

In early October, PacMtn leadership staff and board member Christina Riley met with **Local Labor Leader Meeting** to discuss expanding and strengthening our partnership. The group focused on expanding access to apprenticeship, key initiatives related Economic Security for All (EcSA) and providing input for PacMtn local plan development. The Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE population) was discussed at length. Local Workforce Development Boards across the state received state funding to target this group also known as the “working poor” to develop strategies to address the alarming growth in the numbers of households that fall into the category across the state. Despite the fact that these individuals are employed, their household income is not adequate to meet their basic needs, let alone allow them to thrive and build resiliency. Labor Leaders recognize this as a core issue for workers and share support for expanding access to apprenticeship to help move this group into self-sufficiency. Apprenticeship is the gold standard for this type of economic mobility. PacMtn, with continued support from our labor board members will continue the conversation as we develop and build strategies.

PacMtn welcomes **Marco Hernandez** to the team. Marco joins our Quality Assurance team and will focus on supporting our contracted partners with technical assistance, monitoring and policy. He brings a wealth of experience in WIOA related QA work, tribal relations, and contractor support. He is already making an impact and is taking a lead on policy communications and contractor engagement. Welcome Marco!

Building on last year’s success, Thurston County Chamber of Commerce expanded their **Future of Work Summit and Expo** to encompass all 5 counties in the PacMtn region. The summit provides area employers an opportunity to learn about key strategies used to develop a talent pipeline. Highlighted in the breakout sessions were discussions related to developing work experience opportunities such as internships and apprenticeships, and information on support system with educators and the public workforce system. Students and educators in attendance got an inside view of the region’s businesses who are actively looking for ways to build relationships within their local schools. As the presenting sponsor, PacMtn supported the keynote speaker – Donny Jones of Alabama Works!, who shared insights on their success of connecting disadvantaged talent to opportunities in their communities. Their workforce development model is viewed as a “Best Practice” and has influence PacMtn’s “Good Jobs initiative”.

PacMtn was excited to attend The **“Bioeconomy Conference”** held earlier this month at Centralia College. The conference focused on Lewis County and Washington State’s potential related to a nature resource-based economy and energy generation through biomass. Presented by the Renewables Task Force, an ad-hoc committee supported by the Economic Alliance of Lewis County and co-hosted with the University of Washington, the conference presented the broad range of uses of biomass. Defined as “plant materials and animal waste used especially as a source of fuel”, this readily available regional material could prove to be a catalyst for growth in the region. PacMtn will continue to engage the County and regions progress in this sector and will look to impacted communities to inform how best the public workforce system can support their efforts.

PacMtn's Community Service and Team Building Day

As part of PacMtn's Benefit Package, employees receive 8 hours of paid Community Service time that is used for volunteering at non-profit organizations, public agencies or union activities. This year, we took a team approach to this and supported our local [Senior Services for South Sound](#). Team members were able to assist with their [Meals on Wheels](#) program and with serving meals thorough their [Community Dining](#) Program. To end the day, we had a PacMtn Team Building activity. We supported a local business and unleashed our artistic talents at [Painted Plate Olympia](#).

