



# Business Update

AWARD-WINNING MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **JANUARY 7TH, 2016**  
 2016 Legal Update  
 Presented by Sutton Hague Law Corp  
 12:00 - 1:00 pm  
 Wyndham Hotel  
 \$35.00  
 Reservations required  
<http://www.visaliachamber.org/events/calendar/>
- **JANUARY 12, 2016**  
 Travel Slide Show: Spectacular South Africa  
 12:00 pm  
 Chamber Office 222 N. Garden Street
- **JANUARY 20, 2016**  
 SEO & PPC Seminar  
 Presented by: GANNETT  
 12:00 - 1:00 pm  
 Free for Chamber Members  
<http://www.visaliachamber.org/events/calendar/>
- **JANUARY 21, 2016**  
 Sexual Harassment Workshop  
 Presented by: Pacific Employers Lamp Litter Inn  
 7:30 - 10:00 am  
 \$35 for Members \$45 for Non-members  
 Reservations Required  
<http://www.visaliachamber.org/events/calendar/>
- **JANUARY 28, 2016**  
 Chamber Ambassador Breakfast Meeting  
 Visalia First Assembly Church  
 8:00 am



## We Invite you to Explore in 2016!

- **South Dakota: The Black Hills & Badlands,**  
 June 21 - 27, 2016
  - **Spectacular South Africa,**  
 September 22 - October 5, 2016
  - **Colors of New England,**  
 October 11-18, 2016  
Collette Vacations CST#2006706-20  
 Chamber Explorations CST#2048841-40  
 Grand Circle Travel CST #2041626-40  
 Jet Vacations
- For more information, go to [www.visaliachamber.org](http://www.visaliachamber.org)

## Visalia Chamber of Commerce Board of Director Nominations are open

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce is currently accepting nominations of current Chamber Members to sit on the Board of Directors. Nominations must be received by February 15, 2016. Please send nominations to Sue Summers at [info@visaliachamber.org](mailto:info@visaliachamber.org)

Visalia Chamber of Commerce  
 222 N. Garden St., Suite 300  
 Visalia, CA 93291  
 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## In-Shape – Healthy Habits for a Strong Community

**BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT**



**Nicola Wissler,**  
 Visalia Chamber of Commerce

Carl Bard once said, "Although no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending." Now that Christmas is over and New Years is around the corner, everyone is talking about new years resolutions. Every year thousands of people resolve to start new habits, and one of the most common habits is to get in shape or lose weight. This resolution is no easy task and often people discover that they just don't have the will power or knowledge to make their resolution happen. In-Shape Health Clubs are dedicated to helping individuals to keep their resolutions and start a healthy lifestyle. Recently I had the chance to talk with In-Shape about their business and how they are helping people and businesses in Visalia to keep their New Year's resolutions.



In-Shape staff at the N. Mooney Blvd club are excited to help you meet your fitness goals.

**Can you tell me a little bit about the history of In-Shape?**

In-Shape is a health club business that offers full service fitness, relaxation and recreation opportunities for members across the state. In-Shape was started in 1981 in Stockton, CA and has grown over the last 35 years to include 75 clubs across the state.

**Who is your target customer?**

Our customers are everyone, the mom who is trying to lose the baby weight, the guy who is trying to impress the girl down the street, the grandparent who wants to stay active for their grandchild. We service the needs of many different people within the community. There is always a reason to get in-shape.

**We know that individuals can join one of your health clubs, we would love to know how a business owners and professionals can benefit from your services?**

We offer special programs for businesses to enroll their employees. Active employees are less likely to incur sick time and have lower health care costs. We also have classes in the early morning or later afternoons to fit all types of working schedules.

**What are some of the reasons behind your success?**

In-Shape offers our members a diverse offering of ways to get in shape or stay in shape, plus amenities aimed at giving the whole family ways to relax and have fun. We have options for everyone as well as support to make

sure you get the best results from your time with us. We offer multiple locations throughout the city because we know convenience is key when working to stay healthy.

**What are some of the challenges your business is facing? What would help to overcome those challenges?**

Less than 20% of the US population has a health club membership but more than 60% of the population is overweight. We are trying to help solve this problem by encouraging everyone in our communities to live active, healthy lifestyles and do our best to offer a variety of amenities but recognize that getting in-shape and staying healthy is always a challenge so we provide destinations that combine fitness, relaxation and recreation opportunities.

**What can people do to enhance their workouts at your clubs?**

The biggest trend in fitness right now is the explosion of wearable devices and smart phone apps that allow people to personally track their fitness goals. This is an exciting time because technology has made it possible for anyone to get on



track. We encourage our members to use these tools both in and out of the club.

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce is very proud that In-Shape works so hard to keep our community healthy. We know that when community members are healthy, businesses thrive, and the city grows stronger. We would like to thank In-Shape for sharing with us some of the tools that they have available to help us to keep our New Year's resolutions.

## COMMUNITY LOYAL MEMBERS

*A thriving community starts here!*

### Renewing Members

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce thanks the following companies for renewing their commitment to the community of Visalia.

- Lagomarsino Group
- Redi-Rooter Plumbing\*
- Media Solutions, Inc
- 4 Creeks, Inc\*
- Fairfield Inn Visalia/Sequoia Gateway
- Paradise Aquatech Pools, Inc.\*
- Darlene Loose/ RE/MAX-Visalia
- Cacciatore Fine Wines & Olive Oil Corp.\*
- Equity Group, Inc.\*
- MVP Insurance Agency

- Visalia Rawhide Baseball Club\*
- Comfort Inn & Suites Airport Drive\*
- Golden State Food, LLC\*
- Salsar & Dillard Funeral Chapel\*
- Veterans Memorial District\*
- VF Outdoor, Inc.

\*Indicates membership in the Visalia Chamber 110% Club.

### VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MISSION ICONS

- Business-Government
- Business Relations
- Promoting Community
- Strong Local Economy



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**January 7th**

**2016 Legal Update for Employers**

Presented by **Brett Sutton, Sutton & Hague Law Corp.**

Wyndham Hotel, 9000 W. Plaza Drive  
12:00 - 1:30 pm (registration begins at 11:30)

\$35.00 per person, includes lunch  
Registration is required: [www.visaliachamber.org/events/details/2016-legal-update-for-employers-3441](http://www.visaliachamber.org/events/details/2016-legal-update-for-employers-3441)

**January 20th**

**Search Engine Optimization**

Presented by **GANNETT**

Brandman University - Visalia Campus  
249 S. County Center  
12:00 - 1:00 pm

Please bring a brown bag lunch  
Free for Chamber Members  
Registration requested: [www.visaliachamber.org/events/details/seo-ppc-presented-by-gannett-3447](http://www.visaliachamber.org/events/details/seo-ppc-presented-by-gannett-3447)



**11 Participants Graduate from Stanford University's Patient Education Program Facilitator Training**

Kaweah Delta's Empowerment for Better Living (EBL) Program is the only site between Madera and Bakersfield licensed by Stanford University's Chronic Disease Self-Management Program.

VISALIA, CA - 11 Tulare County residents graduated this past November as Facilitators from a prominent program for chronic disease self-management developed by Stanford University. The Facilitators completed a 32-hour comprehensive training course that prepares them to empower members of the local community living with chronic illness with self-management skills. Stanford's Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) will be offered locally as Empowerment for Better Living (EBL).

These graduates are now the first group of "Stanford-trained" Empowerment for Better Living (EBL) facilitators for our community. The program will continue to be an integral component of the services offered at Kaweah Delta's new Chronic Disease Management Center (CDMC) in Visalia, part of Kaweah Delta's Population Health Initiative to improve the health of the community. Four of the graduates of the Facilitator training are staff members at CDMC. The remaining graduates are individuals interested in implementing the EBL program in various community sites and churches throughout the county. All Facilitator either have a chronic health condition or take care of a family member with a chronic health condition.

Kaweah Delta's EBL program invites 12-18 participants to meet as a group once a week for a total of six weeks, and each session lasts two and a half hours. The EBL program has served Tulare County community members for nearly one year; and has been held in the Visalia Public Library, the Good Samaritan Center, and St. Mary's Church. The EBL participants learn practical tools they can use to manage their symptoms and to take charge of their health.

There will be future opportunities to be trained as Facilitators for the Empowerment for Better Living and Tomando Control de su Salud (Spanish version). To learn more about managing your chronic disease, caring for yourself while caring for those with chronic disease and/or being trained as a Facilitator, please call 559-624-2416. The EBL workshops are free and offered quarterly. Learn more at [www.kawahdelta.org/livebetter](http://www.kawahdelta.org/livebetter).

SOURCE: <http://patienteducation.stanford.edu/programs/cdsmp.html>

**About this publication ...**

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**PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

# Wishing Everyone a Very Happy Holidays from the Visalia Chamber of Commerce

24 local charities and non-profit organizations had their Christmas wishes granted at the 35th annual Christmas Tree Auction held December 11th. More than 1,100 guests raised funds of almost a quarter of a million dollars supporting local charities, while eating great food, drinking local wine, and dancing the night away.

"On behalf of all the benefiting non-profits, the Christmas Tree Auction Committee and Visalia



**Gail Zurek**  
President & CEO  
Visalia Chamber of Commerce

Chamber of Commerce, we wish to thank the community and those donors who dug deep and found ways to impact the lives of many individuals in powerful, positive ways. Visalia's legacy of generosity continues to confirm our faith in the community's ability to come together and support our vital non-profit organizations", stated Gail Zurek, President & CEO of the Visalia Chamber of Commerce.



Golden State Family Services Tree - photo courtesy of Roy Dressel Photography



Christmas Tree Auction Attendee chat with local wine vendor - photo courtesy of Roy Dressel Photography



15 beautifully decorated trees were auctioned off to raise money for local charities - photo courtesy of Goal Line Media



Christmas Tree Auction attendees bid on silent auction items - photo courtesy of Goal Line Media



Visalia Christmas Tree Auction is THE formal event of the season, Left to Right - Vincent Marquez, Natalie Alfaro, Lesa Mann, & Lindsay Mann - photo courtesy of Roy Dressel Photography

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**The Visalia Chamber of Commerce is now seeking open nominations for the 2016 63rd Annual Awards Celebration**

**Categories**

- Large, Medium, and Small Business of the Year
- Non-Profit of the Year
- Woman of the Year
- Man of the Year

To nominate a person or business go to: [www.visaliachamber.org](http://www.visaliachamber.org) or call 559-734-5876

The deadline for nominations is April 1st, 2016

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VPD bids farewell to Communications Operator Christina Carleton. Christina began her employment with VPD in 2005 as a Police Records Specialist. She was promoted to Communications Operator in 2006. Christina has been hired as a Communications Operator with the Oregon State Police Department in Salem,

Oregon. We wish Christina and her family all the best, and thank her for her service to our community

**Sutton and Hague Law Corp** is pleased to announce the association of Attorney Amy McGeever.

**College of Sequoias** would like to say thank you to everyone who supported their favorite organizations and causes this #givingtuesday. We loved hearing our student,

**United Way of Tulare County** are committed to working towards bettering our community. This season our staff delivered over 50 food baskets, coats, and blankets to rural communities. We have also have distributed over \$17,000 to support food pantry's in 15 Tulare County communities.

**Visalia Emergency Aid Council** wants to say THANK YOU Visalia VDUBs for collecting over 600 toys!!!



Kaweah Delta

**Tulare County Farm Bureau** Treasure John Guthrie is now a Leadership Farm Bureau Graduate, at the Annual Meeting. Congrats John!

Congrats Julie Cates of **Linwood Elementary** in Visalia. This year's Ag in the Classroom Educator of the Year!

**The City of Visalia** held its Employee Service Awards this morning. A total of 46 members of the Visalia Police Department were recognized for a combined total of 515 years of service! Congratulations to all!

**The Visalia Transit Department** has celebrated the overwhelming success of their new shuttle V-LINE. Since its launch on November 18th, the Visalia community has given it's full support of the new shuttle - as Visalia and Fresno



Fire Association

board, faculty and staff stories of why they care!

**The Visalia Firefighter's Association** would like to thank **Cal Water** in matching our donation today to the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation for their Christmas Party.

Christmas came early at **The Lifestyle Center!** Over the Thanksgiving Holiday The Lifestyle Center Basketball Gym and Aerobic Room (A) received a makeover! Both floors in each area were resurfaced and the lights in the basketball gym were replaced. We're pretty excited about how great they turned out and hope you all enjoy the new floors as much as we do! Have a great Holiday season everyone!

**Food Link of Tulare County** - Our Giving Tuesday would not be complete without us giving thanks for all of you who GIVE through donations, time, services, and food. We are excited to share that November's campaign brought in 56,955lbs of food (that's 28 TONS!).

**Ronald McDonald House** would like to thank the community from the bottom of our hearts to everyone who participated in #GivingTuesday and donated to our House! Your support is keeping families close. The best gift a child could ever ask for is family.

**Valley Oak SPCA** - We would like to introduce our new veterinarian Dr. Adams. We are so excited to welcome her to our team! We are looking forward to getting back on track helping our community.

Although we are in the midst of holiday festivities, we at



Valley Oak SPCA



2015 EBL Program Graduates

residents can catch a ride to Fresno on a more affordable, and convenient mode of transportation.

**Family HealthCare Network (FHCN)** will donate holiday food baskets, blankets, and gifts to 77 needy families in the communities of Cutler-Orosi, Hanford, Porterville, Terra Bella, Tulare, Visalia, and Woodlake. Staff and volunteers are busy preparing the baskets to be given away as part of the organization's Anita Fund, a tradition of FHCN for more than 25 years.



FHCN Anita Fund

BOARD SPOTLIGHT

William Martin

William Martin is the Managing Member/President of Martin & Martin Properties; Martin Enterprises. William has been a member of the Chamber Board of Directors for five years.



William Martin

**What brought you to Visalia?** I was born in Visalia. Murray Street is named after my grandmother's maiden name.

**What is your favorite thing about your job/company?** Being able to interact with so many community leaders.

**What do you like to do when you are not working?** Spending time at my cabin in Mineral King and house in Morro Bay.

**What is your favorite place to go in Visalia when you are not working?** Eating lunch or dinner downtown or hanging out at Pita Kabob, PHD, and Cellar Door.

**What was your favorite book that you read in the last 12 months and why?** If you want to know the real future over the next 25, 50, 75 and 100 years read "Physics of the Future" by Kaku. It's a real eye opener. Another I've read is; "The Hidden Messages in Water" by Emoto. It proves that the appearance of water crystals will reflect what observers are thinking.

**What is your favorite charity or local cause?** The local Rotary Community Foundation and Rotary International Foundation are my favorites in part because less than 1% of all funds are used for administration. Maintaining and improving downtown Visalia as the jewel of the valley is the local cause.

**What is your best advice for young professionals?** Always think and manifest positives and positive things will happen in your life. Find a way to be financially successful doing what you'd be willing to do for free.

**What did you want to be when you were in elementary school?** An ecologist according to a childhood scrap book newspaper article on me in 1956.

**What is your favorite quote?** From me: Thank you sun for being our physical life source; Thank you earth for the fruits of your harvest; and thank you God for giving us the ability and opportunity to both appreciate what we have and be mindful of the needs of others. Another is to paraphrase a quote from Jesus in the new testament which says; We are only as good as the least among us.

AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT

Nicole Centofanti



Nicole Centofanti

Nicole Centofanti is a CPA with M. Green and Company LLP. She has worked for M. Green for 10 years. M. Green and Company LLP is a local firm of Certified

Public Accountants, established over 60 years ago, with offices in Visalia, Tulare, Hanford and Dinuba. We provide the highest quality accounting, auditing, tax and advisory services to a broad range of clients, from small businesses to large corporate groups, nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies. Our services include payroll services, bookkeeping, QuickBooks consulting, financial statement preparation, estate and trust planning, fraud and business valuation services. Specialty certifications, such as Certified Valuation Analysts and Certified Fraud Examiners, are held by certain members of our firm, which provide further depths of knowledge in these technical areas.

**What are some of the ways you'd recommend getting involved/working with/partnering with the Chamber?** I would recommend becoming an ambassador and attending as many of the ribbon cuttings as you can. The Chamber

See Centofanti /5

VISALIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT Musical Season Again!

I hope you and your family have had a good holiday season. This time of the year is one that is full of traditions. I'd like you to get out your new 2016 calendar and schedule some dates for a VUSD tradition; it is show time! For many years, our community has grown accustomed to excellent high school performing arts productions. Everything from band to dance, we have wonderful performances all year long and school musicals are perhaps the best example of this long standing tradition.

**"Catch Me if You Can"** is this year's production by **El Diamante High School** and will be performed on Friday, January 15, Saturday, January 16, and again on Thursday, January 21 through Sunday, January 24, 2016. This will be very entertaining and will showcase the musical and dance talents of El Diamante students!

**"High School Musical"** has quickly become a favorite of many, and this year it will be performed by **Mount Whitney High School** on Thursday, February 4 through Saturday, February 6, 2016. This is a popular musical, and Mount Whitney has an incredible cast and is excited to perform the crowd-pleasing favorite.

**Redwood High School's** all school show will be **"West Side Story"**. It will be performed on Thursday, February 18 through Saturday, February 20, 2016. This fifties love story is really timeless and resonates with audiences of all



Craig Wheaton, Ed.D. Superintendent, Visalia Unified School District

ages. The setting may be the fifties, but the story is played out in the lives of youth every day!

**"Thoroughly Modern Millie"** will continue the **Golden West High School** tradition of musical productions on a grand scale, more than 100 Golden West students will participate in this year's musical. I can guarantee that you and your family will "thoroughly" enjoy an evening of wonderful entertainment. Flip open your April calendar and save these dates: April 6-9, 2016!

**The Green Acres Middle School** musical tradition continues with **"Chitty Chitty Bang Bang"**. If you have never attended a Green Acres musical production you really must take time to do so. This may be young middle school students but you will be totally surprised by the quality of the production and how entertaining the evening will be. Green Acres productions include over 100 students and staff; yes, I said staff. Traditionally, many staff members perform a number to the delight of the audience and the principal is always a part of that tradition. Let's see if Mr. Di Meo can fill those shoes! The production is scheduled for February, 11, through February 14, 2016.

This year's musical selections are excellent choices for family entertainment. So, get your friends and family together and go out and get your tickets early because several shows could be sellouts, and prepare to be entertained!

VISALIA TIMES-DELTA • DECEMBER 26, 2015

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**January 21st**

**Labor Law Compliance Series  
Stop Harassment Seminar**  
Lamp Liter Inn  
7:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  
Breakfast Included  
**Pre-Registration:**  
\$35 for Members  
\$50 for Non-Members  
At the Door: \$45 for Members -  
\$55 for Non-Members  
**RESERVATIONS REQUIRED**  
For registration go to:  
[http://www.visaliachamber.org/  
events/calendar/2016-01-01](http://www.visaliachamber.org/events/calendar/2016-01-01)

**Cal Water rolls of  
Commercial Water-Use  
Efficiency Evaluation Program**

Continuing its customer-first approach to managing the state's historic drought, California Water Service (Cal Water) announced earlier this month that it will begin offering its popular Water-Use Efficiency Evaluation program to commercial, industrial, and institutional (CII) properties as another tool to help customers continue to use water wisely.

The Commercial Water-Use Efficiency Evaluation program is now available to all CII customers in Visalia.

As part of the Commercial Water-Use Efficiency Evaluation program, Cal Water's contractor, CLEAResult, in conjunction with the California Conservation Corps, will conduct a thorough evaluation of the customer's property, including plumbing fixtures, industrial processes, and irrigation and landscape uses. Customers also will be provided a water-use report detailing recommendations on how the property can be more efficient. These services will be provided to qualified customers at no cost.

"Programs like this are helping Cal Water businesses achieve significant water savings and helping the state reach its water conservation goals," said Ken Jenkins, Cal Water's Director of Drought Management and Conservation. "Individual savings will vary by location, and we are encouraging all eligible businesses to do their part to help with the drought."

If you are interested in having a water use evaluation conducted at your business, contact Cal Water's local Conservation Coordinator Scott McNamara at (559) 624-1660 or [smcnamara@calwater.com](mailto:smcnamara@calwater.com).

Cal Water serves about 132,200 people through 43,400 service connections in Visalia. The company has provided water service in Visalia since 1926. Additional information may be obtained online at [www.calwater.com](http://www.calwater.com).

**The Power of Giving**

Thursday November 19th the foothill community of Three Rivers and our neighboring communities showed what the "Power of Giving" is all about. Over 400 guests attended the first ever Festival of Trees hosted by St Anthony's Retreat Center.

During the evening guest enjoyed appetizers provided by the Chefs at the Retreat Center and the "World Famous" Gateway Restaurant.

Local wineries supplied the wine that was poured and sampled from Commemorative Wine glasses sponsored by Cru Winery as a take home token of their appreciation.

One of the finest brewers in the Valley was pouring generous samples of his finest Micro brews for the guest enjoyment," it was a great opportunity for Brewer Kenny Hildebrand to showcase his brewing talent and introduce some new varieties."

Over 30 non profits participated in the event, with either a Silent auction item or an artificial "Live Auction Tree". Highlighting the evening Justin Martella the Auctioneer and Master of Ceremonies for the evening made his way through the crowd and from tree to tree guests were bidding from their hearts and their commitment to the non-profit they came to support.

"The generosity of the crowd exceeded our expectations, the evening brought over \$29,000 to support the local charities that participated."

The Festival of Trees committee is already hard at work planning next years event. For more information about participating or for further information about St Anthony's Retreat Center contact Darlene Mayfield at 559 561 4595 or view their website at <http://www.stanthonyretreat.org/>.

**HEALTHCARE NOTE**

**Visalia Medical Clinic Celebrates 75 years**

This year, Visalia Medical Clinic celebrates 75 years of providing care to Visalia and surrounding communities.

Over the decades we have seen huge changes in our industry, and change continues at a dramatic pace today. Fortunately for our staff and patients, the changes are primarily good.

We are excited about the providers that joined the VMC family in mid- to late 2015. They are young, but well trained and highly skilled. They are enthusiastic and caring. And, they are very comfortable with the technology-based nature of the health care industry today.

In 2015, we welcomed pediatrician Kirk Coverston, MD; cardiologist Ashkan Attaran, MD; orthopedic surgeon Jason Mihalcin, DO; Alberto Ruvalcaba, MD, family medicine; Candice Lovelace, DO, internal medicine; and Jim Schroder, physical therapist.

We expect to add to our family of providers in mid-2016, as we continue to grow to meet the needs of our patients. As with any business experiencing growth, the challenge is to continue to provide quality service, delivered by staff members who are friendly, helpful and informed. VMC delivers this service through ongoing training, a patient-centered focus and a highly effective group of supervisors.

Another significant change has been the affiliation with the



**By Richard E. Strid,  
MPA, CMPE**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Visalia Medical Clinic

Kaweah Delta Medical Foundation. We appreciate the support of our patients as we have worked through the transition over the last few months.

This new foundation will help our community as a whole reduce redundancies in the purchase of very expensive medical technologies, improve customer service through improved communications, and serve as a recruitment tool so that we can continue to bring highly qualified and caring providers to Visalia.

The changes in our industry also pose challenges. The technology that provides more accurate imaging and lab services, more effective medications and faster communications can also interfere with the human touch. It is our goal to foster that very important human touch, while maximizing the benefits of technology.

Changes in the insurance industry can also cause frustration. VMC's staff is committed to helping our patients navigate the paperwork so they can stay focused on their health.

It is quite an accomplishment for any business to reach the 75 year mark, and we acknowledge that it is a result of the leadership of the physician-owners past and present and a wonderful staff.

Thank you to our patients and the community for allowing us to help you Be Well. We look forward to another 75 years!



**LEADERSHIP VISALIA**

**A Lesson in Citizenship**



Leadership Visalia Class Members with Tulare County Sheriff's Farm Manager, Tom Guinn

**Aunna Lopez, VWR International LLC**  
Leadership Visalia Class Member

Leadership Visalia met on December 4th at Visalia City Hall, to embark on their day of learning about Government, Public Finance and Citizenship. Raquel Garcia, Alberto Ramos, and Juan Vasquez facilitated the day with great eagerness and pride.

The class embarked on a short drive to tour the Tulare County Adult Pre-Trial facility. The class was greeted by a new recruit who enjoyed the attention and a quick pet behind the ear; but the deputy sheriff's dog was using her enhanced sense of smell to assure we were all free of illegal explosive devices or drugs. Captain Sigley started our tour with an enlightening view of the complex security system within the facility. The tour then transitioned to the inmate processing area. The administration group greeted us and noted the average processing time of the 200+ daily inmates averages 45 minutes and includes a psychological review. To provide additional security the facility has invested in a full body scanner to search for contraband, weapons and other hidden items on people booked through the facility. Throughout the tour, Captain Sigley and others helped our class to understand the cost associated with running a pre-trial facility.

Following the tour, Captain Sigley accompanied the class to the Sheriff's Farm next door, and introduced us to farm manager, Tom Guinn. The farm is one of the major factors that allow the department to have some of the lowest foodservice costs in the entire state. Tom gave the class information on the farms sustainability and complex commodity production. The farm produces beef cattle, eggs, green house garden produce, hogs, hay and grain. Additionally the farm recycles water from the jail in their farming efforts. This unique program offsets the food costs of the jail significantly.

Next on the agenda, our class headed to the Bethlehem Center where the members were provided a humble lunch in exchange for volunteering our time at the center. The class was impressed by the art

looking for volunteers and donations, and they can be contacted at (559) 734-1572.

Following this humbling experience class members traveled to Visalia City Hall to learn more about the City Council from Mayor Steven Nelson and Visalia's Assistant City Manager, Leslie Caviglia. Committees and Commissions Handbook were provided and the processes of City Council meetings reviewed. Additionally, Captain Rick Haskill of the Visalia Police Department visited to provide more information on the traffic division and gave the class an up close and personal view of one of the 8 new BMW motorcycles purchased by the department.

As the Leadership Class of 2015-2016 closed out its day session the members reflected on all they learned about local Government, Public Finance and Citizenship. The successful session provided many of the team members with new perspectives on how they can be more involved citizens and partake and connect locally as a resident.



Day Session Organizers checking out the new Visalia Police Department motorcycle

**VTEC High School Named 21st Century Learning Exemplar by P21**

Exemplars nationwide feature how innovation makes learning possible for all students.

P21, the leading organization advocating for 21st century learning for every student, has designated Visalia Technical Early College High School as an exemplar school, as part of a nationwide initiative identifying models of exemplary 21st century learning practices that are preparing students for success across the United States.

Now entering its 4th year, P21's 21st Century Learning Exemplar Program shares case studies of schools and districts that have successfully transformed student learning through innovative and transformative practices that include collaborative teaching and learning, distributed leadership, student voice and choice, engaged community partnerships, a climate of achievement, and evidence-based practices into teacher practice, curriculum, assessment, and professional development.

The 2016 21st Century Learning Exemplars, including VTEC High School, were selected along with 17 schools and 2 districts through a rigorous application process, and evaluated for educational excellence and 21st century learning implementation.

Visalia Technical Early College (VTEC) High School enrolls each of its 9-12 grade students into specific Career Technical Education



pathway programs of their choice. Students graduate from VTEC college and career ready as they complete a prescribed course of study within the agriculturally based program. Pathways are aligned with industry standards and certifications or community college certifications at the College of the Sequoias, and students enroll concurrently in high school and community college courses or industry-sponsored courses. The school environment provides a highly supportive combination of industry-relevant training and an early college experience with hands-on, project-based instruction that re-energizes disconnected students.

"The VTEC staff members are well deserving of this award," said Superintendent Craig Wheaton, "They have taken a concept and idea and created a fabulously successful school environment; one that engages and supports students in a way that results in high levels of achievement."

"We feel so honored to be recognized for this award," says Vicki Porter, Principal of VTEC High School. "It represents the culmination of our college and career ready focus for the last six years. "I am so proud of our amazing staff and students for their hard work and commitment toward the achievement of this goal."

Visit [www.p21.org/exemplars](http://www.p21.org/exemplars) for a list of all Exemplars, case studies, powerful learning stories, podcasts, videos, and more.



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# YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS Academy FOR KIDS WHO MEAN BUSINESS



## All I want for Christmas is to start my own company



YEA! students meet with business mentors to discuss business ideas

It would be safe to say that most teenagers spent the month of December convincing their parents, family members and 'Santa' that they really needed the latest and greatest phone, tablet, clothes, or gift cards for Christmas. This year, 13 local Visalia and Tulare students spent the month of December convincing their parents, family, and maybe even themselves that they are ready to start their own company. For the last 11 weeks the Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) students have been brainstorming and learning core business concepts in preparation to start their very own business in the next 6 months.

Everyone knows that it takes a lot of hard work to start a business. Many adults learn through trial and error that entrepreneurship is difficult and that you must have a never give up attitude. The YEA! students are learning reality, but have also learned that the business communities in Visalia and Tulare are extremely supportive of their efforts. So far the students have gone on two different field trips one to Rosa Brothers Milk Company and the other to A&W Restaurant. They have also had the opportunity to meet with Gregory Gillett, an attorney with Philpot Mattos, Attorneys at Law and Kevin Daniel, a CPA with Vollmer, Daniel, Gaebe & Grove. Both men spent an hour of their time with the students giving them professional advice and encouraging them to follow their dreams.

One of the most exciting experiences for the students so far is the chance to be paired with a business mentor. Eleven local business professionals have volunteered as mentors for the YEA!

program this year. The mentors will help prepare the students for the upcoming Investor Panel "Shark Tank" event, where students will receive startup funding from local investors. Each mentor has been asked to help the students to clarify, and add detail to their individual business plan including marketing plans, short term and long term goals and financial charts. The mentors will also assist the students as they begin to put their formal presentations together. We would like to thank each of our mentors for agreeing to meet with the students in class on seven different evenings and for making themselves available to the students outside of the classroom for the next 3 months. This year's mentors are: Kim Batty, Staci Chastain, Lori Dunagan, Garth Gipson, Zach Green, Igor Ferriera, Kevin Mooney, David Moore, Kim Rico, Terry Sayer, and Harley.

"We are proud of these students and commend them for taking on such a large task at such a young age. It is inspiring to see a student set a goal and work diligently to reach that goal. We know that through the YEA! program these students will see success and will soon be able to say that their Christmas wish of owning their own business has come true."

Current student businesses:

- M.W. Productions - a rake and shovel combination to help with yard work.
- Stack Error - a website for students, teachers, and parents that provides better communications tools
- Vevo - water bottles that come with charms, proceeds from profits are donated to drought relief efforts.
- Fruit Frenzy - a custom fruit salad bar
- R.E.A.C.H. - an after school tutoring program for high school students
- The Classic Cup - a new twist on a coffee cart/café
- Cr8 - a series of children and teen novels with an emphasis on strong ethics
- Gerges Referral Company - a referral service to help connect high school students to part time office jobs.
- Chocolate Wonders - delicious homemade chocolate candies
- MTS Soaps - customize handmade bars of soap.

## Bank of the Sierra Run Funds Local Non-Profit; Inspires Fitness for New Year



The 4th annual Rockin' Resolution Run benefits Visalia Rescue Mission while giving runners a chance to start the year off right.

**VISALIA, CA** — Bank of the Sierra announced that registration was still open for its annual run for charity, the Rockin' Resolution Run. The New Year's Day run aims to inspire community members to make fitness goals for the New Year, while also creating community awareness. In its fourth year, the run has raised more than \$25,000 for local charities.

Over the past two years, the local run has partnered with Visalia Rescue Mission, a local homeless outreach organization which serves the community through offering food and shelter and other programs for men, women and children in need. The group serves an average of 130 people each night. All net proceeds from this year's run will go to the Mission.

The rock-themed 5k event hosts several bands along the run route. This year also sees the addition of a costume contest, which will encourage runners to don their best rock get-up from any era. Prizes will be given for best individual and group costumes.

Bank of the Sierra President and CEO Kevin McPhail expressed his appreciation for the work that the Visalia Rescue Mission does. "It's a pleasure to be able to partner with the Visalia Rescue Mission. The Bank loves to support organizations that improve our community, and we're happy to show our gratitude for the Rescue Mission's important work."

The festivities start out with a 1-mile kids run at 9 am at the Downtown Visalia Bank of the Sierra branch. Early-Bird Registration is open through December 11th at a discount, and registrations will be accepted through the 24th, with limited registration available the morning of the event. Learn more at <http://rockinresolutionrun.com>, and register online at <http://goo.gl/oxXrql>.



### SOUTH AFRICA CULTURE & NATURE IN HARMONY

Join the Chamber for a slideshow presentation January 12th at 12:00 p.m. at the Chamber office

**SEPTEMBER 22-OCTOBER 5, 2016**

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Johannesburg, Soweto, Kruger National Park, Safari Game Drive, Knysna, Featherbed Nature Preserve, Ostrich Farm, Cape Town, Table Mountain.

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For pricing or registration details call the Visalia Chamber of Commerce at 559-734-5876 or visit [www.visaliachamber.org](http://www.visaliachamber.org)

**VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**  
222 N. Garden St. Suite 300, Visalia

## Family healthcare network to open new school-based health center in Traver, Ca

Visalia, CA – After nearly two years of planning and development, Family HealthCare Network (FHCN) will open the doors of its newest Community Health Center in the rural community of Traver, CA on Wednesday, December 9, 2015. Located on a parcel of Traver Elementary School land at 4177 Avenue 368, FHCN's newest site will be a school-based health center and was developed in conjunction with Traver Joint School District. FHCN's new Traver Health Center will offer comprehensive family medicine and pediatric services for local school children, families, and the community.



FHCN Traver

"This project is years in the making and with the support of our partners, patients, and the community, we are extremely pleased to officially begin expanding access to health care for Traver residents, and to be a part of the ongoing development of this community," stated Family HealthCare Network President and CEO Kerry Hydash.

In early August, FHCN was notified that it was selected as a recipient of a New Access Point grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to open the new site. The 3,700 square foot health center features six exam rooms for medical services and supports the

organization's team-based, patient-centered medical home model. The Traver Health Center will mark the organization's twentieth site, and sixteenth Community Health Center in Tulare and Kings Counties.

FHCN's Traver Health Center will initially open part-time, Monday and Friday from 9:00am to 1:00 pm, and Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 2:00pm to 6:00pm. Full time hours will expand to Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 6:00pm. To schedule your appointment, or for more information about the new Family HealthCare Network Traver Health Center, please call 1-877-960-3426, or visit the website at [www.FHCN.org](http://www.FHCN.org).

### Centofanti

(continued from page 4)

offers an abundance of networking opportunities to make business connections and in today's business profession it seems to be more about who you know and not always what you know.

**What has Chamber Membership meant for your company?** Chamber membership has helped M. Green and Company LLP get involved in the business community by informing people about the services we can offer them. If you would ask the average person what a CPA does, the only thing that would come to mind is taxes but our firm offers a wide variety of accounting and auditing services in addition to our taxation services.

**The best part of Visalia is .....** The best part of Visalia is downtown and Visalia's central location. Downtown Visalia offers many unique local restaurants and shops and the Downtown Visalians put on several enjoyable events throughout the year. Then when you need a day away, Visalia is only a short ride away to the national parks or the beach.

**What is your favorite local charity/non-profit?** I love Read for Life's mission. With a 2 year old of my own I can appreciate the value of reading and this organization provides the resources to children in our community.



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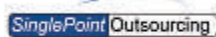
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Suncrest Bank today announced that the merger of Sutter Community Bank with and into Suncrest Bank was completed on December 11, 2015.

The acquisition, which was first announced on June 25, 2015, was concluded following receipt of shareholder approval for the transaction from the shareholders of Sutter Community Bank and all required regulatory approvals. As of September 30, 2015, Sutter Community Bank had \$68.3 million in assets and Suncrest Bank had \$218.0 million in assets.

Ciaran McMullan, President and CEO of Suncrest Bank, commented, "The transaction creates a much stronger community and agricultural bank with an expanded presence across the Central Valley. Our newly combined company has the ability to offer loans up to \$10 million to qualified borrowers throughout the North and South Valley, and we are excited about the growth potential this geographic expansion gives us."

CLIP & SAVE

**CALENDAR - JANUARY 2016**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 Visalia City Council Meeting 4 pm work session; 7 pm regular session Council Chambers	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Travel Slide Show Visalia Chamber Office 12:00 pm Government Affairs Meeting 7:15 pm Buckman-Mitchell Office	13	14	15	16
17	18 Visalia City Council Meeting 4 pm work session; 7 pm regular session Council Chambers	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Ambassador Breakfast Visalia First Assembly Church 8 am	29	30
31						

**THE LAW AT WORK**

**Be on the Lookout: New Employment Laws for 2016**

A new year usually brings new laws for employers to worry about. It looks like 2016 will be no exception. This is not a complete list of every new employment law taking effect in 2016, but here are some notable ones:

- Restrictions on E-Verify Use (AB 622; Labor Code § 2814): U.S. employers must verify that the workers they hire are authorized to work in this country. But this new statute restricts their ability to use the E-Verify system to do so. Unless required by federal law, employers can only check the status of applicants who've received an offer but have yet to start work. In addition, the employer needs to notify the workers promptly if the E-Verify system doesn't confirm that they are authorized to work in the U.S.
- New Minimum Compensation for Exempt Computer Software Professionals (Labor Code § 515.5): Effective January 1, 2016, for computer software professionals to be exempt from overtime, they must (among other things) be paid a minimum of \$41.85 per hour or \$87,185.14 per year.
- Expansion of Individual Liability for Wage Violations (SB 588; Labor Code §§ 690.020 et seq.): The "Fair Day's Pay Act" has been passed to help employees who have difficulty collecting judgments because their employers change their names or hide their assets. It allows the Labor Commissioner to conduct hearings to determine whether a "person acting on behalf of an employer" should be held personally liable for an employer's violations. The Labor Commissioner would also be able to levy those individuals' accounts or property to enforce a judgment.



**Brett Abbott, Attorney**  
Gubler & Abbott LLP

• Piece-Rate Compensation (AB 1513; Labor Code § 226.2): Under this law, no matter how much employees are paid per piece, they must also be paid for rest periods and other "nonproductive time."

• Protection for employees when a relative working for the same employer engages in protected activity (AB 1509): Under this law, if a married couple is working for the same employer, and the husband complains of discrimination, that's not a legal basis to take action against the wife.

• Protection for Requesting Accommodation (AB 987): This bill amended the Fair Employment and Housing Act to clarify that employers can't retaliate against employees for requesting accommodation for a disability or religious observance.

While it's extremely unlikely that a single business would be affected by all these new rules, given the breadth and scope of them taken together, it's almost certain that one of these laws will affect your business in the coming year.

This article is for education and information purposes only; it should not be construed as legal advice. If you have an employment law question for inclusion in a future article, contact Brett T. Abbott at Gubler & Abbott LLP (bta@thecalifornialawyers.com). For specific employment law advice or other legal assistance, contact Gubler & Abbott LLP, (559) 625-9600, 1110 N. Chinowith St., Visalia, CA 93291 (www.thecalifornialawyers.com).



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