging storytelling

The Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB) is pleased to announce the launch of our new and improved website, www.SonomaEDB.org.

With a clean design and simple navigation, the EDB website now makes it easier for businesses to launch and grow in Sonoma County. EDB's responsive design means that users can access the site on their desktop, tablet, or smart phone, getting the information they need to help navigate the start-up process and expand the reach of their operations..

In addition, businesses can obtain valuable insight into topics ranging from demographics and economic forecasts to entrepreneurial resources. Visit the new website and see how useful—and easy to use—it is!

CEDS Update

Sonoma County and Mendocino County collaborated in 2015 to create the Sonoma-Mendocino Economic Development District and draft a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS).

The CEDS represent an effort to create a roadmap for regional economic development. The goals of the CEDS fall into four broader categories: 1) economic diversification (resilience); 2) human capital development; 3) innovation and entrepreneurship; and 4) inclusive economic development. In order to achieve the CEDS goals, local assets must be leveraged and aligned with stakeholders. To establish plans for action the Sonoma-Mendocino partnership invited stakeholders in the area to submit project proposals.

Of the goals identified to achieve a sustainable, inclusive, and diverse economy, the CEDS recognizes the need to focus on workforce development. The Economic Development District Board of Directors understands that while the regional economy may be working well for residents who have the education, training, and wages to keep up with the rising cost of living, a large and increasing share of residents do not. Therefore, the CEDS will guide the region towards stronger economic development that will be shared by all residents, in an effort to promote a more equal access to available resources. Projects submitted work to achieve this goal.

For more information, interested parties can find the document here: www.sonomamendocinoceds.com.

Support Continues in Follow-up



"[My client's] response soon after getting hired with her employer was, 'thank you for believing in me.'"

-Job Link Employment and Training Counselor Veronica Aguilar

People may be surprised to know that the help Job Link provides to clients doesn't end when they find a job. In fact, Job Link clients receive ongoing follow-up support for a full year after they are hired. Job Link Employment and Training Counselors check-in with their clients at least once every few months and clients are encouraged to reach out to their counselors any time.

Counselors provide a variety of help to their clients in follow-up. If the job ends, for one reason or another, and the client is facing difficulties the counselor can still assist the client with finding another job. Additionally, if a client is seeking a salary increase or promotion, a counselor can suggest negotiating strategies. Likewise, the counselor can provide advice on documenting accomplishments in order to advance their career. Embarking on a new career path can be challenging and our follow-up clients know that their counselor is available to support them as they go through this process.

The assistance offered by Job Link Counselors can be invaluable to the success of our follow-up clients. Here's one success story provided by Job Link Employment and Training Counselor Veronica Aguilar:

My client came to our office on unemployment and unclear what the next step in her career would be. She had 20+ years in retail and cosmetic sales, but she was feeling discouraged after being fired from her last job and repeatedly faced what she perceived as ageism throughout her job search.

My client realized that she needed to change careers and learn new skills. Job Link provided financial support with medical assistance training and helped with her job search. During her training, my client accepted a patient coordinator position at a dental office. Though the experience was valuable, the environment wasn't the right fit and my client decided to leave the position.

In a later check-in, I explained that she was eligible for further job search assistance. I worked with her almost every week for the next two months. I helped her stay on track by actively pursuing her job search, sending her leads and encouraging her to follow up on them, as well as conducting mock interviews. During this time she had many interviews and was hired on as a medical receptionist at a facility in Healdsburg. She is enjoying her new job and loves her co-workers.

While Job Link staff celebrates the success of landing a job with clients, it's understood that the work is not over. The support provided by Counselors after clients obtain employment is critical to their ongoing career success. It is a true partnership that reaps benefits long after clients hear the words, "You're hired!"

Job Link Customers

Total Number of
Registered Individuals

2,959

How Our Customers Break Down

4% Disabled

2% Veterans

8% Youth 18-24

Training Participants

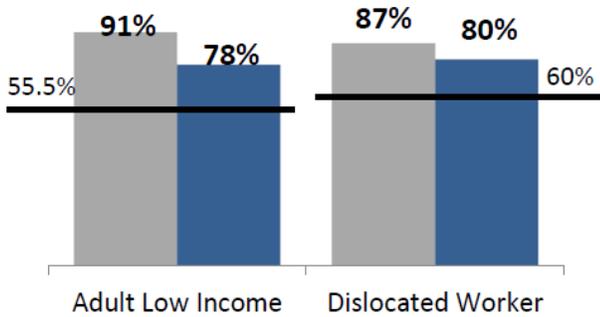
Total	On the Job Training	Individual Training Accounts	Customized Training
15	10	5	0
Average Paid	\$2,512	\$798	\$0
Total Paid	\$12,565	\$7,978	\$0

WIOA Performance At-A-Glance: Q1 2016-2017

ADULT PERFORMANCE GOALS

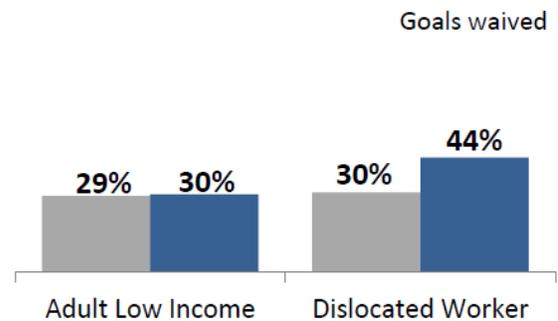
■ First QR (Jul-Sep '16) ■ 2015-16 — Goal

Entered Employment



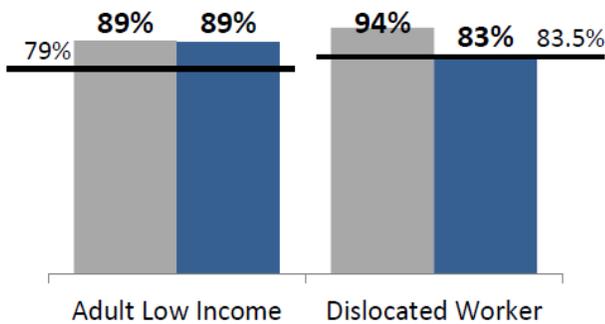
Includes participants who exit the program with a job.

Employment and Credential Rates



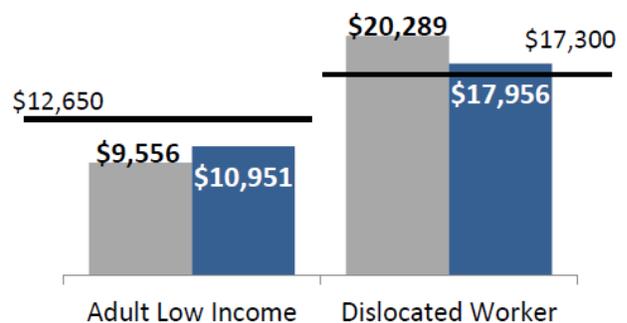
Includes participants who successfully complete a training program, and receive a certificate.

Retention Rates



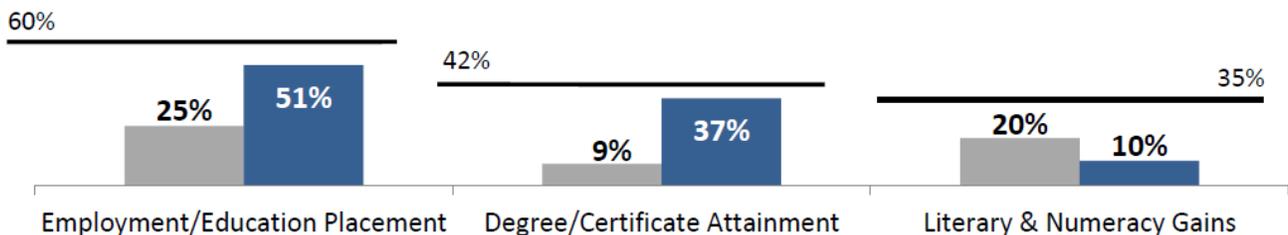
Includes participants who retain their job for at least 90 days after exit.

Average Earnings



Includes the average earnings of all participants during this time period.

YOUTH PERFORMANCE GOALS



Includes participants who are employed or in a training program at exit.

Includes participants who successfully complete a training program.

Includes participants with basic skill deficiencies at entry who have increased their skills.

Job Link and EDB Collaboration Update



A recruiter from Nelson Staffing speaks with interested job seekers at the Monolingual/Bilingual Job Fair in October.

Sonoma County's current unemployment rate is hovering around 4%, creating a challenge for employers who face serious difficulty in finding the talent they need to fill available jobs. To help alleviate some of the hiring need, the EDB is collaborating with the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and Job Link on several workforce and talent development projects.

The Employee Training Reimbursement Program was developed to connect businesses to state and federal training funds, which are distributed to companies to help augment their employee training programs. In this year alone, the Employee Training Reimbursement Program has helped secure customized training funds for 10 local companies, and more than 60 workers have

been trained, gaining new skills which will help them advance in those companies.

More recently, the EDB worked in collaboration with Job Link to launch a pilot Summer Job Fair Series of nine industry specific job fairs in four months, providing free participation for employers. The job fairs attracted more than 50 unique employers, and over 250 job seekers to the job fairs.

The response for the job fairs was overwhelmingly positive, with 77% of employers noting their interactions with job seekers were 'Excellent' or 'Good'. Additionally, all employers indicated the organization of the job fairs were 'Excellent' or 'Good.' Job Fair attendees listed Job Link (75) and Referral from counselor, friend, etc. (42), as the primary means about learning of upcoming job fairs. Moving forward, Job Link will concentrate their marketing efforts on outreach to expand the pool of job seekers at these events.

With such a successful summer behind us, Job Link and EDB will be rolling out monthly job fairs in 2017. We encourage you to connect with EDB or Job Link if you are a business interested in participating in any of the Job Fairs scheduled for 2017. See page 6 for the 2017 Job Fair dates. Employers interested in participating in future job fairs can contact the Business Services team at 565-8079. More information for job seekers, coming soon.

10

Customized training programs

60

Workers trained

250+

Job seekers attended 2017 Job Fairs

50+

Unique employers at 2017 Job Fairs

Regional and Local Plan

In accordance with the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA), the Workforce Investment Board is drafting a regional and local plan. The purpose of these plans are to align the work of the WIB with the policy objectives of the state, which include: fostering demand-driven skills attainment; enabling upward mobility for all Californians, including populations with barriers to employment; and, aligning, coordinating, and integrating programs and services. The end goal for these plans is to increase the number of post-secondary degrees and apprenticeship programs for middle-skill, well-paying jobs in in-demand industries.

At the core of the regional plan is an effort to align educational and training programs with regional industry sector needs in the area. The goal, therefore, is to create educational and training programs that support re-

gional industry sector needs, ultimately establishing pathways from training to employment.

In order to properly understand important regional sector pathways, the WIB will work to identify key industries, in-demand occupations, and the educational and training programs in the county that lead these occupations. This allows the WIB to ensure that important industries in the region are having their workforce needs met, all the while ensuring that students, workers, and individuals have to opportunity to develop the necessary skills to succeed in the local labor market.

With this plan in place, the WIB will be better situated to support and work for all the clients looking for career and job search assistance, and any other support the WIB can provide.

Workforce Development Survey

The 2015 Workforce Development Survey, produced by the Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB), summarizes the top employer needs and the pressing workforce issues.

Key findings indicate employers express a steady level of optimism for continued hiring through 2016, with 75% of surveyed employers expecting to hire new full-time employees; however, 65% of survey respondents experienced hiring difficulty in 2015 citing an insufficient number of applicants as the main cause for hiring difficulty.

Despite the hiring difficulty employers face, survey results show employers underutilize and are unfamiliar

with Job Link, Sonoma County's one-stop job center, that provides free services to employers.

Through specialized hiring events, and by pioneering the customized and incumbent worker training, the WIB will help businesses address their specific workforce issues both with hiring and retention of qualified applicants. For more information on customized training for your business, please contact Heather LoBue at 565-6415.

The 2016 Workforce Development Survey and other specialized workforce reports can be found here:

<http://sonomaedb.org/Data-Center/Workforce/>.

Youth Committee Update

Under the new Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act, the Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) established a Youth Committee which began meeting in March 2016. The committee will focus on the following goals:

- 1. Engage and work with youth friendly employers** to educate them about the benefits of recruiting and hiring youth and address any concerns or misconceptions, including offering support in working with youth with work readiness challenges. Develop strategies to both convene and celebrate youth friendly employers.
- 2. Be a convener** and networking opportunity for those that provide youth services.
- 3. Advocate** for youth and collaborate to find and fill the gaps in services and resources.
- 4. Align education, training, and career pathways** to the needs of local businesses. Identify the key barriers that youth experience in school, out of school, and returning to school.

As part of Goal 1, a subcommittee was formed to recognize, promote, and express gratitude to local businesses identified as providing outstanding customer service towards youth, hiring youth, and for assisting youth in the

community. The Youth Friendly Business Recognition Subcommittee held their first meeting in October 2016 and discussed program details including the processes for nomination and application review and approval, program marketing, and business recognition.

To address Goal 2, the Youth Committee is brainstorming and compiling an inventory of youth-related services available in Sonoma County. This inventory of youth services will be made available online and will be updated and reviewed annually. The goal is for it to be the primary resource for youth providers.

As the Youth Committee continues to meet, they are working on Goals 3 and 4 through robust conversations and presentations. While there is a great representation of youth service providers on the Committee, there is a shortage of local employers. If you are interested in joining the Committee and contributing to the conversation, please contact Angela Beran at aberan@schsd.org.

The Youth Committee meets quarterly, with the next meeting scheduled for **November 16th at 2:00 pm in the Santa Rosa Room at 2227 Capricorn Way, Suite 100**. Please join us!

Upcoming Events

2017 Job Fairs Calendar

General Business Job Fair

January 24th

Hospitality Job Fair

February 28th

Construction & Trades Job Fair

March 28th

Outdoor & Recreation Job Fair

April 25th

Manufacturing & High Technology Job Fair

May 23rd

Healthcare Job Fair

June 27th

Apprenticeships & Internships Job Fair

July 25th

Public Service Job Fair

August 22nd

Seasonal Job Fair

September 26th

Bilingual & Monolingual Job Fair

October 24th

11AM—2PM

Sonoma County

Job Link

2227 Capricorn Way

Santa Rosa, CA 95407

New Website

The Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board, and Job Link, are continuing to improve their digital appearance by working on a new website, coming soon!