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Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County Invests \$200,000 to Provide Employment Services to Individuals Experiencing Homelessness in Porterville.

Bridges to Employment and Careers will provide 16 residents with job readiness skills and work-based training opportunities with the City of Porterville.

[Visalia, California] The Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County (WIB) is investing \$100,324 in grant funding from the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) through the Workforce Accelerator Fund (WAF) with an additional \$100,000 in local matching funds to implement the Bridges to Employment and Careers (BEC) program in the City of Porterville. WAF supports innovative solutions that accelerate quality employment outcomes for low-income and disadvantaged populations that have the potential for system-wide scale. The Bridges to Employment and Careers takes a regional approach to bring employment services together with mission-driven community-based organizations (CBOs) and the City of Porterville. This project will “bridge” workforce programs with homeless services to help individuals obtain quality jobs and stable housing.

The BEC program is an integrated team effort involving multiple organizations whose mission is to support individuals experiencing homelessness, including Kings View, Porterville Family Crisis Center, Kings Tulare Homeless Alliance, Local Initiative Navigation Center, Turning Point of Central California, Porterville Chamber of Commerce, City of Porterville, and CSET.

The project will support sixteen individuals with job readiness support services. Thirteen of those individuals will receive work-based training through a partnership with the City of Porterville Parks and Leisure Service and Public Works Departments. City staff will supervise, train, and mentor the participants. After receiving training, the goal is for at least 10 of these individuals to obtain unsubsidized employment and reach a level of self-sufficiency, allowing them to get housing and other basic needs on their own. The WIB will be responsible for overseeing BEC and the associated funding.

“One key aspect of this project is that job readiness support services will be integrated into an existing network of services provided to individuals experiencing homelessness in Porterville. The success of these individuals will dramatically increase because of the collaboration of so many local partners,” stated Adam Peck, Executive Director of the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County.

Beyond funding for work-based training, the grant funds will support a Project Coordinator from the Porterville Employment Connection to work with partner agencies involved in the Local Initiative Navigation Center (LINC) committee to include employment services into the existing integrated services available to Porterville residents. In addition to meeting with LINC committee partners at the Porterville



Navigation Center to share resources and develop plans for wrap-around services for individuals experiencing homelessness, the BEC Project Coordinator will also provide case management services for the program participants.

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Bridges to Employment and Careers is part of the California Workforce Development Board's Workforce Accelerator Fund. The fund's goal is to impact economic and racial equity by creating pathways to good quality jobs for workers from disadvantaged or low-income communities, ultimately bringing successful strategies to scale and embedding them into the workforce system. For more information about the Bridges to Employment and Careers program, contact Nicola Wissler at the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County at (559) 713-5208 or nlwissler@tularewib.org.

This project is funded by the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County, an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Bridges to Employment and Careers is 50% funded by the California Workforce Development Board as part of an award totaling \$100,324 and 50% funded from non-federal funding sources.