

## Chair's Message

Marty Lombardi



Life is full of sudden punches and aside from a life threatening illness to one's self or a family member, I cannot think of a more unnerving experience than the unexpected loss of one's job. It is one of those fears to which most of us can relate.

The need for job training or re-training could happen to any of us – some analysts predict we will have seven or more jobs during our lifetime. This is why I am so passionate about service on the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB), the overseer of the workforce development system in Mendocino County.

The WIB is set up to be business-driven. Because Mendocino County continues to be in economic transition, there has never been a greater need for our County's stakeholders to work together to have a motivated, well-educated and trained workforce for area employers – a workforce that is conducive to attracting new businesses and facilitating economic opportunities.

Let this be an open letter of invitation to our County's business community to become an active WIB member. The WIB requires business-minded, insightful leadership directed at identifying critical workforce needs and developing strategies for dealing with those challenges.

I believe that each of us desires to make a difference during our lifetime. Membership on the WIB is one of those rare opportunities to make such a difference. If I can answer any question relative to this very worthwhile program, please call me at 462-6613.

### WANTED:

#### **BUSINESS OWNERS, OPERATING OFFICERS, & CHIEF EXECUTIVES!**

Congress set up local Workforce Investment Boards to be business-driven. If you are interested in steering the workforce development system in Mendocino County, consider becoming a WIB member. Call 467-5506 for a board information packet and membership application.

## Mendocino Works Employment Resource Center Hosts Job Shop for Veterans

The Mendocino Works Employment Resource Center (MWERC) in Ukiah hosted a job shop for veterans on November 4, 2004, to launch the One-Stop Career Center's observance of the federal Hire Vets First Campaign.

Veterans and other job seekers found a variety of job listings, general employment information, and employer descriptions at the event, which was co-sponsored by the Ukiah/Fort Bragg Employment Development Department (EDD), the Mendocino Private Industry Council (MPIC), and the MWERC partnership.

MPIC and EDD job developers offered a series of free mini workshops throughout the day, and covered the topics of networking for unadvertised jobs, interviewing, tips for using the Resource Center, and writing successful applications, cover letters, and résumés. During computerized presentations, participants learned how to research and apply for state and federal jobs.

Local employers and employment agencies who provided applications, job listings, and informational packets included Frank R. Memorial Hospital, Ukiah Valley Medical Center, Mendocino Community Health Clinic, West Company, Big Lots, Metalfx, Redwood Empire Small Business Development Center, SBC, Savings Bank of Mendocino, The Home Depot, Harwood Products,

Mendocino Transit Authority, Little River Inn, In-Home Supportive Services, LINK Business & Personnel Services, Shodakai Casino, Black Bart Casino, and Green Lion Landscaping, in addition to local, state, and federal government agencies. Several employers stopped by to offer job listings with priority for veterans.

For Rick Buckman, Mendocino County Veterans Services Officer, the job shop produced an especially favorable outcome. A student attending college under the GI Bill stopped by the Veterans Services booth, where Buckman interviewed and hired the student on the spot for a work-study position with the Veterans Services office.



Mark Molina, Vercinia Gunn, Rick Buckman, and Lorraine Perry discuss jobs for veterans during the job shop for veterans at the Mendocino Works Employment Resource Center.

## One-Stop Career Centers at Center of National "Hire Vets First" Media Campaign

The President's National Hire Veterans Committee and the federal Department of Labor initiated a national media campaign on October 1 to promote the National Hire Vets First Initiative and to encourage employers to hire veterans. One-Stop Career Centers were promoted during the campaign, which ran through November 11, as the location for businesses to receive assistance in recruiting and connecting to veterans.

In Mendocino County, the One-Stop Career Centers, known as Mendocino Works Employment Resource Centers, are available in six locations. Employers and veterans are encouraged to contact the Centers for services.

Center locations and phone numbers are: 631 S. Orchard Ave., Ukiah, 468-1196; 221 S. Lenore St., Willits, 446-3760; 310 E. Redwood Ave., Fort Bragg, 964-6950; 255 Main St., #2, Point Arena, 882-1615; 44400 Willis Ave., Laytonville, 984-8704; and 76405 Covelo Road #3, Covelo, 983-0070. The MWERC website is [www.mendocinoworks.org](http://www.mendocinoworks.org).

# Mendocino County Board of Supervisors Issues Proclamation in Recognition of National Hire Vets First Campaign

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors issued a proclamation on October 19, 2004, in recognition of the Hire Vets First Campaign. First District Supervisor Michael Delbar presented the proclamation to Lorraine Perry, Veterans Workforce Specialist for the Ukiah Employment Development Department.



Supervisor Michael Delbar presents Hire Vets First Campaign proclamation to Lorraine Perry, EDD Veterans Workforce Specialist

Also attending the ceremony were representatives from the Mendocino County Workforce Investment Board, Mendocino Private Industry Council, and the Mendocino County Veterans Services Office. Perry introduced Vercinia Gunn, a local veteran and job seeker, to the Board.

The proclamation reads as follows:

*“Whereas, the President has proclaimed a national Hire Vets First Campaign for October 1<sup>st</sup> through November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2004; and Whereas, Mendocino Works One-Stop Career Centers are the locations where businesses can go to receive assistance in recruiting and connecting to veterans; and*

*Whereas, The people of our community have great appreciation and admiration for the many local men and women who served their county in the armed forces to protect and preserve the freedoms enjoyed by our community and by all Americans; and*

*Whereas, Veterans possess a wide variety of valuable job qualifications and skills, including experience, maturity, leadership, and loyalty, that make them ideal candidates for employment; and*

*Whereas, Local Veterans Workforce Specialists and other Employment Development Department staff are committed to ensuring that veterans receive the services and programs to which they are entitled, and to promoting employer interest in hiring veterans.*

*Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Mendocino, hereby proclaims October 1<sup>st</sup> through November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2004, as Hire Vets First Campaign.”*

## Mendocino County Veterans Service Office Program Offers Work Experience

Veterans and dependents in college degree, vocational or professional programs may “earn while they learn” under the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) work-study program. The Mendocino County Veterans Service Office (MCVSO) is an official work site for participants in the work-study program. An advocate for the veteran community regarding entitlement to federal, state, and local benefit programs, MCVSO also provides daily transportation to the San Francisco VA Medical Center.

The work-study program is open to all veterans enrolled for at least three-quarters time under the GI Bill or Vocational Rehabilitation Program. Spouses and dependents enrolled for at least three-quarters time under the Dependents Educational Assistance program are also eligible to participate in the program.

On average, 12 to 15 students participate each year at the MCVSO work sites in Fort Bragg and Ukiah, but there is no restriction to the number of work-study positions at MCVSO.

“We utilize as many students as possible. Our only objective in hiring veterans for this program is to help them defray the cost of

their schooling,” says Rick Buckman, Veteran Services Officer. He adds, “Some participate for one semester and some have stayed for the entire time that they are in college.”

Individual student interests are matched with the availability of work opportunities. All services performed under the VA work-study program must be VA-related. Two examples of services performed by students are the processing of VA paperwork and outreach services under the supervision of a MCVSO employee.

Work-study students at MCVSO are paid at the minimum wage rate of \$6.75 per hour for a maximum of 25 hours per week during the semester. The payments to students are considered a grant, rather than a wage, under the GI Bill program and are not taxed. The Federal Workers’ Compensation Program covers the students for any workplace accidents.

Eligible veterans and dependents interested in participating in the work-study program with MCVSO may apply in person at the Ukiah office at 747 S. State Street, or may call 463-4226.

## Coordinator’s Corner

Colleen Henderson, WIA Coordinator



When President Clinton signed the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 into law, it capped a seven-year bipartisan effort to consolidate and streamline employment and training programs throughout the nation. The Act set forth the framework for a new Workforce Investment System charged with increasing the employment, retention, and earnings of participants, increasing participants’ occupational skills, and, as a result, improving the quality of the workforce, reducing welfare dependency, and enhancing the nation’s productivity and competitiveness.

Mendocino County Workforce Investment Board –the WIB– is appointed by the Board of Supervisors to oversee the operation of local WIA programs. The WIB also oversees the workforce

development system whose partners provide services through the six Mendocino Works Employment Resource Centers located throughout the county. Services are directed at building a skills-based, knowledgeable workforce to enhance business value, potential and competitiveness. Members of the WIB represent agencies that provide workforce services, as well as representatives of the business community, the ultimate beneficiary of a strong workforce.

WIB meetings are held on the second Wednesday of August, October, December, February, April and June. Three standing committees, Executive, Oversight, and the Youth Council, also meet regularly. Current WIB officers are Chair Marty Lombardi, First Vice-Chair Lee Kraemer, and Members-at-Large Alison Glassey and Meredith Randall. Staff to the WIB is housed within the Mendocino County Department of Social Services.

Present WIB initiatives include continuation of healthcare training programs and advocacy for technical education.

## Local Employer Spotlight: The Home Depot Recruits Military Job Seekers

Retired Navy Lieutenant Randy Taylor is a top sales producer in the Millwork Department at The Home Depot® in Ukiah. He also enthusiastically “sells” the benefits of being a Home Depot Associate. When Taylor speaks of his job as a Millwork Specialist, he says, “I love it. I look forward to going to work every day. It’s not just a job, it’s an adventure.” Associate of the Month for August, Taylor finds the “consistency” and the “camaraderie” of the workplace similar to what he most enjoyed about his 25 years in the military. As a disabled veteran, he considers his employer to be especially accommodating to his needs.

Kevin King is an active duty Marine Corps Reserves Sergeant. When Home Depot hired King in April, his leadership skills developed over 6 years of military service were immediately evident, and he was made Department Head of Lumber. Now as the Department Head of the Pro Desk and contractor sales, King recognizes that the military experience of leading a wide variety of people translates into valuable skills for his current position. Like Taylor, King appreciates the structure of his work environment. “I like the structure, I like that there are 100 different jobs being done by 100 different people, all working together.” King was called back for a year of active duty for Operation Iraqi Freedom beginning in November. The Home Depot has extended and enhanced leave of absence benefits for active duty associates, which means King has a job when he returns.

The Home Depot launched Operation Career Front in September 2004. This major hiring initiative, in collaboration with the U.S. Departments of Defense, Labor, and Veterans Affairs, links military personnel and their spouses to career opportunities with the world’s largest home improvement retailer. With a history of supporting military efforts and recruiting veterans for jobs, The Home Depot hired almost 10,000 veterans in 2003 and expects to exceed that number in 2004.



Home Depot Associates, Randy Taylor, Melissa Randall, and Kevin King

Taylor and King are among the 20 percent of the Ukiah Home Depot associates affiliated with the military as either veterans, National Guard and Reservists, separating and retiring service members, or military spouses.

“The U.S. military community offers The Home Depot a talent pool of highly skilled individuals who have unique knowledge and character from their military experience, making them ideal candidates for our national hiring initiative,” says Bob Nardelli, chairman, president and CEO of Home Depot. “We view our support of the military as our responsibility to our country and a valuable investment in our company’s future. In short, it is good for America, and it is good for our business.”

Melissa Randall, Human Resource Manager for The Home Depot in Ukiah says, “We’re looking for people willing to go the extra mile.” She is impressed with the experience that veterans bring to their jobs.

Military job seekers can apply to The Home Depot online at [www.careers.homedepot.com/military](http://www.careers.homedepot.com/military) or at the in-store kiosk that provides computer access to applications. Information is also available through the One-Stop Career Centers, Military Transition Assistance and Family Centers, the U.S. Department of Defense, and Marines for Life alumni hometown links.

## EDD Gives Priority to Veterans Through Employment Assistance Program

For the California Employment Development Department (EDD), compensation to military veterans takes the form of a priority in receiving EDD services. Veterans receive top-priority in job referrals, referrals to training, and the provision of other employment-related services. Disabled veterans receive top priority in all employment services.

Two Veterans Workforce Specialists (VWS) trained in veterans’ employment issues are available at the Ukiah and Fort Bragg Mendocino Works Resource Centers to assist Mendocino County veterans. Lorraine Perry, VWS for the inland area, and Mark Molina, who represents veterans on the coast, provide case management services for individual veterans and education about the services to veterans, employers, and the general community.

Case management services include individual assistance with applications, job interviews, vocational guidance, referrals to other programs and community services, and contacts with employers. During specialized workshops, veterans learn how to use the Resource Centers, research labor market information, match skills with job descriptions, write résumés and cover letters, and refine interviewing techniques.

Perry and Molina also promote program services to community organizations and introduce employers to individual veterans for potential job connections.

Emphasizing the unique set of attributes that are developed in the military, Perry states, “Veterans are self-disciplined, devoted, persistent. They have a strong work ethic and know how to follow through. The military experience develops pride in one’s self.”

She also notes that many of the veterans who enroll in the EDD program have expertise in high demand job skills including building maintenance, equipment mechanics and operation, engineering, geospatial technology, and land surveying using AutoCAD. “They are pre-trained and experienced, with journey-level skills and master certificates,” says Perry.

For additional information about the services or about potential employees, contact Lorraine Perry at the Mendocino Works Resource Center, 631 S. Orchard Ave., Ukiah (phone: 707 463-4708) or Mark Molina at the Mendocino Works Resource Center, 310 East Redwood Ave., Fort Bragg (phone: 707 964-3295).



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### WIB ADMINISTRATION

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This is a quarterly publication for business leaders of Mendocino County. We invite comments and suggestions on this and future publications.

**Please let us know if you would prefer to receive this publication by email, or if you would prefer to not receive this publication.**

To contact us regarding this publication, please call (707) 467-5590 or send an email to [swain@mcdss.org](mailto:swain@mcdss.org).

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### *On the Web...Resources for the Veteran and the Employer*

**HireVetsFirst** – [www.hirevetsfirst.gov](http://www.hirevetsfirst.gov) - Employers can find qualified veterans and veterans have access to a national network of employment resources.

**The Department of Defense Job Search** – <http://dod.jobsearch.org/> - Includes a résumé writer to translate military experience into civilian/private sector language. Registered businesses search the database for veterans and post jobs.

**America's Job Bank** – [www.ajb.org](http://www.ajb.org) - A federally financed electronic labor exchange for job seekers and employers.

**Department of Veterans Affairs** – [http://www.va.gov/bln/vre/emp\\_resources.htm](http://www.va.gov/bln/vre/emp_resources.htm) - Information about incentives available to businesses that offer employment opportunities to disabled veterans.

**CalJOBS** – [www.caljobs.ca.gov](http://www.caljobs.ca.gov) - California's Internet system for linking employer job listings and job seeker résumés.

### *Popular Career Fields For Veterans*

Police Patrol Officers ~ Correction Officers and Jailers ~ Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs ~ Personnel, Training, and Labor Relations Managers ~ Administrative Services Managers ~ Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment ~ Computer Support Specialists ~ All Other Communications Equipment Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers ~ All Other Electrical and Electronic Equipment Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers ~ United States Marshals ~ Stock Clerks - Stockroom, Warehouse or Storage Yard ~ All Other Protective Service Workers ~ Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technicians and Technologists ~ Communications, Transportation, and Utilities Operations Managers ~ Aircraft Mechanics ~ Guards and Watch Guards ~ Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks ~ Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists ~ First-Line Supervisors and Managers/Supervisors - Clerical and Administrative Support Workers ~ Fish and Game Wardens

Source: Veterans Enterprise magazine, "Hiring the Veteran Means Hiring the Qualified," Summer 2001 Issue, [www.veteransenterprise.com](http://www.veteransenterprise.com)

### Workforce Investment Board Members

**Darline Bergere**, Insurance Broker, Retired

**Patty Bruder**, Owner, Strong Mountain, Inc./ Community Service Director, North Coast Opportunities

**Michael Delbar**, Member, Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

**Alison Glassey**, Director, Mendocino County Department of Social Services

**Monte Hill**, Financial Consultant, A.G. Edwards & Sons

**Madelin Holtkamp**, Executive Director, Economic Development and Financing Corporation

**Bob Jordan**, Regional Manager, United Way of Sonoma-Mendocino-Lake Counties

**Leland Kraemer**, Broker, Leland Kraemer Real Estate

**Martin Lombardi**, Senior Vice President, Savings Bank of Mendocino County

**Richard Mack**, Owner/Operator, S.T.E. P! Recyclers

**Cindy Miller**, Executive Director, Mendocino Private Industry Council

**Sanford Nabahe**, Program Manager, California Indian Manpower Consortium

**Stephen O'Mara**, Business Development Director, West Company

**Victoria Patterson**, Owner/Victoria Patterson Consulting / Executive Director, Nuestra Casa

**Rachel Peugh**, Owner, LINK Business & Personnel Services

**Rick Radcliffe**, Organized Labor Representative, Carpenters Union Local 751

**Meridith Randall**, Dean of Instruction, Mendocino College

**George Rau**, President/CEO, Rau and Associates

**Brent Rutherford**, Employment Programs Manager, Employment Development Department, Ukiah/Fort Bragg Offices

**Lin Park**, Senior Rehabilitation Counselor, California Department of Rehabilitation

**Janis Tappin**, Owner/Administrator, Personal Management Services

**Chuck Whitlock**, Owner/Operator, Coast Rents

**Cindy Wysong-Brown**, Director of Human Resources, Ukiah Valley Medical Center