

# Yuba-Sutter job fair: The chance for a fresh start

Job fair attracts around 200 hopefuls looking for a new career

By Chris Kaufman / ckaufman@appealdemocrat.com | Posted 16 hours ago

Lillian Belloni had a heart attack ten months ago, but that's not stopping her from trying to land a good job.

She was one of about 200 people who attended a job fair Wednesday in Yuba City organized by the Sutter and Yuba One Stops.

"I had open-heart surgery so I can't work in the old field I was in, but I'm not ready to give up yet," Belloni said. "I used to work at the Toyota Amphitheatre, but I can't do that any more."

Belloni, a Yuba City resident, looked over and connected with some of the 40 potential employers at a crowded Boyd Hall. She's also taking a job preparation course at the Sutter County One Stop.

"I enjoy meeting new people and learning new things, and I'm looking for new work," she said. "It's great that I can ask questions here in class without judgement."

Tamara Russ was teaching the Interview and Employment Essentials Workshop class, which happened to coincide with the job fair across the street.

"We get people ready for jobs in the 21st century," Russ said. "It used to be that you had 60 seconds to make a first impression, but now it's tighter – about 15 seconds."

Ron Del Bianco, another student, had a stack of updated resumes ready to hand out and was looking forward to meeting potential employers at the job fair.

"I was working in public works in San Bruno in 2004 and was 11 months into my 12-month probation period, but they didn't pick me up," he said. "Soon after that, I moved in with my dad in South San Francisco to take care of him, but he died in 2007."

Years later, after a duck hunting trip to Yuba-Sutter, he bought a home and later worked at Mary's Gone Crackers for a couple of years.

"When Mary's Gone Crackers closed and moved to Reno, I thought they were going to keep the plant here, but they didn't," he said. "Since then, I've been struggling to find a job."

He said the One Stop staff helped with his resume and interview skills, and that's already helped get him more comfortable with more formal interactions.

Adam Copen of Yuba City worked in the medical field to pay for the accounting classes he was taking to get a career in numbers ,but something changed along the way.

“I’m better suited in a different line of work and I learned that I really like helping people,” he said. “I found out what I really want to do (health care) while I was learning to become an accountant.”

Kim Kerby has worked a lot of jobs over the years and said the class at One Stop helped present her diverse skill set in a better way.

“I’ve worked for family businesses, auto repair shops, construction companies and have done lots of clerical work,” she said. “One Stop took all my skills and put them on a resume, and I was surprised at all the skills I had.”

Shannon Miller, human resources director with Yuba City Post-Acute, said the job fair serves a couple of crucial functions for the company.

“We come out to the job fair because it’s critical to get our name out there so people know we’re here,” he said. “We’ve hired about five people from the job fairs that we’ve attended, so it’s very helpful that they host these.”

Marina Alvidrez is the employment manager for Thunder Valley Casino Resort and said job fairs help her hire the 2,700 people on staff.

“The job fair is an exciting opportunity for us to hire,” she said. “We have 14 restaurants so we need lots of servers and janitors, but also slot machine ambassadors and we have a blackjack dealer school.”

Sergeants Tony Bess and Marc Baes, with the California Department of Corrections, were also at the job fair getting the word out about openings.

“We go to job fairs at high schools, colleges and military bases,” Bess said. “We’re trying to be more present because it’s a good field in law enforcement.”

Both men served in the armed forces and said there are some extra benefits for veterans in the corrections field.

“Unlike other law enforcement agencies, there’s no age cap in corrections,” Baes said. “It really appeals to people who served in the military because there’s a lot of similarities in terms of the structure.”

Heather Murray, lead business workforce specialist with Sutter County One Stop, said the event had a very good turnout.

“Now everything is online and internet-based so the importance of the job fair is people get to meet face to face with employers and hiring managers,” she said. “In this area, we have a high need for entry level workers, skilled labor, manufacturing and production jobs.”

Even if people lack all the necessary skills for a specific job, she said, some employers don't mind.

“A lot of these employers are open to on-the-job-training,” she said. “It's a great opportunity for people in some skilled jobs where they can work, get paid and learn all at the same time.”



Chris Kaufman/Appeal-Democrat

People line up in preparation for a job fair on Wednesday at Boyd Hall in Yuba City.

### **Expert offers job hunting tips**

Job hunting tips from Jennie Archuleta with Sutter County One Stop:

#### **Understanding the reality of job hunting**

Finding a job is a job, it takes time. You need to put a lot of effort into your job search. Treat it like a full-time job. Don't quit until you succeed.

#### **Create a career portfolio**

Career portfolios provide more in-depth information than a resume. You are able to highlight education, work experience, awards and references. Prepare and gather documents such as: A sample application, a letter of introduction/cover letter, your resume, a list of references, letters of recommendation, schools transcripts, certificates of completion/awards, diplomas or degrees. All of the documentation you have should be presented in an orderly fashion in a nice binder. We also recommend you place your material inside sheet protectors.

#### **Job Search Methods**

**Ask (cold calling):** If you have a business you would really like to work at, go in and ask for an application regardless if they have a help wanted sign or advertised an opening.

**Employment agencies:** Use an employment agency for temporary and possible permanent positions.

**Networking:** 70-80 percent of the jobs available aren't advertised. Talk to your friends, family, club/church organization members and other acquaintances, and ask them if they know about a business that is hiring.

**Posted job listing:** Such as want ads, company websites, Cal JOBS, online job announcements, etc.

**Volunteering:** Normally positions that you volunteer for are unpaid. However, will also allow you to gain experience and establish a work history. You can also expand your professional network and possibly get connected with a job.

### **Job fairs**

A great way to discover and meet employers who are hiring.

There are more tips on filling out applications, writing a letter of introduction/cover letter, creating and improving resumes, how to dress and thank you letters as well as classes at the One Stop in Sutter County and Yuba County.

**-Chris Kaufman**