

April 14, 2008

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

I was reminded once again last week about the privilege of being an American and living in an open, democratic society. At our Executive Committee meeting this week, we were presented with information on our cultural similarities and differences. All too often too many of us expect everyone to be a clone of a single cultural cookie cutter. We forget that cultural ancestry is steeped in tradition that has been carried into this land by those who have emigrated here since the formation of the United States of America. (Even Swedes brought some stuff, albeit not a heck of a lot!). Read again the inscription under our Statue of Liberty and be inspired.

**Developing Citizens, A Productive Workforce, A Great Community**

**Claude Laval** noted at a recent executive committee meeting that foreign visitors often ask, “What do Americans look like?” More and more being an American has more to do with how you think and behave than what you look like. The *Carnegie Foundation* recently issued a report challenging higher education to integrate disciplines, become more practical and relevant, and focus on developing citizens with both character and competence. “...students must learn to think, reason, interrogate and understand...act, do and perform..and live with integrity, civility and caring. In other words, who you are is as important as what you can do.

**Diversity As an Asset & Diversity as a Complex Challenge**

As we move forward on the Human Investment Initiative, we must keep in mind that every culture has unique perspectives, attitudes and practices. As an example of different points of view, note the contrasts between an Asian and Western lens as explained by Dr. Mai Van Trang:

**Asian**

We live in time.  
We are always at rest.  
We are passive.  
We like to contemplate.  
We accept the world as it is.  
We live in peace with nature.  
Religion is our first love.  
We delight to think about the meaning of life.  
We believe in the freedom of silence.  
Self-denial is a secret to our survival.  
We are taught to want less and less.  
We glorify austerity and renunciation.

**Western**

You live in space.  
You are always on the move.  
You are aggressive.  
You like to act.  
You try to change it according to your blueprint.  
You try to impose your will on her.  
Technology is your passion.  
You delight in physics.  
You believe in the freedom of speech.  
Self-assertiveness is the key to your success.  
You are urged to want more and more.  
You emphasize gracious living & enjoyment.

**Annual McLane Art Show & Gala—5:30 to 7:30 PM--5.15.08—McCormick Barstow**

An annual not to miss event is McLane High School celebration of student visual and performing arts. This event is one of many of the programs and projects the law firm of McCormick Barstow has developed for its partnership with McLane High School. [www.mccormickbarstow.com](http://www.mccormickbarstow.com).

**Wanted: Leaders for the Nonprofit Sector**

Every sector is looking at leadership gaps as the boomers begin to leave the stage. To avert a crisis in the nonprofits, the American Humanics Program at Fresno State and the Nonprofit Advance Center have scheduled an all day conference on May 2 at the University Business Center. Go to <http://www.fresnononprofits.com/page5.html> for more information. At 3:30 PM, Heather McLeod Grant, author of *Forces for Good: The Six Practices of High Impact Nonprofits*, will discuss the results of four years of researching thousands of nonprofits.