

Business Update

AWARD-WINNING MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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FILE PHOTO / THE SUN-GAZETTE

Gov. Gavin Newsom's office is awarding \$14 million in economic and workforce development to the San Joaquin Valley.

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EVENTS

APRIL 12

Spring-Tini

Time: 5 to 9 p.m.
Location: The Woodlands
Tickets: visaliachamber.org/springtini

APRIL 25

Ambassador Monthly Meeting

Time: 8 a.m.
Location: Visalia First

TRAVEL WITH US

JUNE 20-27, 2024

Alaska: Call of the Wild

JULY 17-25, 2024

Great Canadian Cities

SEPTEMBER 20-26, 2024

New York City and the Hudson River Valley

OCTOBER 1-9, 2024

A Culinary Journey Through Tuscany

MARCH 18-29, 2025

Treasures of Croatia and Slovenia

MARCH 25-APRIL 2, 2025

Treasures of Ireland

JULY 22-30, 2025

Alpine Swiss Villages and Rails



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www.visaliachamber.org/travel

\$14 million boosts economic growth in Central Valley

Gov. Newsom's latest economic endeavor funnels \$14 million to the Central Valley's Job First Collaborative



Darren Fraser
Reporter
The Sun-Gazette

Gov. Gavin Newsom's latest move has shined a light on the Central Valley's economic potential with his introduction of a new state council, which is not only focused on creating more jobs across the state, but on streamlining the state's economic and

workforce development programs to create these jobs faster.

In a March 8 press release, Newsom announced the creation of the California Jobs First Council. He also awarded \$182 million in grants to a statewide initiative to accelerate economic and workforce projects across the state, of which \$14 million has been allocated to the Central Valley Community Foundation, a nonprofit organization in Fresno.

The nine-member council, co-chaired by Dee Dee Myers, senior advisor to Newsom and director of the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, and Stewart Knox, Secretary of Labor and Workflow Development, will be tasked with guiding California's investments in economic and workforce development.

The council will focus on creating more family-supporting jobs and on prioritizing sectors for future growth.

Keeping our eye on the prize

As one of 13 economic regions in the state, the Central Valley is a key player in California's economy. The Regional Investment Initiative, formerly known as the Community Economic Resilience Fund, established within each economic region a governance body called a Jobs First Collaborative. The Central Valley Community Foundation (CVCF) is the Valley's Collaborative.

In October 2022, CVCF received \$5 million during the planning phase of the initiative; last week, CVCF received \$14 million of the \$182 million in grants. The \$182 formed the initiative's Catalyst Program.

CVCF has a six-county footprint that includes Fresno, Tulare, Madera, Kings, Merced and Mariposa. Ashley Swearingin is CVCF's president and CEO. For Swearingin, the creation of the council is significant.

"It's a really big deal," she said. "I've been at this for a while and it's been a while since I have seen a gubernatorial administration stop and say, 'Hey, we really need our state agencies to be coordinating better. To lift up our regions and make sure we're helping to create jobs.' We're real excited to see it hit."

Swearingin said CVCF used the initial \$5 million to support its planning process, which is ongoing. They also used to fund small profits. With respect to the \$14 million CVCF received last week, she said they put out requests for proposals (RFPs) to call for projects.

"We have a local, competitive process we're going through to help allocate those dollars," she said. To date, 85 entities have submitted draft pro-

See **ECONOMY** on page 2

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Leadership Visalia and the Future CEO program



Gail Zurek
President and CEO
Visalia Chamber

"The future belongs to those who invest in today and have a hope for tomorrow"

In the ever-evolving landscape of the business world, discussions about different generations in the workplace often swirl the latest viral social media video.

These videos, while sometimes humorous, underscore a deeper truth: the need to invest in the future of leadership. As organizations grapple with succession planning and long-term strategies, it's clear that the future belongs to those who invest in today and hold hope for tomorrow.

Enter two remarkable initiatives from the Visalia Chamber of Commerce: Leadership Visalia and the Future CEO program. These programs aren't just about education; they're about transformation, empowering individuals to lead with purpose and vision. They are your organizations opportunity to invest in our community's succession planning and long-term success.

Leadership Visalia leads participants on a nine-month journey of personal and professional growth. Whether they're budding business leaders or seasoned professionals seeking new avenues of leadership, participants dive into understanding their leadership style, learn to work together on community projects and forge mean-

ingful connections that drive positive change. It's about equipping leaders with the skills and insights they need to make a lasting impact, not just in their businesses but in the broader Visalia community.

Similarly, the Future CEO program ignites the entrepreneurial spark in young minds. Through structured online courses, elementary-aged children learn the ropes of innovation, problem-solving, and business management. They're not just dreaming; they're doing, laying the groundwork for future success as they bring their business ideas to life.

On May 4th, these Future CEOs will showcase their ventures at the Future CEO Day. I invite you to join us in supporting them – whether by trying their juice, sampling their muffins, or simply sharing in their excitement. By patronizing their businesses and celebrating their achievements, we're not just buying products; we're investing in the next generation of leaders, fostering an entrepreneurial spirit that will drive innovation and growth in our community.

The success of Visalia isn't accidental; it's the result of deliberate investment in leaders for today and tomorrow. As we rally behind programs like Leadership Visalia and the Future CEO program, we're not just shaping the future; we're building it, one empowered leader at a time.

More information about both Leadership Visalia and Future CEO can be found on our website visaliachamber.org including how you can participate and invest in these great initiatives. Because when we invest in them, we're investing in the future of our community – and that's a bet worth making.

Local officials secure funds for Kaweah Health

Supervisor Larry Micari announces Senator Grove's securement of \$21 million to keep the Visalia Kaweah Delta Health Care District in operation



Karis Caddell
Reporter
The Sun-Gazette

Local officials have locked down life-saving funding for Kaweah Health, which will allow the medical facility to continue to stay in operation and stay serving the community.

In an effort to save rural hospitals, Senator Shannon Grove (R-Bakersfield) and Tulare County Supervisor Larry Micari came together to secure loans to Central Valley hospitals at risk of closure. On Feb. 27, at the board of supervisors meeting, Chairman Larry Micari announced that Senator Shannon Grove received confirmation that \$21 million was secured to keep Kaweah Health hospital up and running.

"I'm happy that our efforts are moving forward and that we're able to continue to keep our hospital open," Micari said at the meeting. "I've been working on that for a couple of years now with her trying to (save the hospital) from what's happening."

According to a press release from the senator's office, Grove was able to help secure \$20.8 million for the Kaweah Delta Health Care District in Visalia and \$5.5 million for the Ridgecrest Regional Hospital in Ridgecrest. Micari explained that Kaweah Health has been on the verge of going bankrupt for a while now.

"It's going to help people in our community because it's going to help keep our hospital open and staffed," Micari said in an interview with The Sun-Gazette. "No business can operate in the negative...this funding will help them continue to provide services to our community."

Micari explained that one of the things threatening the hospitals right now is that MediCal reimbursements do not cover all the expenses of necessary procedures. Because of this, Kaweah Delta Hospital has been working in the negative because they are only receiving a portion of reimbursement of what the actual procedures they offer are costing them.

This is why Senator Grove has been working to get funding for two hospitals in her district that desperately needed funds as part of the Distressed Hospital Loan Program, according to a press release from her office.

"Keeping Kaweah Hospital and Ridgecrest Regional Hospital open and serving their communities has been my top priority this year," Grove said via press release. "Securing this funding relief was also a community effort with local organizations advocating for the health and wellness of Central Valley residents. Hospitals are the one thing that everyone will need at some point in their lives."

The Distressed Hospital Loan Program is a state program that

See **FUNDS** on page 2

CITY UPDATE



Spring Snapshot

It's not just a season, Visalia is springing forward with exciting new development as 2024 rolls on.

We've compiled highlights from recent updates from the City of Visalia Community Development Department's Site Plan Review to share below. Here we grow!

The new North Visalia Costco project has gained a revise and proceed through the City's Site Plan Review (SPR). The 159,352 square foot Costco will be accompanied by a car wash and a 15-dispenser fuel facility. The project will add additional signals at, and near the corner of, Shirk and Riggan.

The College of the Sequoias Visalia Campus University Center project will continue the entitlement process. The Measure C funded project will deliver a "mini CSU" in Visalia providing increased satellite access to four year institutions such as Fresno State, UC Merced, or CSU Bakersfield.

An indoor pickleball court is being proposed at 730 S. Bridge. The facility proposed will have a 26' clear height for unobstructed play with several courts, locker area, restrooms, waiting and observation areas,

and concessions.

A new, local coffee and tea house concept is being proposed in the existing historical building at 112 E. Oak. Tazzah Coffee + Tea received a revise and proceed as they propose to use the existing structure and outdoor area to provide a new sit-down cafe option, serving coffee, tea, juices, smoothies, and food.

The City's East Civic Center Campus project also received a revise and proceed from SPR. Phase Two will construct the new Council Chambers Building, Public Safety Administration Building, Evidence Building, and pavilion. The future Phase Three will further enhance the campus with the construction of City Hall and additional parking, expanding administrative capacity and community engagement resources.

To learn more about the City of Visalia and economic development, visit www.visalia.city/business/ed.

For more information on City of Visalia, visit www.visalia.city or visit them on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn @CityofVisalia.

ECONOMY

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posals for projects.

Swearingin said she encourages CVCF's local partners who are involved in the initiative to keep their eye on the prize.

"And the prize is a large-scale, long-range plan for inclusive and sustainable economic development in the region," she said. "I think, by order of magnitude, we should be putting forward a plan that argues for tens and tens of billions of dollars of investment for this region."

The other 12 regions are North State, Capitol, Redwood Region, Bay Area, Orange County, Los Angeles County, Eastern Sierra, Kern County, Central Coast, Inland Southern California and the Southern Border. Each region received \$5 million during the Planning Phase and \$14 million as part of the Catalyst Program.

"California has created more opportunities, more jobs, and more businesses than any other state, but we need to ensure that we're all moving forward together. Through this new council and these investments, we're aligning all of our economic resources to create more jobs, faster for Californians in every community," Newsom said.

According to the press release, the California Jobs First Council will oversee the development of a statewide industrial strategy. This strategy will address business attraction and expansion. The council will identify sectors in the state that need economic assistance and investment.

"I am looking forward to working with my colleagues to align strategic investments that further economic growth and job creation in every region of California," council co-chair Dee Dee Myers said.

Community Loyal Members | *A thriving community starts here!*

NEW

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce would like to welcome our newest members. We encourage individuals and businesses to support chamber member businesses.

Business Builder Members:

- Sizzler USA
- Quality Printing

Small Business Members:

- Cen Cal One Technologies
- Kamel's Med Spa
- Mooney Pet Shop
- Sequoia Meadow Christina Camp
- Watsons Veggie Garden

RENEWING

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

Regional Leader Members:

- SJVC / San Joaquin Valley College, Inc.*

Keystone Members:

- California Dairies, Inc.*

Community Investor Members:

- College of the Sequoias*

Business Builder Members:

- Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel*
- Southern California Edison Company*

Business Connector Members:

- Citizens Business Bank*
- County of Tulare Board of Supervisors
- Elite Restoration by Villegas*
- Karen Gross / State Farm Insurance*
- Pita Kabob*
- The Creative Promo*
- Urbane Cafe

Small Business Members:

- Ashwood Construction, Inc.*
- Law Offices of Sherwood & Marvin*
- LMG Ag Products*
- Motto Mortgage Destination*
- Paynter Realty & Investments, Inc.*
- United Health Centers



Business Builder Nonprofit Members:

- Visalia Fox Theatre*

Business Connector Nonprofit Members:

- Center for Spiritual Living Visalia

Small Business Nonprofit Members:

- Seven Oaks Church*

* Indicates membership in the Visalia Chamber 110% Club.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Name: Jenna Salazar
Company: Transit Media, Inc.
Title: President/CEO

Founded in 2013 under the name "Rethought Reborn Media," our agency has managed the transit advertising revenue sharing programs for multiple markets throughout the Central Valley. We love transit advertising so much we changed our name to reflect what we do - Transit Media.

While transit advertising programs are our passion, our services to our transit partners also include fleet design, marketing support, communications, print collateral, and whatever else our transit agency partners need to help them serve their communities.

In January, we merged with a sister agency and expanded our footprint to several markets in Northern California. We currently manage programs in Amador County, Calaveras County, City of Delano, Glenn County, Lake County, Mendocino County, Tulare County, Tuolumne County, City of Visalia, and Yosemite.

Studies show moving transit ads engage consumers 45% sooner than stationary out-of-home ads, increasing memory encoding by 33%



TRANSIT MEDIA, INC.

resulting in a 112% increase in brand saliency proving transit advertising is most likely to shift brand preference and recalled in a purchasing situation. In addition, 71% of consumers prefer buses with ads over buses without ads! Transit advertising is incredibly effective for reaching your target market and is very affordable.

Transit Media is a member of each Chamber of Commerce where we manage transit advertising programs. We truly value the services and support the Chambers bring to the businesses in their communities. Additionally, Transit Media regularly sponsors local fundraising efforts and events.

This company was originally founded with the desire to help

small businesses grow. By managing transit advertising programs, we get to connect with businesses in every community we serve and provide a simple, affordable, and effective way for them to get their message out to their target market. We believe strong local businesses result in a strong local economy, which equates to a better quality of life for the whole community.

Additionally, all the net proceeds from the transit advertising programs directly support the services the transit agencies are able to provide the community. So, not only does transit advertising help our business partners grow their businesses, it helps local residents get to work, school, shopping, and medical appointments.

The Chamber provides excellent opportunities to connect with other businesses throughout the community in a variety of ways. Always available to provide networking opportunities, answer questions, and connect resources, the Chamber is an invaluable asset to local businesses.

Placing transit advertisements is very simple and straightforward. We coordinate the whole process from start to finish, and even provide complimentary ad design for our clients.

Locally owned recruitment firm is celebrating 23 years in business



Twenty years ago, Shelly Little, CEO and President of Personnel Solutions Unlimited had a plan to match strong candidates with growing, Central Valley companies. Her vision to serve local businesses while providing quality candidates is still being accomplished today.

Personnel Solutions Unlimited is locally owned and operated doing business since March of 2001. The independently owned recruitment firm and offers staffing & recruiting solutions for employers and job & career opportunities for employees.

With over 26 years of experience in the Industry, Shelly

and her team of staffing and recruitment specialists understand the needs of their clients and candidates. Their specialized niche recruiting focuses on Accounting, Administrative, Management and Medical Office Recruitment, however they do industry specific recruitment is depending on the needs of their clients.

Personnel Solutions has always maintained a presence in the community which is evident with their involvement with the local Chambers of Commerce, Society for Human Resources Management-Tulare/Kings SHRM, and The California Staffing Association, as well as the Better Business Bureau. We understand

the importance of networking, education and being a part of the local professional network.

As the 23rd year Anniversary arrives for Personnel Solutions Unlimited, Inc. Shelly Little would like to thank the many businesses of the Central Valley that have supported her company throughout the years.

At Personnel Solutions, we work extremely hard to help meet the needs of our Clients and Candidates.

Our Recruitment solutions provide:

- Temporary employees for a project or coverage for any type of leave
- Temp to Hire for companies that want to make sure they are hiring the right candidate for a full time opportunity
- Direct Hire-Executive Search & Placement

We provide exceptional customer service and listen to the needs of our Clients! Our results-oriented approach to placement solutions enables us to create the ideal fit for

both our clients and employees.

Honesty, integrity, credibility, and a willingness to respond to the needs of our clients and employees is our philosophy for building long term business relationships.

Get the help you need: Companies can reach out to outside

firms to assist in their Recruitment & Staffing needs. We can help you save time, with our pre-screening process. We have seen an increase in candidates that are passively looking for a change and want our help. We connect with and place skilled candidates every day and those relationships are

something we pride ourselves with.

If your company is having a difficult time finding talent to fill positions, let's have a conversation and see what how our team can help you.

Call 559-734-0570 or email Slittle@psu-inc.com website: www.psu-inc.com

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

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Layout The Sun-Gazette

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FUNDS

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was created in 2023 and designed to provide loans for nonprofit and public hospitals on the brink of collapse. It came into action soon after the Madera Community Hospital closed in January 2023, which according to Grove, sent a warning across California that hospitals are facing a critical financial crisis, especially in rural communities.

Before the program was established, Grove and other Senate Republicans wrote a letter to the governor urging him to sign Assembly Bill (AB) 112, which put the Distressed Hospital Loan Program in place. She noted that any delays in implementing the program would put hospitals and their patients at risk.

Back in August 2023, Micari also voiced his support for the bill at a State of the Local Government Luncheon.

"I've worked on it for a long time. We've taken baby steps on it. I hope this bill takes us a long way to helping our hospitals because we need it here," Micari said at the luncheon.

Grove has also been advocating to save rural hospitals that face an uncertain future by jointly authoring Senate Bill 774, the "Save Our Hospitals" measure. The measure aims to keep California Attorney General Rob Bonta from closing more financially distressed rural hospitals.

According to a press release from Gavin Newsom's office,

the governor signed AB 112 to further the efforts to save the hospitals. The bill made a \$150 million loan program immediately available for California's not-for-profit and public hospitals on the brink of closure—or recently closed—to access so they can continue to serve their communities.



PHOTO BY RIGOBERTO MORAN

Kaweah Health Medical Center received just under \$21 million from California's Distressed Hospital Loan Program to help the hospital with its ailing finances as it struggles to bridge the shortfall between actual costs and state reimbursements.

Congratulations to **Kaweah Health** who was ranked among the top 10 hospitals in California for 2024, according to Knowinsiders.com. Rankings are assessed by a number of US News and Healthgrades criteria.

Assistance League of Visalia will host their annual fundraiser, "An Evening at the Derby" on April 27th. The event will feature prizes, dinner, and a silent auction at the country club on April 27th. Proceeds will support Operation School Bell.

Congratulations to **California Service Dog Academy** who announced in March that they are in escrow on a permanent training facility.

Just Between Friends Visalia/Fresno will host their Spring Sale on April 5-7 at the **International Agri Center**.

Congratulations to **Tri Counties Bank**



who is celebrating 50 years this year!

Family Health-Care Network welcomed their newest providers, Christopher Liguori, PA-C to their Porterville Downtown health center, Marlyn Serralde, ASW to their Cutler-Orosi health center, and Evan Dean, FNPC to their Visalia

Bridge health center.

Eagle Mountain Casino donated a record breaking \$117,000 from their 22nd Annual Charity Golf Tournament.

Bank of the Sierra donated more than \$4 million to multiple nonprofit organizations in communities through its Sierra Grant Program.

Visalia nonprofit to host event showcasing mission to honor military personnel

The Brave Project Visalia, in partnership with Leadership Visalia, will host a special Celebration Event on Saturday, May 18, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. to recognize its grassroots effort and mission to honor local military personnel with banners in the City of Visalia. This free family-friendly event will take place at the Bello Vita Venue Parking Lot and will showcase the organization's legacy—all started by Visalia resident, Gary Cole, in 2012.

Inspired by a similar project done in Southern California, Gary made it his mission to bring back the idea to the



The BRAVE Project Visalia

Central Valley and honor active service members and veterans of Visalia. After Gary's passing, his son, Dustin Cole, became The Brave Project's Executive Director and has continued his father's legacy.

"I'm so grateful and privileged to have helped my father start this organization and to have continued in his footsteps. We enjoy our freedom, because of the brave men and women who choose to serve in the military. It's beautiful to see the support from Visalians. This city truly appreciates their military personnel," said Dustin Cole, The Brave Project Visalia's Executive Director.

Today, more than 500 banners hang in the City of Visalia. Dustin is a one-man show running the organization, and is appreciative of the donors, volunteers, and service mem-

bers' families who have shown great support in purchasing banners for their loved ones.

"I've seen the work that goes on behind the scenes, firsthand. Dustin truly is like a one-man show, and that's why it's really important for the community to come together to support him and ensure The Brave Project Visalia is sustainable for generations to come," said Aurelia Rocha, Visalia mother who purchased banners for her two service members.

The Celebration Event will honor local active members and veterans, as well as their families.

Donors will also receive recognition for their ongoing support to fund banners for service members in Visalia. Local dignitaries will also be in attendance.



Leadership Visalia travels back to school

Victoria Balderas

Human Resources Senior Program Coord. CSET

On Friday March 8th the Leadership Visalia day session focused on local education. We kicked off the morning bright and early at Mt View Elementary where we had a warm welcome and were treated to a delightful breakfast accompanied by coffee, juice and music. We started off with an Icebreaker activity that involved sharing meaningful memories or personal traits, fostering connections among attendees.

The morning featured the distinguished speakers, Claudia Ardon-Diaz the Director of Teaching and Learning with a focus on multilingualism, and Dr. Cifuentes, the passionate principal at Mt. View Elementary. In addition, Lizette Ayala, a dedicated student success teacher, shared insights into coaching teachers working with dual languages.

Claudia's journey, shaped by her early separation from her parents, emphasized the importance of understanding each child's story to make a difference. The mission and vision highlighted the commitment to a dual language program, now in its third year, emphasizing partnership and program structure. The model ensures unity in language, emphasizing the importance of surrounding oneself with supportive individuals. Currently, Visalia Unified School District has two schools that offer Dual Immersion programs.

The day continued with a presentation by Vanessa Alvarado on the Family & Community Resource Center, addressing issues like homelessness, substandard housing, and unaccompanied youth. A poignant video shed light on students facing housing challenges, reinforcing the need for community support and awareness.

The program also addressed the needs of newcomer students, spanning 2-3 years in its journey since its inception in 2016. The learning process actively involves student voices, aiming to understand their experiences and address challenges, while also recognizing and valuing their individual stories. We had a wonderful pizza party with student panelists who shared their stories. We learned what the program is doing for them or what it has done for those who graduate from the program.



LEADERSHIP VISALIA



LEADERSHIP VISALIA

After Lunch, we all gathered for the ride of our lives. We traveled to COS on a yellow school bus. The class was provided with a behind the scenes tour of COS, led by COS President Brent Calvin and Vice President of Student Services Jessica Morrison. We visited the Giant Market which is offered to every student, providing them with 18 essential items per month. Additionally, students are encouraged to sign up for CalFresh, reinforcing holistic support beyond educational needs.

Remarkably, the Giant Market program goes beyond the academic realm, offering housing for students and emergen-

cy transportation services. The focus on well-being is evident through initiatives like kitchen demonstrations, emphasizing essential life skills such as cooking. Practical aspects like laundry facilities and the availability of Grab and Go items for them at no charge.

Partnerships with local entities, including Giant Threads COS, showcases a collaborative effort towards the program's success. There is much anticipation for the growth at COS including the expansion of their partnership with the University Center and the offer of more local programs.



Bank celebrates 50th anniversary by helping community college students achieve their dreams

Tri Counties Bank, a leading community bank in California, kicked off its 50th Anniversary Celebration today with the launch of a year-long fundraising campaign to support the California Community Colleges Student Ambassador Program. In a press event at Sacramento City College, the bank launched the campaign with a \$50,000 contribution and announced it will hold a variety of fundraising events and volunteer activities in partnership with the Foundation for California Community Colleges (FoundationCCC), which oversees the program.

The Student Ambassador Program trains and empowers students as on-campus leaders in peer-to-peer outreach. Ambassadors connect fellow students to food, housing, and other basic needs resources that ease barriers to education (such as CalFresh and Crisis Text Line), provide hands-on benefit application assistance, and reduce the stigma around getting help. Through the partnership, Tri Counties Bank employees in California will be connected directly with local student ambassadors across the California Commu-

nity College system.

"We chose FoundationCCC as a partner for our 50th Anniversary campaign because of the positive impact the California Community Colleges and the Student Ambassador Program have on the communities we serve throughout the state," said Rick Smith, President and CEO of Tri Counties Bank. "Tri Counties Bank believes in people, first and foremost, and we plan to continue that mission over the next fifty years."

The partnership comes at a critical time. A 2023 survey found that two-thirds of California community college students struggle with food or housing insecurity. Nearly half of California community college students are unsure of where their next meal will come from, and roughly one in four face homelessness. Each ambassador can reach approximately 1,000 students, providing crucial support to address these challenges and ease their pathway towards college and career success.

"As a single parent who had to balance education with

See BANK on page 4



Learn more about

TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES



April 29, 2024 | 5pm

RE/MAX Success Conference Room
4840 W Mineral King Ave, Visalia CA 93291

REGISTER NOW!



2025 Trips:

Vietnam & Cambodia,
Croatia & Slovenia,
Holland & Rhine River,
Alpine Swiss,
Venice, Ireland
& more!

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PHOTO BY RIGOBERTO MORAN

Visalia hotel named Best of Wyndham 2023 award winner

Visalia, California (March 13th 2024) – The Wyndham Visalia at 9000 W. Airport Drive, Visalia today announced it has been awarded the annual Best of Wyndham Award 2023 which recognizes the brand's top performing hotels and their staff.

In celebration of the achievement, Samantha Rummage-Mathias, General Manager, accepted the award from Wyndham Hotels & Resorts leadership.

"We are so proud to receive this honor for the fourth time, as our team has worked incredibly hard to consistently deliver a high level of service to our guests," said Rummage-Mathias. "To be part of an elite list of 54 hotels around the world to receive the award, with only 14 recipients in the USA and just 2 in California, Wyndham Visalia Hotel and Resort and Wyndham Anaheim Hotel and Resort, is a testament to the dedication of our team and our steadfast commitment to our guests. We look forward to welcoming even more travelers in the year to come!"

To be eligible for the award, hotels must have demonstrated strong guest satisfaction, had all their staff complete Wyndham's required health & safety trainings, and remained in good standing with the brand in the past year.

The Wyndham Visalia is a 256-room hotel with well-appointed guest rooms and suites, offers two pools (heated indoor and outdoor), hot tub, 24 hr fitness center, 22,000 sq ft of meeting space, complimentary business center, full service restaurant and lounge with complimentary Wi-Fi and ample complimentary parking.

Count on Wyndham® to give travelers what they really need

See AWARD on page 4

Thank you

TO OUR PREMIER MEMBERS

CHAMPION:



VISIONARY:



REGIONAL LEADERS:



KEYSTONE:



MEDIA PARTNERS:



RIBBON CUTTING



Ochs Chiropractic hosted a ribbon cutting and open house in celebration of their 2nd Anniversary. Visit and book your next appointment at 2630 S Mooney Blvd #204 or by calling (559) 931-2889.

California pay data reports due May 8

Attention employers with 100+ employees: You have less than two months to report last year's pay data to the state's Civil Rights Department, and you need a plan of action in order to comply with this stringent law. Here's your three-step action plan for compliance:

Step 1: Determine whether you need to file a Payroll Employee report or a Labor Contractor Employee report, even if you are based outside of California.

In addition to the Payroll Employee Report, a private employer with 100 or more workers hired through labor contractors (such as temp agencies) in the prior calendar year (with at least one worker based in California) must file a separate Labor Contractor Employee Report that covers workers hired through labor contractors in the prior calendar year. A Labor Contractor is an individual or entity that supplies, either with or without a contract, a client employer with workers to perform labor within the client employer's usual course of business.

You should first review whether you will need to file a pay data report this year, either for payroll employees or labor contractors. Employers who did not file an Employee Payroll report last year based on having fewer than 100 employees should review whether your headcount has changed, necessitating a report to be filed this year. In addition, review whether you have used 100 or more labor contractor employees (and at least one California employee), which would necessitate filing a Labor Contractor Employee report.

Employers based outside of California with 100 or more employees who have even 1 employee in California are required to file a pay data report.

Step 2: Identify your labor contractors and request the required labor contractor pay data report information.

You should identify your labor contractors now and send out written communications soon to request the information needed to complete the Labor Contractor Employee report.



While labor contractors are required to comply with these requests – and there are penalties for not doing so – the obligation to file the report falls on the employer using the labor contractors. Ensure your written request for information from labor contractors is sent out as soon as possible to allow them to timely gather the information, especially without the possibility of responding "unknown" for demographic information.

Step 3: Prepare a plan for submitting your pay data report(s) before the May 8 deadline.

Designate the individual or team of individuals who will have responsibility for ensuring all information is gathered for the Payroll Employee and Labor Contractor Employee reports and file the reports by the May 8 deadline. You should get started on this early to ensure compliance and get any questions about the new requirements answered well before the deadline.

Conclusion
The Pay Data Reporting Portal is now open for employers to begin early submissions and the Civil Rights Department (who receives the reports) has created a comprehensive collection of documents to assist employers with preparing their reports. From a User Guide and FAQs to training slides, employers should review this information to ensure accurate completion of the reports. The website where the Portal and additional informational documents are located is <https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/pay-datareporting>.

BANK

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childcare responsibilities, I've seen first-hand how access to food and housing resources can transform lives," said Yuriko Curiel, Student Ambassador Program Coordinator for the FoundationCCC. Once a part of the program herself, Curiel now trains future student ambassadors.

Tri Counties Bank's year-long 50th Anniversary initiative will involve multiple fundraising efforts, including encouraging donations through the Bank's Mobile and Online Banking, and a new checking account that will benefit the FoundationCCC. Additionally, as part of the Bank's mission to improve the financial success of its communities, Tri Counties Bank has committed to providing financial education training to student ambassadors and community college students, and will be hosting a needs drive in all bank branches, to be launched this summer to help community college students throughout the academic year.

Tri Counties Bank's 50th Anniversary Campaign will celebrate its past, present, and future with a focus on its customers, shareholders, communities and employees. As part of the campaign, the Bank encourages current and former customers to submit their favorite Tri Counties Bank moments and find a customer appreciation event taking place near them at TriCountiesBank.com/50.

To learn more about Tri Counties Bank's 50th Anniversary and its groundbreaking partnership with FoundationCCC, visit TriCountiesBank.com/50.

AWARD

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