

July 31, 2006

**Message From the Chair Emeritus—Dick Johanson**

Nothing is more basic to the success of an organization than a healthy work force. Businesses, particularly, cannot be healthy without healthy workers. Because of our oftentimes unhealthy air quality this region needs to be especially involved in the health and wellness of all who are among us. A recent report showed that Fresno County spends approximately \$2 Billion dollars annually on the treatment of chronic diseases which results in absenteeism and reduced productivity. To counteract this drain on our resources, an organization named HealthyFresno has announced a program to help employers better control health care costs through an effective prevention program. It is not the purpose of this Bulletin to advocate a particular program but it should be our purpose to bring attention to the benefits to be derived from focusing on health care issues such as smoking cessation, fitness incentives, health screenings, diabetes, and high cholesterol. As we say in our world, the investment is cost effective. For more take a look at [www.HealtyhyFresno.org](http://www.HealtyhyFresno.org)

**If You Can, Just Do It—HealthyLiving In the Workplace**

“It’s not my job, parents should be doing this, and it’s a personal responsibility” are often the reasons why many of us believe the level of health and wellbeing in our community is not a shared responsibility. Responsibility has more to do with capacity, while its fraternal twin, accountability, has to do with taking action where one has responsibility. Since employers benefit greatly when their workers are healthy, more and more are stepping up to support healthy lifestyles through specific actions. Last week, a new initiative called HealthyFresno had its public launch. Founding partners range from business groups, organizations serving children, nonprofits and the cities of Clovis and Fresno. Like so many other cultural norms, we are all impacted by those around us. Where once those committed to healthy foods and exercise were called “health nuts”, today these people are called role models. Having access to the tools and learning the skills of self care—preventive health care, exercise, healthy foods, managing stress, setting boundaries—will help prevent individual suffering and curtail health costs. Diabetes, obesity, depression and addiction all have lifestyle components. Let’s change our culture together. Thanks to Julie Griffiths, who picked up this opportunity for our community and ran with it.

**Regional Jobs Initiative—Measurable Outcomes to Date—Highlights**

When you are actively engaged in something, it is easy to feel the momentum. If you are not directly involved, then visible, measurable outcomes tell the story. Recently, Ashley Swearengin, the Chief Operating Officer of the of the RJI, provided a quarterly report for the Economic Development Corporation. Major accomplishments include:

- Organized 10 industry clusters involving 600 businesses
- Steps toward establishing an Advanced Manufacturing Center at Fresno State
- Completion of a Clean Energy Roadmap for the Fresno Area.
- Attraction a 250 employee call center to the area (Special thanks to Cynthia Downing)
- White paper on process water treatment issues facing the City of Fresno with specific recommendations.
- Region-wide plan to increase nursing education.
- First ever international water technology conference in the works for April 2007.
- DVD to promote tourism. New staff position to increase and leverage opportunities.
- The newest cluster, software development, has a website, is launching an internship program and creating support systems to launch more software companies.
- Advocacy for Highway 99 yielded a \$6 billion Caltrans plan to reach interstate standards.
- Creation of the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley—initial recommendations include:
  1. Create a regional financing authority for water and sewer infrastructure.
  2. Establish a region-wide incentive zone to improve Valley businesses.
  3. Locate a UC medical school in the region.
  4. Enact a comprehensive plan to improve air quality.
- Improve the Region’s Technical & R & D Capacity through Fresno State

- Working with WIB secured earmark to do real-time occupational analyses
- Release of the community report card, the sequel to the New Valley Times generated by the CRI
- Release of annual report online at [www.FresnoRJI.org](http://www.FresnoRJI.org)