San Joaquin Valley—Fresno
San Joaquin Valley Manufacturing Alliance

Overview
Identified in 2003 as a high priority industry for job and wealth creation by the Regional Jobs Initiative (RJI), the San Joaquin Valley Manufacturing Alliance built upon the lessons learned by that pioneering effort. While led by stewards, the RJI was designed to focus on economic development as if industry was the customer of other sectors. The industry clusters acted more like a trade association, essential voices, but looking through a narrow lens. The SJVMA emerged through the integration of two efforts—The Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley's Regional Industry Cluster Initiative and the California Community Colleges Doing What Matters for Jobs & the Economy initiative. The Fresno Business Council blended the two efforts building upon a strategy it led with cross sector partners to assist State Center Community College pass a bond and invest the resources optimally.

Regional Challenge
The San Joaquin Valley has been challenged by concentrated, chronic and endemic poverty for decades due to its economic base—a low cost agricultural economy and state and federal policies that allowed or fostered the situation. Diversification, cross-sector collaboration, a commitment to innovation and excellence, and policy change were all aspects of the RJI. While we knew industry champions were essential, the Alliance takes it further and includes government, education and students at the level of design. In other words, key players are partners in strategy development, execution and funding. The era of top down leadership has ended and learning how to build, align and lead networks is underway. This requires everyone to learn new ways to think (design) and work together. Success demands high levels of knowledge and skill, social/emotional development and a community centric mindset to build trust.

Stewardship Approach to Engagement
Launched in 2000, the Collaborative Regional Initiative set the stage for a stewardship approach. A central element of that effort was ten community values vetted by hundreds of people and endorsed by individuals and organization across sectors. The values were designed as an antidote to a culture based upon fragmentation, self-interest, and low expectations. The values are a new social contract, a behavioral agreement for behavior in the civic sector. The SJVMA is committed to operating in accordance with the values. The SJVMA began with a handful and now includes nearly 600 members from all sectors, 150 are manufacturing companies.

Solution
All involved at the leadership level in the SJMVA are keenly aware of the triple bottom line, community centric movement in California led by the California Stewardship Initiative and California Forward. Central to our communications efforts, we are helping to teach the broader community that economic, social and environmental issues when addressed holistically can result in leverage and win/win. When played off against each other, we can create an intractable issue, a “wicked mess” that gets worse over time, triggers costly government intervention and regulation and results in policy paralysis and polarization.

Key Strategies
The SJVMA is focused on three primary buckets—workforce, business excellence and policy. Every aspect involves partners at the local, regional, state and federal levels. The strategies to develop a world-class workforce are hands on involving relationships with educators at the top to the classroom. Working together at design—ensuring curriculum and instructors are current with industry needs—is a central
focus. An online website—the E3 Network—will foster connection, offer self-learning modules, and provide a one stop site for information about courses, certificates and sites to prepare students and adults for the workplace and inform employers about resources.

While workforce is the first priority, we are committed to developing industry/business resources to achieve excellence in leadership, culture, systems, products and services.

The policy bucket has multiple levels. There are regulatory and infrastructure issues that have made California and the San Joaquin Valley inhospitable to manufacturing. Most policies were developed in siloes without regard to their impact on equity, the economy or the environment depending upon the driver. Our approach is through education, coalition building, partnership and data, to create a community agenda that promotes economic inclusion while building upon core industries.

**Key collaborations**
The SJVMA recognizes that everyone could be a partner, thus Alliance membership is open to everyone. Hands on collaborations include those engaged in *Doing What Matters for Jobs & the Economy*, local elected officials at the City and County of Fresno, the leaders at State Center Community College District and West Hills, and Fresno, Central and Clovis Unified School Districts. The County Office of Education is also a key partner. As these entities exist in all counties of the San Joaquin Valley, the long-term goal is to include everyone by building an Alliance platform in the center, in the north and in the south. As execution is local and relational, we are first demonstrating what works in Fresno and Madera.

**Results**
The results are both tangible and intangible. Millions of dollars are being invested to broaden curriculum and add industry certification in response to industry guidance. A $70 million-dollar bond was passed by State Center. The Alliance is the first member of *Dream It; Do It*, a national program to build awareness and inspire participation in manufacturing pathways. We are heading into year four of an Advanced Manufacturing Summit that has grown in sponsorship, attendance, and quality each year. The Alliance is being built to last, thus the intangible results are equally important. Crossing the cultural lines between education and industry have been challenging. Persistence has paid off as each side began to recognize that each had essential attributes for success. Deep partnership is our path forward.

**Role of Stewards**
The role of stewardship cannot be overstated. Like salt in a stew, it is invisible but without it the whole thing falls flat. Stewardship is a state of mind that is embodied in behavior and a commitment to North Star outcomes that serve everyone. Stewards persevere knowing in some cases the fruit will not become visible until after they are gone. Stewards are leaders for the long-term.

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