



## Great Valley Center Program Focused on Workforce Development

New Valley Connexions is a program of the Great Valley Center. Begun in 1998, New Valley Connexions (NVC) focuses on diversifying the economy of the Valley by providing information on new technology, clusters and communications infrastructure.

In every sector, technology and information systems are essential to operations. Global positioning systems steer tractors, distribution center inventories are monitored electronically and office workers telecommute from their homes. To ensure a competitive place in the 21st Century global economy, the Valley has to be strategic and make investments now.

One of the most important parts of any investment for prosperity is in infrastructure—partly wires and cables, hardware and software, but also human infrastructure; the workforce.

This issue of Insight focuses on creating a technically literate and prepared workforce. Supported by a grant from the Governor's Discretionary Fund of the Workforce Investment Act, this work gives specific recommendations to prepare the region for the new jobs being created in an increasingly technical world.

The NVC program has changed in the last 6 months. Carolyn Ratto, who has a strong background in local government and the private sector, has taken over as Program Manager, while Dr. Sheila Hurst is assuming new duties in project coordination for the Center. Orion Fulton, a recent graduate of the Great Valley Fellows Program, joins Daniel Roix, who has a background in computer engineering, to provide staff and logistic support to the program.

Wishing you a prosperous new year!

- Carol Whiteside, President  
Great Valley Center

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# Health Services as an Economic Engine

Health Services has the potential to be one of the largest sources of economic growth in the San Joaquin Valley.

With 85,000 employees, the Health Services industry trails only Government and Ag Services as the largest employer in the region, according to a recent report by New Valley Connexions. Employment in this sector grew almost twice as fast as non-farm employment and almost four times faster than farm employment from 1980 to 2002.

The report warns, however, unless the Valley can prepare more of its homegrown population for these jobs, the Health Services sector will have to either rely on imported talent or grow elsewhere, and employee shortages will remain a perennial problem.

There are already growing workforce shortages and constrained educational institutions unable to keep pace with student demand. Good jobs with career potential go unfilled, while unemployment rates remain unacceptably high and waiting lists for educational programs continue to grow.

Nationally, the shortage of Registered Nurses (RNs) is well documented; there are only 798 RNs per 100,000 people. In the San Joaquin Valley, the figure is 452 RNs per 100,000. With 3.5 million people living in the region, we are 11,421 RNs short of the national average.

“And [the RN shortage] is only one example,” says Kelly Morgan, President and CEO of Sierra View District Hospital in Porterville. “People are needed at many levels across many segments of the industry,” he says.

To fill positions, employers are forced to recruit talent from other regions, even though this practice often leads to higher turnover than with homegrown workers.

The report, *Good Medicine: Making Health Services an Economic Priority for the San Joaquin Valley*, explains while there have been local efforts to address the problem, there has not yet been a strong regional response.

Why?

As in many regions, Health Services is viewed as an

essential part of the region’s community infrastructure and quality of life rather than a significant contributor to the economic well-being of the people and communities. Thus, Health Services is perceived more as a social need than an economic priority for the region.

While healthcare access and cost are clearly important issues, so too are workforce shortages and economic impacts. And, the report argues, unlike many industries, Health Services offers an opportunity for significant job creation and economic prosperity; it can help stimulate spending in local economies and increase public revenues for local and state government.

Morgan believes people outside of healthcare need a clear understanding of the economic benefits. For example, using median salary data for RNs (\$55,000), Morgan estimates if

all 11,421 RN positions were filled, it would generate \$628 million in revenue and create \$189 million in income taxes at the 30% tax bracket. If the region can address the shortage, significant economic opportunities are possible.

Yet getting enough local students trained remains difficult.

Student demand for healthcare careers far outpaces the capacity of education and training programs to address it. Students see the opportunities, but have a hard time receiving training to access them.

In most cases, the budget constraints of educational institutions are so severe they prevent the expansion of training programs. Public institutions are funded by the state per full-time equivalent student (FTE), not by the cost of educating a student. Thus, programs with more expensive laboratories, equipment needs, instructor costs, and low faculty-student ratio requirements must compete for available funding with programs that can accommodate more students at lower costs. The

system constrains growth of higher-cost programs, even in the face of enormous employer needs and student career opportunities in a field such as Health Services.

What’s more, there is a relative shortage of instructors in key health fields and not enough clinical sites for student training.

New public facilities are needed to accommodate any sort of training services growth. Local governments can play a key role in helping build new facilities by including sites in their

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*Hiring 11,421 Registered Nurses (RNs) at the middle range \$55,000 salary generates over \$628 million in new payroll income for the Valley, and \$189 million in income taxes.*

*Meeting the 20-year need for 27,000 new RNs in the Valley generates \$1.5 billion in new salaries annually and \$449 million in taxes.*

**- Kelly Morgan,  
President and CEO  
Sierra View District  
Hospital**

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**See Health, Page 10**

# Federal, State Policies Could Do More to Improve Broadband Access in Rural California

Widespread access to high speed Internet along with computer literacy would make significant strides in addressing the persistently high unemployment of the San Joaquin Valley.

Over the past five years, New Valley Connexions has done extensive work in trying to encourage access to high speed Internet in the region, and has recently completed a study addressing telecommunications policy as it applies to the deployment of broadband (high-speed Internet) infrastructure.

The report, *Public Policy Roadmap for Improving Broadband Access*, explains federal and state definitions of rural are already limiting the deployment of broadband infrastructure, which will leave the region further behind as the world moves more towards an information-based economy.

Approximately 80% of the San Joaquin Valley is rural with low population densities. This is problematic for broadband expansion largely because population and demographics drive the market-based deployment of telecommunications infrastructure. Telecom infrastructure is deployed, operated and maintained by private Local Exchange Carriers (LECs), which require a certain volume of potential users in an area to create market demand that can provide an adequate return on investment.

Therefore, public policy can play a key role in ensuring

the deployment in rural areas that would otherwise be “high cost” to the LECs. To encourage LEC activities in these areas, agencies such as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) have programs to subsidize or reimburse LECs for rural services that otherwise would not be cost effective.

Oddly, most of the San Joaquin Valley is not eligible for these funds. Why? The region does not fit the federal definitions of the term “rural.”

The reason has a lot to do with the dispersion of a few heavily populated cities amidst large agricultural counties with low population densities. Between the population size of these urban centers and services they provide their counties, by almost any federal definition most of the region is not considered rural. And while the federal methodologies vary somewhat, the end result is the same: minimal federal support for deployment of high-speed Internet in the San Joaquin Valley.

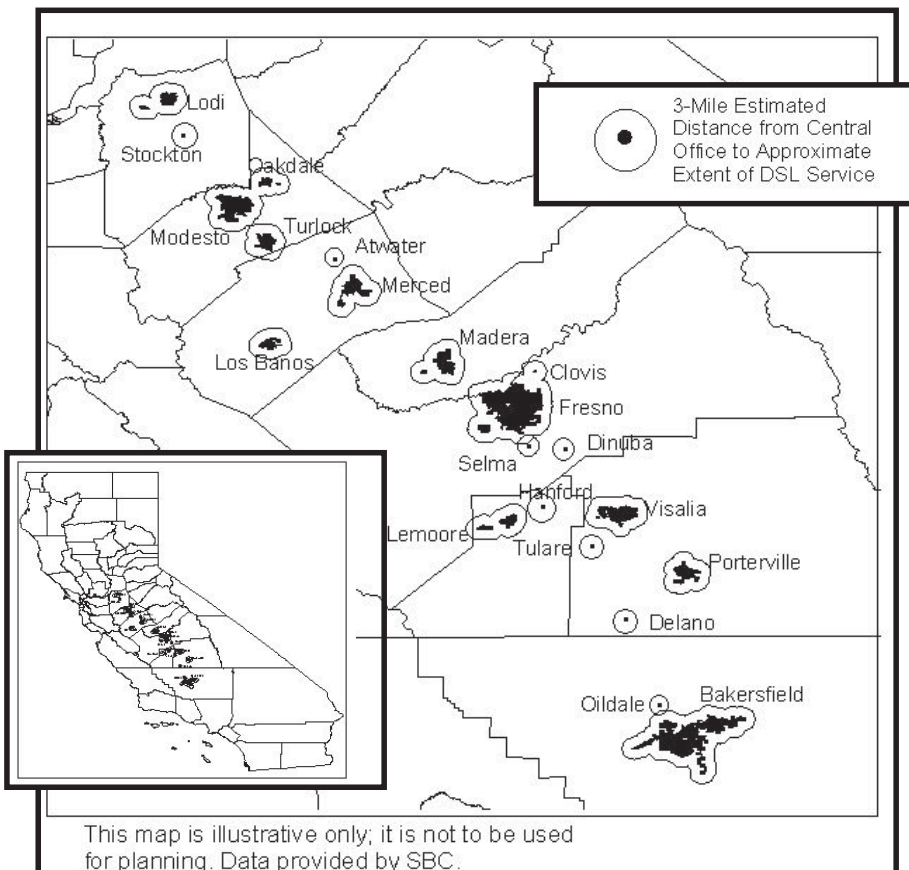
At the State level, the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) has opened Order Instituting Rulemaking (OIR) R0304003 to examine ways in which the state can further stimulate the investment in and deployment of advanced network technologies in all areas of the state. In this case, the mandating legislation conspicuously leaves out the term rural

from the list of areas of inquiry, which again translates into no assistance. Input by Valley leaders in the OIR process will help ensure rural deployment issues are addressed.

The report asks that telecommunications, particularly broadband, be thought of as infrastructure just like sewer, water and electricity. As such, local government representatives need to concern themselves with locating and mapping where new and existing infrastructure is deployed and upgraded in their area.

For example, city and county planning efforts (such as General Plan updates and Ordinances) could include a general inventory of local telecommunications infrastructure, making deployment and access (or lack thereof) measurable at the local level. Close communication with LECs would help achieve this.

Closed networks, both wired and wireless, of corporations, utilities, government, military and educational entities extend into rural areas, and could be leveraged to provide excess capacity to a wider set



**See Policy Roadmap on Page 11**

# Telework Programs Improve Productivity

Let employees work from home to increase productivity while improving air quality! While it may sound overly optimistic, programs in California's Great Valley are making this scenario a reality.

Telework, or telecommuting, allows employees to work outside their place of employment. Improvements in Internet speeds, computer software, and network technology have made connecting to the office from home and elsewhere easier and more secure than ever.

The concept of telework is not new to tech savvy businesses such as Hewlett-Packard, Intel, or Cisco Systems. However, you may be surprised to learn telework is also catching on with public entities, such as the State of California, Sacramento County, and CalPERS.

Here in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley, the City of Fresno is putting the final touches on a telework program. Kathleen Eckerson, a Management Analyst for the city, is helping put the program together as part of the city clean air strategy. She believes telework is an unexpected but effective way to address the region's need to reduce vehicle emissions.

Eckerson attended the NVC telework seminar series in June 2003 where she was able to gather enough information about telework to draft the documentation necessary to get the city program started.

"We put together a package in about two weeks because we really had access to what we needed and were inspired by the fact that the information was there the moment we needed it...[and this] set the standard for the rest of the clean air strategy," said Eckerson.

Telework in the United States has grown from 3.4 million people in 1990 to 28 million in 2001. A nationwide survey by the International Telework Association and Council (ITAC) in 2001 found 21.2% of the adult workforce over the age of 18 teleworked for a full day at least once a week from home, a telework center, or on the road.

Telework programs vary in scale. They can be as simple as allowing employees to work from home intermittently, or be as comprehensive as permitting work from home three-times a week. Regardless of size, successful telework programs have at least three things in common: (1) they are tailored to the needs of the organization, (2) they provide flexibility, and (3) they generally involve policies with the following elements:

- General policy statement with program definitions
- Program goals and objectives
- Explanation of the process for program participation
- Review of program benefits
- Identification of positions or aspects of positions appropriate or not appropriate for a telework arrangement
- Review of time, pay and attendance (core hours,

If 10% of the nation's workforce telecommuted one day a week, we would avoid the frustration of driving 24.4 million miles, we'd breathe air with 12,963 tons less air pollution and we'd conserve more than 1.2 million gallons of fuel each week.

- Carol Browner, former administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

days, duty station, leave, etc.)

- Assessment tool to determine potential for telework
- Sample agreement to be completed by the employee and supervisor
- Supervisory checklist
- Home safety checklist of logistical support items available, with necessary forms

Studies show the biggest barrier to telework is a management belief employees will not work unless they are supervised in person. The solution is to design a telework program that identifies the most appropriate jobs and individuals for telework, and provides training for teleworkers and managers. Established formulas allow employers to calculate the financial benefits of a telework program in terms of increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, and reduced office and parking space requirements.

Businesses and government agencies have found telework can, beyond trip reduction, help them recruit top talent, retain experienced workers, increase productivity, and conserve office space. The State of California's telework program experienced productivity gains of 10% to 30%, which is not unusual for well-designed programs.

The spread of telework programs in the San Joaquin Valley can make the region's employers more attractive to skilled workers, help make operations more efficient, and contribute to improving air quality for all. The following recommendations can encourage telework:

- Provide the media with stories that help destroy the myths about telework, and encourage people to learn more about the advantages
- Consider telework as one cornerstone in the battle for better air quality
- Explain the process for program participation to employees
- Promote the quality of life benefits to community and family life that can be realized through even part-time telework opportunities
- Use telework to provide jobs for people who have mobility challenges that might prevent them from traveling on a daily basis

Like Fresno, local governments can take a leadership role in making telework a regional strategy for improving the economy and quality of life here in the San Joaquin Valley.

Visit [www.greatvalley.org/nvc](http://www.greatvalley.org/nvc) for more information about starting a telework program.




## Business Leaders Gather to Share Telework Best Practices and Lessons Learned

(Article used with permission from GETF)

Washington, DC—Senior executives from nine leading companies gathered for the ecommute Program Business Roundtable in Washington, DC on December 4th to discuss their experiences related to offering employees telework options and the potential for expanding the practice within their own companies and among other businesses across the United States. The Global Environment & Technology Foundation (GETF) recently assumed administration of the ecommute Program, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) study supported by Congressman Frank Wolf of Virginia.

Through the development of pilot programs in five cities (Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and the Washington, DC metro area), this study specifically looks at the role of incentives, including potential air emissions trading programs, for increasing business participation in telework programs. The ecommute Program will culminate with a final report that U.S. EPA will present to Congress in the fall of 2004. For more information please visit <http://www.ecommute.net>.

One participant, Tim Perez of Siemens said, “This roundtable is further proof that teleworking is moving beyond the mere proposal phase into the mainstream for businesses seeking competitive advantages in this technology-enabled economy.”

The input provided by companies during the ecommute Program Business Roundtable will be an important part of the final report to Congress. For more information about the meeting and the ecommute Program, please contact Anna Garcia, GETF’s ecommute Program Director, at 703.379.2713. 

## New Technology Can Boost Valley’s Quality of Life

Making more homes energy efficient with high-speed Internet access can improve the region’s economy and quality of life.

The use of new technologies in the Great Central Valley can build healthier communities and add value to the building industry, notes a new report by New Valley Connexions.

The Valley is experiencing rapid population growth, with 10 million people forecast to join the current base of 3.5 million by 2040. The continued strength of the construction industry has created a rare opportunity to develop a large portion of the Valley’s buildings in ways that are highly energy efficient, cost less to operate, and have high-speed network connections (i.e. broadband) that reduce the need for people to physically travel to meetings, classes, work, and events.

Residents of the San Joaquin Valley currently use 33% more electricity per capita than the average Californian. Moreover, we find ourselves searching for solutions to the region’s air quality crisis. New energy-efficient and broadband technologies can improve the structures we live and work in, while reducing costs and conserving resources.

The San Joaquin Valley’s air quality may soon be declared an “extreme” non-attainment zone by the Environmental Protection Agency. Cost-effective technologies that reduce energy consumption, conserve natural resources, and encourage telecommuting can improve air quality and spare the home building industry from a drastic transition to more expensive building practices.

The report, *Job Creation: Enhancing Opportunities with New Technologies*, illustrates how consumers across the nation are demanding more energy efficient features in their homes.

**See Builders, Page 8**

## Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Contact Us!

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# GIS Impacts Planning, Emergency Preparedness

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are changing the face of planning and policymaking.

*Job Creation: Enhancing Opportunities with New Technologies*, a recently released report by New Valley Connexions, touts GIS as a mapping and data management tool to help improve agency coordination and services, while creating opportunities for workforce training and job creation.

Sound land-use decisions and strategic planning require local leaders to understand complex relationships between existing and potential geographic features. The relationships involve physical, social, and/or budgetary attributes of each feature, and GIS is the tool that can manage and display all these datasets.

GIS software can display virtually any data-from social patterns to future transportation scenarios-in the form of a map. The intuitive power of maps reveals spatial relationships not easily seen in other data presentation formats.

“Approximately 80% of all data is geographic in nature,” says Robert Slobodian, Director of the ISIS Center at Cal State University at Fresno. As such, Slobodian says, it is critical to utilize the full power of geographic information technology to make informed decisions.

GIS can play an important role in the formation of local policy. Contingent upon the quality and detail of the data used, a staff well versed in GIS can better inform policymakers by displaying impacts associated with different scenarios.

The wide-ranging applicability of GIS makes it an integral tool for almost every department. Moreover, the “interoperability” of GIS allows for data sharing within and between agencies and organizations, which can create opportunities for cost savings and increased jurisdictional cooperation.

There are a number of GIS collaborative groups in the Valley. These groups-composed of city, county, institutional and private representatives-are developing GIS standards for the region to improve interoperability and sharing of data.

As the region comes together for

reasons such as improving emergency preparedness, there is a strong case for building GIS systems that are interoperable on a regional basis, says Slobodian.

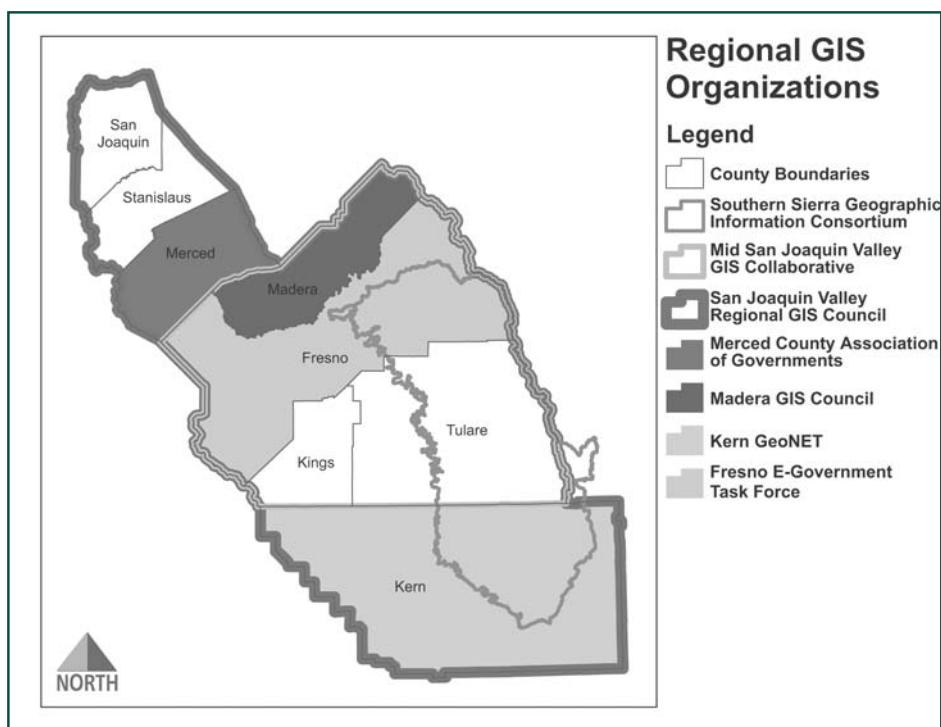
The report lists several actions that could promote the growth of GIS jobs and their specific applications, including:

- Development or enhancement of apprenticeship programs using GIS
- Development or enhancement of internship programs using GIS
- Education of business leaders in the use of GIS to expand or promote their industry
- Collection and maintenance of regional spatial data that can be used in GIS
- Promotion of regional and state data-sharing agreements
- Reorganization and development of curricula to foster GIS learning opportunities in secondary education, as well as in community colleges and four-year institutions

## Preparation for Regional Emergencies

The cross-departmental and cross-jurisdictional demands of emergency services are a perfect example of how the mapping, data management and interoperable potential of GIS can improve agency performance. An important piece of regional response, the report says, is a robust GIS infrastructure, which includes personnel to maximize the capabilities of GIS.

Additionally, California’s Great Central Valley has fewer computer technology employment opportunities than elsewhere in the state, so it was appropriate to view GIS as providing a solution to both jobs development and to



Map Developed by ISIS Center, CSU Fresno, [www.isis.csufresno.edu](http://www.isis.csufresno.edu)

Homeland Security, says the report.

All areas of the Valley are engaged, at some level, in refinement of processes and procedures for emergency incident response. The report shows significant opportunities for enhancement in the following areas:

- Valleywide development of a strategic plan for regional incident management excellence
- Ongoing regional dialog among representatives of all sectors responsible for any facet of incident preparedness, management, and response
- Communications interoperability throughout the region and within all agencies
- Region wide confirmation of base map accuracy, and improvement where necessary, as a foundation for continued GIS/GPS implementation
- Minimizing turf issues to accomplish development of a regional inventory of available resources, including supplies, equipment, and human resources
- Significantly increasing coordination and application of these resources through the use of technology
- Ongoing workforce training in the use of GIS/GPS technology and increased implementation to better inform decision-makers and increase response accuracy

Since the occurrence of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, emergency preparedness has become a top priority of federal, state and local governments. Federal money is available for state and local governments to develop strategic response plans. As a region, the Valley needs to position itself to receive these funds and develop a regional strategic plan. And, as part of this effort, planning for enhanced GIS skills and increased integration of GIS technologies must be at the forefront.



## Former Valley Fire Chief Goes to Sacramento

Rancho Cordova, CA, January 6, 2004—Steve Gage, former Kern County Fire Chief, began his new position as Deputy Chief of Fire and Rescue at the California Office of Emergency Services (OES). His new position focuses on OES operations, coordinating the Fire Master Mutual Aid Program. Chief Gage will work with the Chiefs in the six Mutual Aid Regions that cover California-Region's Three, Four, and Five cover most of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley-to ensure the state is ready to respond to large emergencies.

Chief Gage says he took the position because it was mutually beneficial for OES and his desire to work at a macro-level. With over 10 years experience as part of national and regional emergency response teams, Gage hopes his broad based view of emergency services will result in better service for the people of California.

# AmeriCorps\*VISTAs Bridging Digital Divide in State's Heartland

Throughout the Central Valley you will find a team of dedicated and compassionate AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers who are making a real difference in under-served communities by increasing opportunities for public access to and training for technology.

AmeriCorps\*VISTA members serving with the Great Valley Center's Central Valley Digital Network (CVDN) provide opportunities for basic technology literacy training; develop multi-language training materials; recruit and train volunteers and staff to teach others about technology; conduct public outreach campaigns about free technology resources; build community partnerships; and organize technology-related projects unique to community needs.

During the course of four years, CVDN has placed 25 AmeriCorps\*VISTA at 31 sites in 10 different counties of the Central Valley. Technology trainings conducted by CVDN VISTAs have supported 20,484 user sessions at community technology centers, libraries, government and nonprofit organizations. CVDN VISTAs have served in the following counties throughout the Central Valley in California: Yuba; Sutter; Yolo; Sacramento; San Joaquin; Stanislaus; Merced; Madera; Fresno; and Tulare.

To assist in ensuring a successful project year, CVDN supports AmeriCorps\*VISTAs and Partner Sites in the following ways:

- CVDN conducts VISTA training seminars on a variety of topics such as technology planning, nonprofit technology resources, community outreach, marketing, volunteer management, public speaking, and technology skill development.
- CVDN Innovation Fund creates an opportunity for VISTAs to apply for a small grant in designing their own innovative project that supports technology services at their sites and within their communities.
- CVDN offers competitive scholarships to provide individualized training support to VISTA members who wish to learn additional software, office productivity, or computer troubleshooting skills.

The AmeriCorps\*VISTA program is the only National Service program that focuses exclusively on fighting domestic poverty. The VISTAs dedicate a year of their lives to living at the poverty level of their host community and creating sustainable programs that will continue for years to come.

The following describes the activities of some of this year's VISTAs:

**See VISTAs, Page 9**

## Builders: Continued from Page 5

An annual study conducted by Cahners Residential Group shows energy efficiency upgrades are the most popular. This trend presents builders with an opportunity to achieve market differentiation in services, the report states.

“You cannot create market demand,” Bob Picchi, founder and president of the Blue Ridge Advisory Services Group, reminded an audience at a recent New Valley Connexions workshop in Modesto for builders, developers and planners. However, when new demands begin to grow, Picchi added, you need to be prepared to capitalize on it.

Picchi explained how to optimize the integration of broadband infrastructure into new housing developments. He was one of several consultants speaking at the Builder’s Workshops held in late September and early October 2003. The *Job Creation* report was developed in part from the presentations and discussions at the workshops.

Local governments can ensure improved energy efficiency in their neighborhoods through zoning ordinances, building codes and other local policies that create incentives or requirements for home builders.

For example, telecommunication companies often don’t invest in the last mile of communications infrastructure because of the high costs involved. To build “wired” communities, local policies must encourage developers or builders to complete the infrastructure early in the housing development process, a practice that will help make deployment more cost effective. The same is true with energy efficiency technology.

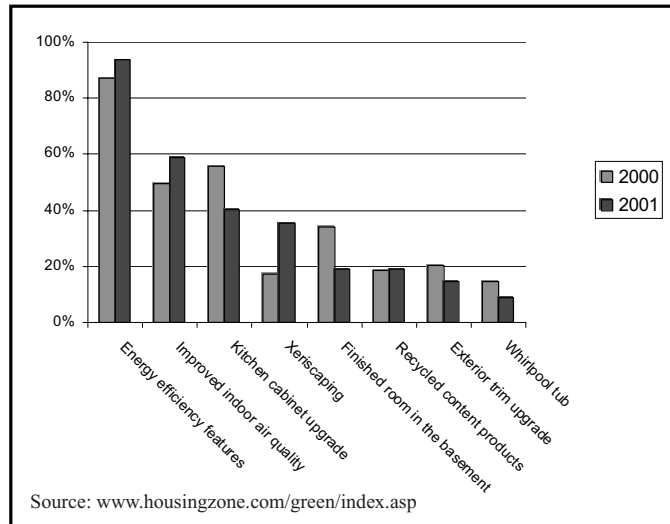
New Valley Connexions Manager Carolyn Ratto sees the integration of energy-efficient and broadband technologies into homes as necessary components, like electrical outlets and

insulation. “We have technologies that can improve quality of life here in the Valley, so we should be doing everything we can to get them into our homes,” she said.

### Recommendations

The report outlines some strategies local leaders can employ to promote the integration of these technologies into new construction. Here are some of the recommendations:

- *Organize workshops on new technologies for planners and policymakers* to promote development of appropriate policies and incentives.



- *Work in partnership with local builders to construct “idea homes”* at strategic locations in the Valley to showcase the latest technologies and benefits to consumers.

- *Identify role-model builders and projects*, and help them gain visibility in the local media.

- *Encourage local governments to be role models for best construction practices* by incorporating the new technologies wherever possible.

- *Work with building industry associations in the Valley.* Help to provide speakers at their events who can discuss the latest technologies and showcase best practices.

- *Promote inclusion of energy efficiency and high-speed communications on the agendas of building industry conferences* by working with event organizers.

Investments made in energy-efficient and “connected” home technology adds value to homes in the San Joaquin Valley, and helps make the region more competitive.

For more on the builders workshops, download the entire report *Job Creation: Enhancing Opportunities With New Technologies* at [www.greatvalley.org](http://www.greatvalley.org).



## Zero Emissions Leaf Blower Shown

Modesto, CA, December 16, 2003—The Great Valley Center hosted an informal demonstration of a non-polluting, quiet leaf-blower. AeroVironment, Inc., a Los Angeles-based research and development firm, originally designed the prototype E-Jet Street Silent Leaf Blower as a quiet alternative to the typical leaf blowers.

Typical leaf blowers are powered by a two-stroke engine that uses an oil/gas mixture, which, according to the American Lung Association of Sacramento, can emit up to

17-times more smog than a typical car. With low noise and no air emissions, the battery-powered E-Jet Street Silent Leaf Blower technology may prove useful here in the Central Valley.

Thomas Zambrano, a Senior Scientist at AeroVironment, Inc., demonstrated the new technology to interested parties, including representatives from parks and recreation departments, municipal utilities, irrigation districts, commercial farms, and private gardening services in Modesto. Zambrano left the prototype E-Jet at GVC for others to test out. If you are interested please contact JP Batmale, Renewable Energy Program Manager, at (209) 522-5103 for more information.

## **CVDN VISTA's: Continued from Page 7**

Greg Jaboin is a CVDN VISTA with the Migrant Education Program in Woodland. He is working with Migrant Ed. to train 11 of its staff members in using computers, the Internet, and office software. These staff members, who counsel migrant students at various schools in the area, use the training to assist their students with computer literacy. Migrant Education was recently awarded 30 wireless laptops that Jaboin will be using for a mobile computer lab to teach migrant families and students how to use a computer, Internet, and software. Greg hopes the lab will help students who may not have access to a computer gain skills they can use in school to complete homework, research, and find educational opportunities.



Connor Murphy is a CVDN VISTA with OASIS in Fresno. OASIS provides day care programs for families who have seniors with Alzheimer's. Murphy is researching software and assistive technology to create a model computer seniors with Alzheimer's can use. Current



research shows individuals with Alzheimer's create stronger connections in the brain when using a computer due to the active control of devices and stimulus of changing items on the screen. By talking with seniors with Alzheimer's about their interests, successes, and challenges in using computers, Murphy hopes to create a user-friendly program the seniors can use to scan photos from their past, create digital stories, and multimedia slide shows so each individual can share his or her own life story.

Steven Kachocki is a CVDN VISTA with the California Coalition for Rural Housing (CCRH) in Sacramento. He is training nonprofits and government agencies how to use a free web-based GIS software system developed by the Advanced Policy Institute of UCLA called Neighborhood Knowledge California (NKCA) at <http://nkca.ucla.edu>. NKCA is designed for people and organizations working to improve local economic and social conditions. Community-based groups and others can assess



conditions in low-income communities using NKCA's demographic, housing and financial services datasets. Kachocki is also researching and implementing new cost-effective Internet access, resources for networking, and website development for CCRH.

Jessie Ryan is a CVDN VISTA at the Lodi Public Library in Lodi. Because of the dedication and service of Ryan, the library's Computer Learning Center is open 53 hours a week, has 25 committed volunteers, offers multi-lingual training, and offers more free computer workshops than the San Francisco Public Library. The center recently purchased an assistive technology device called Quad Joy, which allows the user to operate the computer by mouth. Ryan is also



working on a Digital Story Telling project with a grant from CVDN's Innovation Fund. She will be training local high-school seniors how to use Adobe Premiere and PhotoShop to create three short videos on social awareness in Lodi's underserved populations. A community screening will be held on National Youth Service Day in April 2004 at the Lodi Public Library.

This story was contributed by CVDN VISTA Coordinator Matt Ketchum. He can be reached at (209)522-5103 or [matt@greatvalley.org](mailto:matt@greatvalley.org) for more information.




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*CVDN believes that access to technology must be accompanied by access to content that is of value and interest to the user as well as the skills and knowledge to access and evaluate the information.*

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### **Sustainable Science Building Proposed for Valley University**

Turlock, CA—It's sustainable, it involves a university, this must be UC Merced, right? No, it's CSU Stanislaus, which is considering seeking certification from the US Green Building Council (USGBC) for a planned, new science facility on campus.

Dr. Suzanne Burns, a project manager for Sponsored Programs at CSU Stanislaus, says there is support for obtaining certification from USGBC for the Science II Building because it would reinforce the school's commitment to sustainable practices and set an example for the community and region.

The university needs to raise \$700,000 to achieve its goal. If you want more information about this project, contact Dr. Burns at (209) 664-6788.

Visit [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org) to learn more about USGBC and its certification process.



## Health: Continued from Page 2

general plan as they would commercial or industrial property.

The report lists several examples of innovative strategies and local partnerships that have been formed by Health Services employers and educational institutions. One collaboration in Fresno, part of the Fresno Regional Jobs Initiative, proposes a world-class healthcare education and training institute along with a graduate medical school/biomedical research institute.

Solutions require top-level leadership from local Health Services employers and educational institutions-but also strong support from other business, government, and community leaders. A broader leadership commitment would establish growing the Health Services workforce as a higher critical regional priority and would draw more expertise and resources to address the problem.

Given its monetary constraints, state government is not in a position to invest significant new resources to remedy the situation. So, the *Good Medicine* report concludes, the region will have to chart its own course, creatively combining ideas and resources to grow its Health Services workforce and sector, providing jobs for its people and prosperity for its communities.

### Recommendations

*Good Medicine* offers the following steps to help chart a new regional course in Health Services:

- *Explore the Possibility of a Regional Approach.*

Secure the commitment of key Health Services employers. A number of hospitals are already working together on local projects (e.g. the Fresno Regional Jobs Initiative), which could serve as a foundation for a broader regional coalition. Based on the Great Valley Center project, the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California is creating a working group to explore a regional approach.

- *Build a Regional Team.*

Elected officials, economic development professionals, business leaders from a variety of sectors, and others could help with political advocacy at the state level, institutional advocacy at the local level, funding (e.g.,

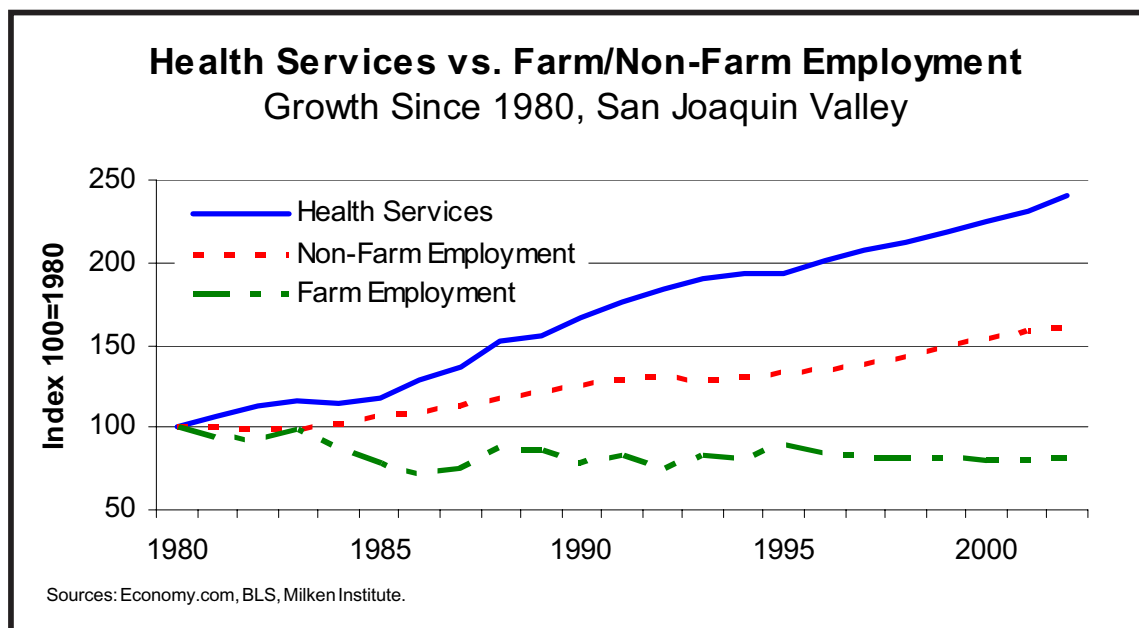
bond issues and other means), support in recruiting new workers, and in a host of other ways. In addition, the region should work with federal agencies to coordinate efforts to address the health services opportunity.

- *Evaluate the Prospects of Adapting or Scaling up Existing Innovative Models.* Numerous small-scale programs in the region have shown great promise, as well as creative approaches from other regions that could provide the basis for a breakthrough initiative for the San Joaquin Valley. A regional team could evaluate the best attributes of these efforts, matching them to the situation facing the region, and assembling the best overall approach based on proven innovations.

- *Pioneer a New Regional Approach.* Design and implement a breakthrough initiative that sets the national standard for how a region can most effectively leverage its resources to prepare a homegrown workforce in Health Services. A solution will require a significant scale-up of healthcare education and training through multiple means, using creative methods and focusing on “pre-competitive,” shared interests.

*Good Medicine* poses this critical question: does the San Joaquin Valley want to be known as a hapless region with a desperate healthcare system or a dynamic region using innovation to provide premier health services while strengthening our economy?

The entire report, *Good Medicine: Making Health Services an Economic Priority for the San Joaquin Valley*, along with other data compiled for the study are available online at [www.greatvalley.org](http://www.greatvalley.org).



## Policy Roadmap: Continued from Page 3

of users. Network capacity is determined by the amount of users and data that can be served before performance is compromised. Unfortunately, infrastructure built through government programs such as fiber optic networks built to public libraries and school through the FCC E-rate program, are typically limited by the policies of the federal or state program that subsidized the deployment.

The key obstacles to opening up closed network capacity are the Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) that prohibit the use of excess capacity by outside sources. With improvements in security and the development of “virtual private networks,” rural economies could greatly benefit from access to excess capacity on existing broadband networks.

Closed government networks in rural areas have been criticized for not providing a community service by opening up excess capacity. Proponents argue government should be the “anchor tenant” of a network used by a variety of interests. However, federal programs that pay for deployment, such as the FCC E-Rate program, reimburse LECs for operating and maintaining the network. If an LEC were to make excess capacity available on a closed network deployed using public funding, issues arise as to which entity collects the user fees.

Deployment and access to broadband have transformed the city of Orange Cove, according Mayor Victor P. Lopez. The rural town of 8,500 people southeast of Fresno is attracting businesses from places as far away as China through the World Wide Web, and preparing its residents for computer-based jobs through a “wired” job training and community center.

What Mayor Lopez finds most encouraging is the way young children are responding to computers in the community center’s childcare program. “If you ask a three year old what they like most about childcare, they say, ‘My computer.’ They love their computers.”

Community technology centers like the one in Orange Cove are an important link in the effort to connect to compete in the New Economy.

### Recommendations

*Public Policy Roadmap* concludes with a list of policy action items recommended for Valley leaders interested in getting broadband infrastructure more widely deployed in the region, including:

- *Understand the existing telecommunications infrastructure and attraction methods.* Local officials and planning staff need to concern themselves

with locating and mapping where new and existing infrastructure is deployed and upgraded in their area.

- *Utilize all excess capacity within existing closed networks.* Consider how to ease AUPs so local governments or schools with excess capacity can become “anchor tenants” who provide access for a wider local population. A statewide and local review of AUP is necessary in order to determine how to best maximize the benefits of existing closed networks while addressing the security concerns of the existing users.

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*“Everything is done through technology. We must hook up....it is amazing how it is changing the face of the little community of Orange Cove.”*

*- Mayor Victor P. Lopez  
City of Orange Cove*

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- *Consider funding through traditional and non-traditional agencies.* In addition to agencies such as the FCC, USDA and the CPUC, funding is becoming available through other less obvious sources such as the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Transportation. Also, money may become available for local improvements through special

public/private programs offered by LECs.

- *Seek to redefine the term “rural” under federal policy.* FCC and USDA definitions of rural need to be redefined so the region can gain access to federal dollars allocated for rural tele-communications infrastructure deployment.

- *Assist in redefining the definition of a rural carrier.* Chances are your local carrier (LEC) is not considered a rural carrier, making federal subsidies difficult to obtain. Talk with your LEC representative about ways you can help them access subsidies.

- *Participate in state and federal deployment proceedings for advanced communications services.* At the federal level, Section 706 of the 1996 Telecommunications Act requires the FCC to regularly ascertain whether the deployment of broadband capability is made available to all Americans in a reasonable and timely manner. At the State level, get active in CPUC proceedings for Rulemaking R0304003 to assure California adopts a more equitable and accurate definition of rural.

All of these actions can have profound effects upon the availability of high speed Internet access here in California’s Great Central Valley.

The entire report, *Public Policy Roadmap for Improving Broadband Access*, as well as weblinks to state and federal programs are available online at [www.greatvalley.org](http://www.greatvalley.org).



## Initiative Calls for Valley Health Services Training Center, Graduate School

Fresno, CA—A recent report by the Fresno Regional Jobs Initiative proposes two projects focused on training and education to combat the high unemployment and serious shortages of skilled health professionals in the region.

The *Fresno Regional Jobs Initiative Implementation Plan*, released in October 2003, calls for the creation of a Valley Training and Education Consortium for Healthcare (VTECH), as well as a graduate medical school and corresponding biomedical research institute in the Fresno region.

According to the report, the healthcare sectors of Fresno and Madera counties are uniquely positioned to become economic drivers for the region. Increasingly, Fresno is becoming a hub for the health services sector of California's Central Valley, which will serve as the foundation for "a world-class healthcare services and education infrastructure."

To address the obvious disconnect in the region between the need for trained employees in the health field and chronically high unemployment, the Implementation Plan focuses on how to increase the number of locally trained health professionals entering the region's healthcare sector. Emulating the Fresno Jobs Initiative itself, the action plan calls for private/public collaboration to share costs and make training responsive to industry needs.

A working group has been meeting on a regular basis to keep the VTECH and graduate school/research institute on track to meet the Implementation Plan's One Year Goals. Among the goals are to increase input to and consensus for the two projects, the development of business plans, and securing seed money for feasibility studies and pilot programs.

For more information, contact the CSU Fresno Office of Community and Economic Development at (559)278-8460 or visit [www.fresnorji.org](http://www.fresnorji.org).



## SBC Yahoo! DSL Availability Speeds Internet Access to the Central Valley

Fresno, CA—Now customers throughout the San Joaquin Valley can take advantage of high-speed Internet connections at affordable prices as SBC, the nation's leading provider of DSL service, furthers its commitment to enhance the region's economic vitality and expand its broadband service to rural communities.

Currently, SBC Yahoo! DSL is available to more than 33 million homes and businesses, making up 69 percent of the company's total customer base. SBC plans to reach about 80 percent of its customers by the end of March, with more than 8,100 neighborhood broadband gateways and more than 1,500 DSL-equipped central offices standing at the ready.

The communities of Arnold, Chowchilla, Coalinga, Escalon, Gustine, Jackson, Jamestown, Newman, Parlier, Riverbank, Sutter Creek and Twain Harte have been enjoying SBC's enhanced service since the third quarter of 2003.

Next in line for access are Angeles Camp, Arvin, Avenal, Caruthers, Edwards, Farmersville, Firebaugh, Frazier Park, Groveland, Hughson, Ione, Ivanhoe, Kingsburg, Mojave, Orange Cove, Orosi, Planada, Riverdale, Rosamond, San Andreas, Tehachapi, Three Rivers, Waterford and Yosemite.

SBC has driven the adoption of broadband by providing leading service and innovative price promotions which begin as low as \$26.95 a month. Residents—from Bakersfield and Fresno, to Modesto and Turlock—are taking advantage of new features focusing on safety and security, improved communications, and new levels of personalization, as well as a business service designed specifically for the workplace.

This article was contributed by Eric Johnson, General Manager of External Affairs for SBC in the Central Valley. To learn more about SBC's Yahoo! DSL Program visit [www.sbc.com](http://www.sbc.com) or call 1(866) 454-3500.



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