

CONVERGENCE

Northern California's only ongoing forum showcasing the issues that intersect education, workforce development and the economy

12.10.2010

CONVERGENCE IV: TECHNOLOGY & ENTREPRENEURISM

Presented By:



TECHNOLOGY & ENTREPRENEURISM KEY INGREDIENTS TO REGION'S ECONOMIC FUTURE

"Given that regions are the units of economic competition and education is the key driver of economic competitiveness in the 21st Century, LEED, along with the partners here at Convergence, provide a model form of governance and civic action for the new economy,"

--Sunne Wright McPeak, CEO, California Emerging Technology Fund at the December 10, 2010 Convergence

Information Technology, both as an industry cluster and as an application for both commerce and education, will significantly drive business growth, entrepreneurial activity and economic prosperity in California and the Capital Region, according to Sunne Wright McPeak, CEO of the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), who spoke to the 250 attendees who gathered at the final Convergence program of 2010.

As Secretary of California's Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, McPeak advanced a statewide strategy to support the growth and development of regional economies within the state, based on key sectors of strength. At CETF, McPeak is helping position California as a global leader in the development and implementation of broadband technology as a platform to advance business growth, enhance the state's economic competitiveness and improve the delivery of education. CETF is also working to "close the digital divide" to ensure that underserved communities and populations have access to broadband technology.

CETF is supporting a Regional Broadband Initiative in the Sacramento Region in partnership with Valley Vision and scores of business and civic partners.



CONVERGENCE IV speaker Sunne Wright McPeak, CEO, California Emerging Technology Fund, outlined the statewide strategy to support the growth and development of regional economies within the state, based on key sectors of strength.

The RBI is intended to invest in new and existing IT and broadband infrastructure to provide health care, education, local government and business with common platforms and expand coverage to previously underserved geographic and socio-economic communities. A key element of the effective implementation of broadband technology is digital literacy, equipping employees and residents with the knowledge and skills to utilize broadband for commercial and personal use.

"Given that regions are the units of economic competition and education is the key driver of economic competitiveness in the 21st Century, LEED, along with the partners here at Convergence, provide a model form of governance and civic action for the new economy," noted McPeak.

Continued on page 2

CONVERGENCE QUICK LINKS

Download: [CONVERGENCE IV Powerpoint Presentation](#)

Register now! [CONVERGENCE V: The Capital Clusters 02.25.11](#)

Continued from first page

McPeak recommended that LEED, Los Rios and the partners present at Convergence, work collaboratively to advance the objectives of the CETF and benefit the economy of the Capital Region. Specifically, McPeak encouraged attendees to:

- Support Valley Vision's Capital Region Broadband Initiative
- Ensure Digital Literacy is incorporated into all education and workforce development programs
- Leverage broadband technology to drive local industry clusters and "sectors of strength"

For more information, visit:

www.cetfund.org

www.valleyvision.org/work/priorities/broadband.html

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM CONVERGENCE IV: TECHNOLOGY & ENTREPRENEURISM

- Closing the region's "digital divide" will involve the support and engagement Capital Region leaders to:
 - > Support Valley Vision's Capital Region Broadband Initiative
 - > Ensure Digital Literacy is incorporated into all education and workforce development programs
 - > Leverage broadband technology to drive local industry clusters and "sectors of strength"
- The Sacramento region already has a significant base of Information Technology businesses, including Intel, HP, Agilent and others, which have also fueled entrepreneurial activities and spawned additional IT and related companies.
- Civic, business and education leaders have the opportunity to leverage our region's ethnic diversity as an economic development asset by promoting entrepreneurial opportunities and pathways to young people from diverse backgrounds.

PANEL: TECHNOLOGY & ENTREPRENEURISM = RECIPE FOR PROSPERITY

A panel of local experts discussed the critical importance of information technology to drive regional economic competitiveness and fuel entrepreneurial activity.

The panel included:

Cary Adams, board member, Sacramento Area Regional Technology Alliance (SARTA);
Wil Agatstein, Director, UC Davis Center for Entrepreneurism;
Mark Adams, CEO of AHI Construction; and
Panda Morgan, Executive Director of the NE California Small Business Development Center.

Cary Adams noted that the Sacramento region already has a significant base of Information Technology businesses, including Intel, HP, Agilent and others, which have also fueled entrepreneurial activities and spawned additional IT and related companies.

Adams highlighted the partnership between Intel and GE in the areas of Healthcare that will be based in the Capital region. Emerging local companies supported by SARTA are also advancing technology in cloud computing, telemedicine and 3D imaging.

At the UC Davis Center for Entrepreneurism, **Wil Agatstein** and his team work to help scientists, engineers and students commercialize their research in the Capital Region and across the globe. Recent successes include finding new uses for tobacco leaves, promoting efficient irrigation and use of wastewater.

The Center for Entrepreneurism also hosts intensive, one week Entrepreneur Academies, which teach the fundamental skills students need to succeed as entrepreneurs, including financial literacy, creativity and innovation. "These programs teach students that they can't just think, they must do," which is key to creating not just more jobs but better jobs, Agatstein said.

Mark Adams was a graduate of the Young Entrepreneurs Academy at UC Berkeley, graduated from UC Davis and began his career with Hewlett Packard in Roseville, determined to "scale the corporate ladder." Later, Adams began AHI Construction, combining his education and professional experience with the knowledge and skills he acquired working construction jobs for his father.

Today, Adams leverages information technology to provide his business with a competitive edge, providing estimates, bids and contracts in "real time." Adams is also a board member of the Sacramento Black Chamber of Commerce and active with the chamber's Young Entrepreneur program. "Whether a student is headed for college or into the workplace, they all can benefit from an entrepreneurial attitude," noted Adams.

As director for the Northeast California Small Business Development Center, **Panda Morgan** and her team help support businesses from 6 to 99 employees in a host of industries including, professional/technical services, retail, healthcare, food, wholesale and manufacturing, which comprise the top segments in the Capital Region. In partnership with the

Continued on next page

"Whether a student is headed for college or into the workplace, they all can benefit from an entrepreneurial attitude,"

Mark Adams
CEO, AHI Construction

Special thanks to our sponsors!

2010 SERIES SPONSOR



EVENT SPONSORS



CONVERGENCE PROJECT



CONVERGENCE IV panelists (L-R) Cary Adams (SARTA), Wil Agastein (UC Davis Center for Entrepreneurism), and Mark Adams (AHI Construction), and Panda Morgan (not pictured-NE California Small Business Development Center) discussed the critical importance of information technology to drive regional economic competitiveness and fuel entrepreneurial activity.

Los Rios Community College District, the NE SBDC hosts a Young Entrepreneur Program (YEP).

"Business owners aren't always the most academically successful students," noted Morgan, "but they do possess qualities and skills that position them for success, including self discipline, follow through, leadership and initiative." "As educators, we have the responsibility and opportunity to guide these students to success, which might include an entrepreneurial path...and the earlier, the better," concluded Morgan.

Panel members identified Clean Tech, Med Tech and Ag Tech as three emerging opportunities for entrepreneurs in the Capital Region. Panel members also pointed out that civic, business and education leaders have the opportunity to leverage our region's ethnic diversity as an economic development asset by promoting entrepreneurial opportunities and pathways to young people from diverse backgrounds. Adams suggested that to do so, "we have to work outside of our organizational and cultural silos." "It's up to us as adults to bring students from various backgrounds together, to work together and learn from each other," Adams concluded.

Dr. Thelma Scott-Skillman, President of Folsom Lake College concluded Convergence, noting that "entrepreneurism is key to the American spirit and American enterprise." Scott-Skillman said technology has accelerated change in society and in the marketplace and that younger people are more comfortable and adept at leveraging technology to drive economic activity. "Clearly, we as educators have a role in preparing our students to compete, by providing them with digital literacy, the basic skills to compete in the 21st Century economy."

"And at Folsom Lake College, we also cultivate the entrepreneurial spirit," Scott-Skillman continued, "by encouraging our students to think outside the box, take risks, be strategic and measure their success."

EMPLOYER/EDUCATOR ROUNDTABLE

Roundtable participants discussed strategies on increasing trade and commerce/economic development in California. Ideas included:

- International eBay project at Folsom Lake College: Involves exporting via the web/products and services – how can entrepreneurs take advantage of needs in other countries/emerging markets?
- Conversion of raw materials into sale-able goods...agriculture, manufacturing and mining; reducing business costs /regulations, etc.
- Value-added goods: U.S. brand/identity will command more dollars; increase value.
- Start educating at a young age...not every student is college-bound. Develop skills for trade and manufacturing.
- Define "college" better. Specialization skills provided by Community Colleges – what is the expected output?
- Manufacturing assistance program

Participants also discussed career pathways, connecting K-12, and aligning regional efforts:

- Introducing different concepts of college at junior high level. Self-sufficiency concepts, partnership opportunities with local organizations – Veterans Programs / business consulting services / Veterans Initiative / PTSD, etc.
- Bringing back career assessments to high schools; requirements for career education on books; out of compliance. Educating parents on opportunities / potential earnings outside of 4-yr college degree.
- Align public and private institutions; one-stops; small business; collaborative partners; task force committee to promote information/same brand via avatar?
- Develop social media business planning strategies. Business exists via social media; transfer this model to virtual career center; virtual veteran center; make sure to include an on-ramp to virtual highway in the form of a personal connection/human interaction.
- Concept of task force: Golden Sierra WIB youth council is developing a strategic plan for defining its identity.

SAVE THE DATES

2011 CONVERGENCE OPERATION: INDUSTRY PIPELINE CONTINUES

February 25th: The Capital Clusters
([Click here to register!](#))

May 18th: Food, Farming & Agribusiness

September 16th: FIRE-Finance, Insurance & Real Estate

December TBD: Higher Education

7:30-11:15 am

7:30-9:30 am Program

10-11:15 am Employer/Educator Roundtable

Radisson Hotel, Sacramento