

Success Story



Martin Goldsbrough—Firma Design Group

In a tighter job market, Job Link has increased its efforts to help local employers, especially those that find it challenging to hire job-ready staff. One way Job Link supports employers is with the On-the-Job Training Program. The On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program offers wage subsidies to cover training costs of new hires. OJT subsidizes the training costs for businesses and helps the employer find qualified staff and save money. It's a win-win situation for both job-seekers and employers.

An employer who took advantage of the OJT is the Firma Design Group, a multidisciplinary firm of landscape architects, planners and civil engineers, who were in need of an office assistant and were actively recruiting for one. Martin Goldsbrough, president of the Firma Design Group, was familiar with Job Link and expressed interest in participating in the OJT program if the right candidate came along.

Reyna Brown, Job Link's Job Developer, was working with job seeker Laura Harty. Laura was working to rebuild her life by finding a permanent home and a job. Laura did not have a current work history so she worked

one-on-one with the Job Link counselors and participated in many of our skill building activities to develop her value as an employee.

Laura was hired by the Firma Design Group, where she excelled. After 6 months, the firm gave Laura a raise and made her a permanent employee. Laura was able to save enough money to find a home of her own.

“We had a very good experience with Job Link and the OJT program. Laura is an exceptional employee. She worked very hard to learn and continues to work hard to learn more and more even after the OJT portion of her employment ended. And Job Link subsidizing her salary during the training helped us out immensely.”

For the Firma Design Group, OJT was a very good experience. They feel that Laura is an exceptional employee who worked hard to learn what they taught her and has become a valuable member of their team.

The Firma Design Group and Laura Harty are wonderful examples how workforce partners can come together and create success.



Laura Harty—Firma Design Group

WIOA's Local Plan 2017-2020 Available for Public Comment

In order to create a more comprehensive, strategic and streamlined workforce system, WIOA required each state to develop a single, unified plan. In 2016, the California Workforce Development Board created their WIOA plan for California. The state plan defined regions as well as local areas and requires each region and local area to develop a plan using the guidance established in the plan. Sonoma County's region includes Lake, Mendocino, Marin, Napa and Solano counties. WIOA requires that these plans be submitted to the Board of Supervisors and the local plan be signed before submission to the California Workforce Development Board for review and approval.

The regional plan's required focus is to develop strategies to implement and strengthen sector strategies, career pathways and regional partnerships. The regional plan was developed with partners and stakeholders including industry leaders and business organizations, economic development agencies, regional consortia of community colleges, regional consortia of adult education providers, representatives of K-12 and Career Technical Education, Department of Rehabilitation, County Welfare agencies, CBOs, groups with experience representing and serving individuals with barriers to employment and the community as a whole. Stakeholder input

sessions were held throughout the region in every county in fall 2016, including at meetings of local workforce boards, community colleges, and partner convenings.

The local plan is to complement the state plan by focusing on the alignment between education and business by developing industry sector partnerships, developing career pathways with our education partners, providing enhanced services and improved service delivery and access to the workforce system for job seekers and employers, meeting new performance measures and increased access to data. The local plan was developed with partners and stakeholders including industry leaders and business organizations, economic development agencies, local schools and colleges including K-12 and Career Technical Education, adult education providers, Department of Rehabilitation, Sonoma County Human Services Department, local CBOs, groups with experience representing and serving individuals with barriers to employment and the community as a whole. A stakeholder input session was held in fall 2016.

The draft Regional and Local WIOA Plans for 2017-2020 are available for public comment for a 30-day period from February 1 — March 2, 2017 and available at www.SonomaWIB.org.

Sonoma County Connections

Sonoma County Connections, one of the first talent-attraction websites in the nation, was developed by the Economic Development Board (EDB) nearly a decade ago and garnered national recognition. Soon after the site's launch, the Great Recession struck and hiring slowed dramatically; as a result the website was updated only periodically.

Now that the economy is expanding and many employers are in desperate need of skilled workers, the EDB, the WIB and the nine cities of Sonoma County decided to collaborate in updating and re-releasing *Sonoma County Connections*. The website addresses critical workforce challenges by attracting the necessary talent to keep the economy growing.

The website acts as a platform to promote the region and its cities as a great place to live, work, and do business. The goal is to increase business retention, expansion, and attraction efforts to stimulate capital investment and job creation in the region. The goal is to increase business retention, expansion, and attraction efforts to stimulate capital investment and job creation in the region.

At its core *Sonoma County Connections* is a dynamic countywide branding and talent attraction site as well as a platform for workforce development and business attraction efforts. The site is currently live but in Beta mode. Check us out at sonomacountyconnections.org.

Partner Spotlight: Sandra Aguayo



Sandra Aguayo—Department of Rehabilitation

A strong economy doesn't guarantee that everyone can find work easily. Just ask Sandra Aguayo, a Bilingual Employment Coordinator at the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR). Sandra has developed a 7-week training program that helps disabled people address their challenges and achieve their goals. She knows from personal experience what it takes to succeed and shares that knowledge with participants in her program.

In 1999, Sandra woke up one morning to discover that she'd lost all hearing in her right ear overnight. Her hearing was already impaired and now she was facing a more challenging future with just partial hearing in one ear.

Despite the challenges, she pursued—and obtained—positions in the staffing and human resources field, recruiting candidates nationally for the manufacturing sector. After a layoff during the 2009 economic downturn, she returned to school with the support of the DOR to pursue another career path, learning both

American Sign Language and Italian. Ultimately, she was able to combine all her skills—in human resources, communication and understanding of disability—in her current position at DOR.

Sandra created the Job Search Preparation & Training Program (JSPT) that gives people intensive hands-on training for all aspects of job search. It covers everything from getting organized and developing “soft skills” like communication and attitude to perfecting the resume. Each session builds on the previous one and simulates workplace expectations to challenge participants in taking initiative and being accountable. Participants also learn how to improve their interviewing and networking skills with plenty of practice time to develop public speaking confidence.

“I was raised to value hard work and a strong work ethic. During the creation of the JSPT curriculum, I tapped a lot of my human resources experience as well as my own personal life experience as an individual with a hearing disability,” says Sandra.

Sandra describes her journey as “rewarding,” a process that helped her realize that she'd found her passion. She adds, “I poured my time and energy into developing the tools and resources helping individuals who face challenges...to become empowered and confident in pursuit of employment.”

The first session of the 2017 JSPT series began on January 13, 2017 at Sonoma County Job Link. The workshop is seven consecutive weeks with each session lasting 3 hours from 8:30-11:30 a.m. For more information, or to ask about signing up for the next JSPT program, call 565-5550 or speak with a Job Link Resource Center Navigator.

Job Link Customers YTD (since 7/1/2016)

Total Number of
Registered Individuals

2,120

How Our Customers Break Down

5% Disabled

2% Veterans

9% Youth 18-24

Current Training Participants

Total Number of
Training Participants

31

On the Job
Training

6

Individual Training
Accounts

25

Customized
Training

0

Average
Paid

\$4,326

\$1,147

\$0

Total
Paid

\$25,961

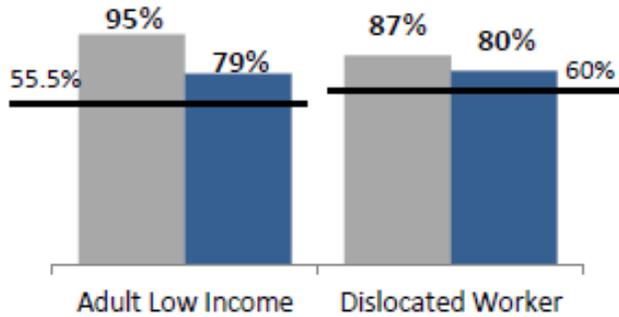
\$28,671

\$0

ADULT PERFORMANCE GOALS

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

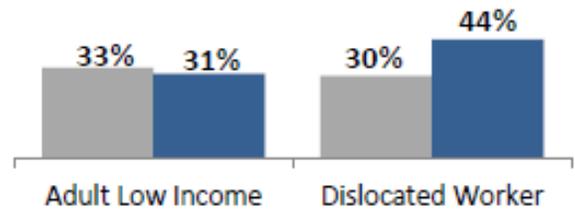
Entered Employment



Includes participants who exit the program with a job.

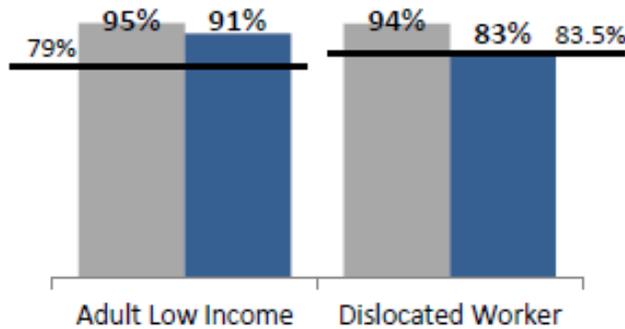
Employment and Credential Rates

Goals waived



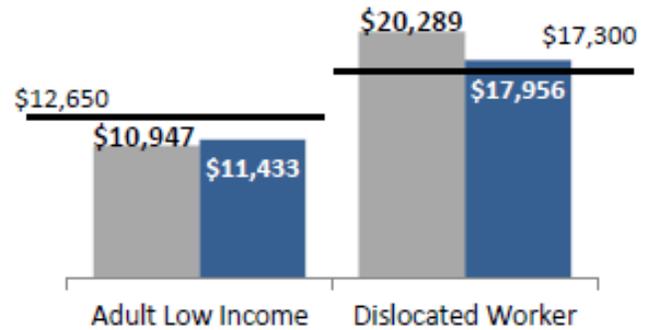
Includes participants who successfully complete a training program, and receive a certificate.

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.

Meet Gustavo Vargas



Meet Gustavo Vargas, an outstanding participant in the Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps.

Gustavo Vargas, or Goose as many friends call him, is a Forestville native enrolled in the Youth Education and Employment Services (YEES) program with West County Community Services. Having recently graduated from high school in the summer of 2015, he was looking for help applying to the Santa Rosa Junior College and finding a summer job when he heard about the YEES program from a friend.

To gain work experience, Gustavo joined the Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps (SCYEC) as a crew member doing ecology work in his community. Never having held a job before, Gustavo says, “It was a valuable experience for me. I got to work on a team, make friends, make money, and learn skills.” He has been described as hard worker with a positive attitude.

Gustavo states that the person he is today required him to overcome challenges and believe in himself. Diagnosed with a learning disability, Gustavo compared his experience with other students: “Most people can just

do things like a homework assignment or a test without much effort,” but that everything took twice as long for him. Gustavo was also shy and lacked confidence but believes sports changed his life, teaching him discipline and teamwork. He became well-known in high school for his athleticism in football and wrestling and transformed into strong, confident person. Gustavo now serves as a community volunteer and coach for local football teams, helping others attain their own goals.

Just as he now helps others, Gustavo also continues to receive support from dedicated people in local programs. The YEES program is helping Gustavo attain his career goal of becoming a police officer. Vivian Diaz, his case manager from West County Community Services, provides services including academic tutoring and job search assistance. Currently, Vivian is helping Gustavo through the process of earning his driver’s license and obtaining work as a security guard. A student at the Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) for a second year, Gustavo receives additional support from the SRJC Disability Resources Department. He is working towards finishing his General Education and hopes to then transfer to a 4-year college or join the police academy.

Gustavo says he is very thankful for the support he receives from the program. Gustavo looks forward to his future and achieving his goals.

Check out the Newly Integrated Job Link/WIB Website

Until recently, Job Link and the WIB had separate websites. With a new year comes the launching of a new integrated website for the WIB and Job Link. Businesses and job seekers can use www.SonomaWIB.org as a way to post or find jobs, and learn about the work of the WIB and Job Link services.

In designing this site other workforce websites were reviewed to find a balance between professional and functional. Our goal was to be a go-to resource for Job Link's job seekers, youth, and businesses while further solidifying the WIB's presence in Sonoma County.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our 2015-2016 EDB Interns (Brian Marland and Amelia Yim) as well as Job Link's Management Team, SonomaWIB.org offers a variety of features to help people and businesses get the information they need, from signing up for weekly job leads to registering for workshops and monthly job fairs.

Now that the website has launched we continue brainstorming and anticipate deploying new features throughout 2017 that will deliver an even better product to Sonoma County. Beginning in May, we will begin including analytics data in our quarterly dashboard/newsletter.

Kristyn Byrne –Job Link's New Steering Committee Chair



Kristyn Byrne—Job Link Steering Committee Chair

Kristyn Byrne joined the WIB in January of 2013 and was recently appointed to chair the Job Link Steering Committee. Having moved to Sonoma County from Texas with her husband in 2000, Kristyn has had hands-on experience with a variety of businesses, including

non-profit entities such as VOICES Napa, and the Children's Museum as well as consulting for Lytton Rancheria of California. Through her work with community-based organizations, Kristyn became interested in how the county builds connections between local employers and its future workforce, which led to her involvement with the WIB. She feels the biggest challenge now facing the WIB will be addressing how Sonoma County Job Link remains not only relevant, but vital when the county is at almost full employment. She also hopes to reach out to other WIB members for their input and tapping into what she sees as underutilized potential.

The WIB staff looks forward to working with Kristyn and benefiting from her enthusiasm and fresh perspective.

Job Market Tracker Update

The Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB) has acquired a new economic modeling database from Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. (EMSI) to inform the Job Market Tracker reports. The EDB prepares the Sonoma County Job Market Tracker Monthly Report (JMT) to provide insights into current workforce demands of the local economy as well as customized reports for businesses.

The WIB utilizes the JMT reports to provide staff and job seekers guidance into current labor market trends, to increase understanding of the local job market, and to improve service delivery. The JMT reports allow the WIB to highlight growing sectors in their workshops and job fairs, and identify top job opportunities within these sectors for their clients.

Previously, the JMT reports have highlighted the number of job postings in Sonoma County over a year, the top local employers by posting volume, the

top occupational groups in Sonoma County, and the top occupations. EMSI's data now expands the JMT Report by analyzing the growing and declining occupations in Sonoma County as well as the growing and declining industries.

The JMT will continue to provide the list of top employers hiring for an occupation, however, now the top occupations employed by an industry will also be showcased. Going further than detailing the top hard and soft skills listed for an occupation, the JMT Report can provide a list of any training or educational programs available for an occupation. This allows job seekers to better understand their opportunities and potential pathways.

We hope the enhanced JMT report will support the work of the Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board and Job Link. To view past reports visit www.sonomawib.org/research-reports.

Growing & Declining Industries

Industry	Change in Jobs (2010-2016)
Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities	5,753
Full-Service Restaurants	2,296
Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	1,789
Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools (Local Government)	-2,429
Private Households	-3,065
Payroll Services	-3,316

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