

October 22, 2007

Message From the Chair Emeritus—Richard Johanson

As you read this week's Bulletin, take time to contemplate upon how much is being accomplished because organizations and individuals of differing positions on substantive issues have been able to come together in a spirit of open-mindedness to arrive at mutually acceptable solutions. Note particularly the last two items regarding Career Education and addressing Youth Violence.

Everything we are trying to accomplish is being done to provide a better tomorrow for those who will follow us. Why is it then that the dedicated teachers of the fourth largest school district in California continue to allow their profession to be debased by those self-focused few who purport to be their leaders? Creating confrontation coupled with a blatantly false denial of responsibility continue to place the Fresno Teachers Union in a position of community isolation and disrespect. Eighty thousand kids deserve better than that.

RJI Continues to Build Momentum & Spark Additional Projects

Deloitte has been the host for many community initiatives including the RJI. Results are piling up in the various industry clusters, educational partners are aligning resources and increased funding has been secured from the state and federal governments. In addition to specific results, the RJI is about changing the way we conduct the community's business. Through shared strategies and goals, assets from every sector become available to achieve the impossible. Thirty-five people attended last week's bi-monthly meeting representing business, government, nonprofits, education (3 levels) and faith based. By creating a container to focus vast amounts of energy in one direction, the RJI has helped to transform economic development from a tangle of garden sprinklers into a fire hose.

Costco Opportunity For Vendors

The Manufacturing and Food Processing Clusters (thank you **Ray Dunn & Bill Smittcamp** for your leadership) are teaming up to offer an opportunity to vendors in our region to "show their stuff" to the buying team for Costco. This approach has been successful in other regions—a win/win for everyone. The date for the event will be February 7. To participate, there will be an application process. Merchandize managers will also be involved. If you would like more information, email **Manjit Muhar** at manjitm@csufresno.edu

Career Technical Education—Myths, Assumptions, A Path Forward

A new mantra in K-12 is career ready. When 92% of those starting in 9th grade don't make it through college and there are 1,000's of quality jobs going wanting for certified, technical and skilled workers, there is clearly a gap between concept and reality. Some of the barriers to change include a Byzantine credentialing process, the need for differentiated pay to create incentives and attract specialized teachers and a lack of multiple pathways for students that match their interests and aptitudes. The good news is people all levels of education recognize the challenge and employers from every sector are engaging to help meet it. While the primary focus remains on areas we can control locally, it is the legislature that is responsible for making sure investments support strategies that actually work in communities—vertical alignment.

Creating Safe Communities—The Challenge of Youth Violence

As a community, we are making a fundamental shift. Rather than focusing on symptoms, we are working together to drill into root causes. As the saying goes, if all you have is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail. By tapping into the rich knowledge of multiple disciplines and leveraging resources across sectors, we can create safe communities for everyone. **Fresno Citizens for Good Government** is hosting a forum on Thursday, November 1 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Saints Community Church of God & Christ. (3740 East Ashlan at Millbrook) The panel is

blend of knowledgeable activists including **Judge Denise Whitehead, Sergeant Brenda Trobaugh, & Maggie Navarro** from the Mayors Gang Prevention Initiative, **Melissa White, Dr. Mitzie Lowe, & Jesse Castro. Jane Middleton** and **Cedric Reese** will facilitate. Call **Mila Rianto** for questions at 244.2522. Be part of the solution—learn, invest & engage.