
Update on Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Program Activities

Adult and Dislocated Worker Program

Monterey County Works staff attended the 2nd Annual LIFT Summit at Portola Plaza in Monterey to strengthen community visibility and expand professional networking opportunities. The event, promoted by DART (Drone, Automation, and Robotics Technology), provided valuable exposure for Monterey County Works, allowing staff to connect with community partners, employers, and attendees while promoting workforce programs and services. Staff's participation helped increase awareness of Monterey County Works as a trusted regional resource and supported relationship-building efforts that can lead to future partnerships, referrals, and collaboration.

Monterey County Works also celebrated the High Road Construction Careers (HRCC) graduation at the Salinas Career Center, with 12 participants completing the program. Graduates achieved important milestones by earning nationally recognized credentials such as Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) and OSHA 10, while also building hands-on skills in grading, concrete work, and tool use. These accomplishments reflect the impact of the HRCC program in preparing participants for careers in the building trades and expanding the local trades workforce pipeline.

Youth Programs

CaliforniansForAll-funded Green Cadre, Cohort #2

The second cohort of the CaliforniansForAll-funded Green Cadre will graduate on April 24. Over the past three months, the Cadre team has supported State Parks, the City of Monterey, and local community food banks, all while keeping every participant actively engaged in the program.

The climate-focused group, partnering with State Parks and the City of Monterey, has made significant progress in the last month. Green Cadre participants spent a full week at Asilomar State Beach, removing more than 700 feet of old fencing to prepare for a new installation. The group also cleared over one acre of invasive weeds along the Presidio of Monterey recreational trails, and at Del Monte Beach, the Cadre team supported maintenance work by clearing accumulated sand from walkways.

In recognition of their hard work, the Cadre team received acknowledgment from the City of Monterey and City Supervisor Steven Garcia. Special praise was given to the Green Cadre staff for their strong leadership and dedication to guiding and supporting participants throughout the program.

The food insecurity group has been working on a variety of projects with partners throughout the county to prepare for spring via the following activities:

- Sheet mulching, weeding, and pollinator planting for Highland Otis Park and Monterey Adult School in Seaside, Natividad Creek Park, and local food banks;
- Planting white onions with MEarth in Carmel;
- Conducting outreach for Double Up Food Bucks program and administering CalFresh surveys in Salinas, King City, and Greenfield;
- Assisting with food distribution at food banks across the county – Soledad (267 parcels distributed), Salinas (250 parcels distributed), Chualar (250 parcels distributed), as well as in Prunedale and Castroville; and
- Digging irrigation trenches, weeding, and mulching for the Pacific Gove Community Garden.

CaliforniansForAll-funded Green Cadre, Cohort #1

December Green Cadre graduates continue to pursue employment and are receiving ongoing support to reach their career goals. Five former participants have enrolled in postsecondary education at UC Berkeley, Hartnell College, and California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB). Another five participants have secured employment in roles such as case manager with Sun Street Centers, maintenance worker with the City of Monterey, and counselor with Alsana in Pacific Grove.

WIOA-funded Tech-Social Media Cadre

The Tech-Social Media Cadre cohort began on March 30, with a total of 12 participants enrolled. Currently, the cohort is receiving in-house training in which they are synchronously learning together and building skills as a team; building local community networks; modeling effective verbal and non-verbal communication and critical thinking; pitching products and organizations; and learning workplace negotiation, how to interview effectively, and how to create a standout resume. Additionally, all participants are taking online courses to practice skills in social media marketing and engagement. All participants have completed their BuildEd and Metrix training and are working to complete their OSHA10 and sexual harassment training certifications.

Participants are looking forward to learning more about the small businesses that have signed up to provide Work Experience (WEX) sites and are preparing for their interviews scheduled for April 14 and 16. Ideally, all participants will start their WEX placements on April 20.

Upcoming Cadre Cohorts

Youth staff are currently recruiting for three upcoming Cadre cohorts – MCWDB's third Green Cadre cohort, a CaliforniansForAll/WIOA hybrid model to start May 4, a Hospitality Cadre to start May 11, and a summer Joby Aviation Tech Cadre to start June 1. The Youth staff are looking forward to supporting the orientations, interviews, onboarding/in-house training and work experience placements associated with each program.

WIOA-funded Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Cohort

The youth staff are once again partnering with Central Coast College (CCC) to link WIOA customers to a 6-week CNA training course. On April 20, five clients will start their CNA program, with Equus Workforce Solutions and Turning Point of Central California staff working closely together to support co-enrolled clients and ensure that all requirements are met.

New Collaborative Youth Staff Tools and Tactics

Youth Collaborative Outreach Tracker

The Youth Program and Project Directors have partnered to develop a shared outreach tracker that is visible to and updated daily by all Youth staff members. The tracker captures current outreach efforts, upcoming events, and standing meetings. Its purpose is to optimize staff time and reduce duplication of outreach activities by intentionally distributing the Youth staff across a broader range of events and geographic areas.

Weekly Program/Project Directors' Action Meetings and Tracker

Youth Program and Project Directors Lauren Walters and Lourdes Luviano have established a strong weekly meeting rhythm focused on performance and outcomes, identifying clear next steps and tracking them through a live PD meeting notes tracker, which is shared with the WDB.