

### **Message From the Chair Emeritus—Richard Johanson**

Draw an X. Where the two lines come together is the focal point addressing the impact of the gang culture upon us. We offer congratulations to local law enforcement agencies for the support given them by **Governor Schwarzenegger** last week in an all out commitment to stop gang violence. Great strides are being made in the Fresno area thanks to the leadership of **Police Chief Jerry Dyer** and his police officers in cooperation with **Fresno County Sheriff Mims** and her department. Upcoming is the soon to be released *Human Investment Initiative*. Through this farsighted program, we shall increase our concentration on creating an environment for young people which will deflect the allure of gang membership. Ultimately, it will be when we focus equally upon the causes as well as the symptoms that gang culture will be overcome. We are approaching that intersection.

### **Fresno Unified On the Move**

While everyone wants quick fixes and easy answers, changing a school system designed for a former age is neither quick nor easy. Yet, we are already seeing signs of change in the abilities of children, the only change that really counts. Seven of some of the toughest schools are making progress and more importantly, building a foundation to accelerate. The basic strategy are focusing on English language arts and mathematics and making adjustments based on student outcomes and improving the culture by raising expectations for all students and adults. The schools include four middle schools, *Sequoia, Cooper, Terronez* and *Scandinavian* and three elementary schools, *Muir, Greenberg* and *Turner*. Fixing a specific problem is a management issue. Fixing a systemic problem is a leadership challenge. Kudos to those who have embraced the need for systemic change and are leading the transformation—**Mike Ribera, Julie Raely-Goorabian, Scott Lamm, Bryan Wells, Virginia Mendez-Buela, Katie Russell** and **Steve Gettman**.

### **Read The Bee & Other Sources To Get Inspired & Pick Up an Oar**

The Business Section last week carried a story about the **Creative Fresno's** report card detailing progress (or not) on the recommendations in their report, "*Making the Grass Greener: Recommendations to Attract, Retain, Develop & Support Knowledge Workers*" The story is important on many levels. First, it demonstrated that civic entrepreneurs--young professionals specifically-- care and are making a difference. Second, it highlighted the changes sparked due to terrific report issued by the **Creative Economy Council** and promoted by **Creative Fresno**. And, third, **The Bee**, a major thought leader in our community, is covering the work of civic entrepreneurs. Not all the grades were good, in fact, some were disappointing. Like all the other transformational work under way, we need champions to take the point who have the passion, expertise and commitment to outcomes necessary for execution. Check out both the original report and the report card at [www.creativefresno.org](http://www.creativefresno.org).

### **School/Business Partnerships—A Win/Win/Win Proposition**

Calling all business leaders! We are looking for businesses that want to have a substantial positive impact on their community. Today in our schools we are preparing the next generation of community and business leaders. We need businesses to consider adopting a school in a partnering relationship. Any size business can participate in a school partnership and the rewards to the school and the business are substantial. It is a chance to positively affect the lives of the youth of Fresno. You are invited to a reception at **McCormick Barstow, LLP** (5 River Park Place East - Across from Woodward Park in the Gottschalks Building) to provide you with an opportunity to learn more about these partnerships. The reception is being hosted by the Joint Task for School Business Partnerships, of which the Fresno Business Council is a member. There will be good food and information provided to you in equal measure. You do not have to make any commitment beyond giving us an hour or so of your time. The reception is on

Thursday September 27, 2007 at 4 PM. If you plan to attend or would like additional information please RSVP to **Mike Wilhelm** at 433-1300. (**Kudos to Mike Wilhelm & McCormick Barstow for your steadfast leadership in this arena!**)