

The Folsom Telegraph

Job fair was deemed a success for Folsom Women's Correctional Facility

By Laura Newell, Reporter

FOLSOM, CA - Offenders within the walls of the new Folsom Women's Facility recently received work and training opportunities to help lead them to productive lives after prison.

The California Prison Industry Authority co-hosted a job fair with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) at the new Folsom Women's Facility on Tuesday, March 5, to fill diverse work assignments at five local sites in areas such as accounting, business services, customer service, marketing, facility maintenance, warehousing and more.

The California Prison Industry Authority is expanding its Career Technical Education pre-apprenticeship carpentry, iron working and construction labor certification programs to include female offenders from the new women's facility, said Eric Reslock, chief external affairs for California Prison Industry Authority.

"It was a very successful event and the offenders were clearly excited about our programming," Reslock said. "We have the lowest recidivism rate of any program in CDCR and they definitely want to stay out of prison. We interviewed about 70 offenders to start and we will continue interviewing them as we bring up our capacity to over 200 workers and trainees from the women's facility."

The prison industry authority will also provide the women with a valid California identification upon parole. The California ID Project began in 2010 as a collaborative pilot project between prison industry authority, the Department of Motor Vehicles and CDCR, Reslock said.

To increase the chance of employment after release, all California Prison Industry Authority offender participants have opportunities to achieve high-demand industry skill accreditations under the Inmate Employability Program, such as certified electronics technician, customer service specialist, air conditioning service and installation, among others. Additionally, all California Prison Industry Authority offenders are required to obtain a high school diploma or complete a GED within two years of beginning the programming, Reslock said.



Folsom Women's Facility Associate Warden Robin Harrington assists offenders at the job fair.

According to California Prison Industry Authority's 2013 Report to the Legislature, offenders who participate in prison industry authority enterprises are 26 to 38 percent less likely to return to prison than general population offenders.

Offenders who participate in Career Technical Education programs have a three-year recidivism rate of less than 15 percent, Reslock said.

Graduates of the carpentry program, have a cumulative recidivism rate of just 7.6 percent, according to a 2012 Prison Industry Board Report.

California Prison Industry Authority anticipates expanding their training to include computer programming, and their enterprises at Folsom State Prison to include e-recycling to increase the female offender workforce to more than 200 participants, Reslock said.

The California Prison Industry Authority is a self-financed state entity that provides training and productive work assignments for approximately 7,000 offenders in 24 CDCR institutions in California.