

March 13, 2006

Message From the Chair Emeritus—Dick Johanson (Picture)

Last week many of us were privileged to hear an address by California State Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing, Sunne Wright McPeak. Ms. McPeak's remarks to her audience of Business Executives stressed that we are at a "Tipping Point" in creating a new era for this region after years of being short changed by our elected and bureaucratic officials in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. As this transformation comes about it will be because the private sector (that's us) got off of our duffs and became involved in critical decision making and following through with action. The speaker was adamant in emphasizing that there is no substitute for business-based participation in creating effective public policy. Business leadership is fundamental to our economic and social well being. You had only to listen to this inspiring address to validate your investment in the Fresno Business Council. The "Tipping Point" is today. Bring on tomorrow!

Stewardship Rising—Building Social Capital in the Schools

Last Friday, the Civic Education Network for Region 7 (www.civednet7.org), plus a host of other organizations, sponsored a Civic Education-Service Learning Forum at Fresno State. While there are many strategies in play to build a sense of personal responsibility for community—civic education, character education and service-learning—it became clear at the forum that to be effective these strategies must be integrated into the regular curriculum, not just an add on or extra curricular activity. We have all experienced the fragmentation of the American agenda and how it has prevented local communities and the state and federal government from successfully addressing even the most urgent problems. As the schools find ways to implement their civic mission, our community has found a way to engage adults by building a civic sector with a new contract for behavior...the Community Values. The first value, Stewardship challenges everyone regardless of position to work together to achieve the greatest, long-term benefit for the community as a whole. And, the second value, Boundary Crossing & Collaboration talks about how—"We are willing to cross political, social, ethnic and economic boundaries and partner with others to achieve community outcomes."

Insuring Process Leads to Desired Results Not Mediocrity or Stalemate

"Public involvement, done well, leads to better outcomes, improved relationships and stronger communities." When done poorly, it may "create more frustration and conflict than before." In order to build policy making skills in Fresno, the Division of Continuing and Global Education at CSUF has developed a new class "Collaborative Policy Making and Public Involvement" in partnership with the Center for Collaborative Policy at California State University, Sacramento. The class is two days, April 26 and 27 and will be offered at the University Business Center at CSUF. For more information call 278-0333 or go to www.csufresno.edu/ExtendedEd. Whether its air quality, water, education or transportation, it is unacceptable to settle for piecemeal, short-term outcomes. We need strategic, comprehensive solutions and sustainable approaches. New times demand new skills. Other timely classes coming up include: The General Plan and Long Range Planning, Land Use Controls, and primers on The Brown Act and CEQA.

CSUF Preparing Students for the Workforce

It often takes someone from the outside to help us see ourselves clearly. The Business School at Fresno State has won awards in a number of areas. Here is a hands on example of why. Nestles in Springville, Utah was in the process of hiring staff in HR and management. After the second round of interviews, managers came into the recruiter's office to ask where the students came from because they had never seen such well prepared, polished business students. The incredible work ethic they demonstrated was something they had not seen at many other schools. The answer...Fresno State. As a result, Nestles is now committed to continuing to recruit from our business school for positions in HR and operations and for summer internships with Nestles across the nation.

Upcoming Meetings and Activities

Tuesday, March 24 from 5:30 to 8:30 InForum—Veteran's Memorial Auditorium

Wednesday, March 29 from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m.--FBC Spring Membership Meeting--Kaiser