

May 1, 2006

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

The little yellow bird that sits on my shoulder whispered to me the other day and asked: “what’s the most important word in anyone’s language?” After a lot of thought I think I have the answer. It is TRUST. Whether it is faith, family, friends, or our “work-a-day world” relationships, everything eventually succeeds or fails based upon trust or lack thereof. The success of the Business Council through its many spin offs and alliances confirms this. Our ability to discuss personal matters with those close to us confirms this. Our loving relationship with our children and grandchildren confirms this. I can hardly wait to hear what my little canary has to say next. I’ll let you know. Trust me!

**Big Changes Underway at Central Valley Business Incubator**

In the 1996, the Central Valley Business Incubator (CVBI) began with the belief that creating and expanding our own were important building blocks of a prosperous community. The Fresno Business Council and Fresno State teamed up to take this belief and build form and functions around it. Much of the funding was secured through the Workforce Investment Board. The results so far: 1174 new jobs, \$12,507,800 in new capital and nearly 3,000 entrepreneurs have taken advantage of the workshops and coaching.

In a bold next step, a state-of-of-the art water technology and clean energy incubator (RJI cluster) is under construction at Fresno State. CVBI will continue to operate its mixed-use incubator. CVBI is also expanding its services to support the venture funds now available in the Valley with supplemental assistance to emerging businesses. CVBI intends to support its replication in other Valley communities. The fundamental goal is the creation of good jobs in the region through fostering business creation and expansion. Entrepreneurship is economic development.

CVBI is searching for a new CEO to bring the vision of a regionalized, sustainable, highly effective tool for economic development to fruition. Qualifications include business, social, and political savvy as evidenced by an entrepreneurial track record. Our economy and community are dynamic...this is an extraordinary opportunity for the right leader. If interested send your resume & three professional references to Riley Water, 7110 N. Fresno Street, Ste. 400, Fresno 93720 by May 22. By email send to [rwalter@walterlawgroup.com](mailto:rwalter@walterlawgroup.com). Check out CVBI at [www.cvbi.org](http://www.cvbi.org).

Don’t miss the CVBI Open House—Tuesday, May 9 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.—2555 Clovis Avenue

**FBC Plans Candidate Forum for Sheriff’s Race—Tuesday, May 9 at 7:30 a.m. at UBC**

There are five candidates in the race for sheriff making the primary a critical step. This could well be a multiple decade decision for our community. The sheriff, unlike most elected officials, is not simply a policy maker. This is a chief executive officer position requiring both leadership and management skills. Like every other profession, law enforcement has changed due technology and the need to collaborate across old boundaries. The sheriff must be able to work with other local, state and federal law enforcement agencies and with a broad array of local organizations and institutions. The Regional Jobs Initiative was one of a number of recommendations in the Meeting The Challenge Report of the City of Fresno. The connection between crime and unemployment was clear and compelling. Only a safe community affords the quality of life knowledge workers seek and everyone deserves.

The connection to Choosing Our Future, the plan to transform Fresno Unified, is also clear. The path to crime, addiction and prison often begins when a child cannot read by third grade, lacks social skills, does not feel part of the community and lacks the belief that education is the path to a quality life.

The forum is open to the public. Thank you to the University Business Center at Fresno State for partnering with the Business Council on this event. Phoebe Wall Howard has agreed to moderate. The forum will be held On Tuesday, May 9 from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. Parking restrictions will be relaxed in the lot out front. Please RSVP if you plan to attend.