



## 2007 Economic Summit Brings Binational Leaders Together

### Education The Key Focus



**California Lt. Governor John Garamendi used his keynote speech at the 17th annual Economic Summit to stress the importance of education to the continued development the region's future workforce.**

More than 400 community and business leaders were in attendance last month as the South County Economic Development Council (SCEDC) hosted the 17th annual Economic Summit at the San Diego Convention Center. Education was the major overriding theme of a summit that also focused on a wide array of issues affecting economic progress in the South County-Tijuana region and included a variety of vibrant panel discussions on topics pertinent to the region, including sports and entertainment, economic development and bi-national relationships.

"The Summit is the culmination of a yearlong effort designed to recognize the thriving region the South County has become," said Doug Paul, president of the SCEDC board of directors. "It provided a forum of ideas for creating an

environment that will empower businesses and create jobs in the region."

Following a morning full of panel discussions involving community leaders from around the region, keynote speakers Dr. Sally K. Ride and Lt. Gov. John Garamendi addressed the Summit's attendees with spirited speeches championing the need for an increased focus on education.

"We have a challenge we must invest in," said Garamendi. "We have to make certain that we have a highly skilled, highly educated workforce. The closer you connect yourself to the education system, the more likely it is that the skilled workers you need will become available."

Dr. Ride put special emphasis on the importance of math and science.

"Science and technology are the engines that drive our economy and we need to put major emphasis on developing a technically trained workforce."

Dr. Ride said that science and math education are vital if the U.S. is to maintain the competitive technological advantage it has enjoyed for so many years.

"We need to respond today as we did 50 years ago after the launch of Sputnik," said Dr. Ride. "That means providing our students with the math and science skills they need and that education needs to start early on."

Both Dr. Ride and Lt. Gov. Garamendi cited global climate change as the primary *(continued on page 7)*

### What's Inside?



**In his keynote speech at the 17th annual Economic Summit, Tijuana Mayor Kurt Honold called for friendship not fences between the United States and Mexico.**

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## Tijuana Mayor Advocates Bridges Not Fences

One of the highlights of last month's Economic Summit was the keynote address by Tijuana Mayor Kurt Honold. His passionate remarks echoed what many of the members of the South County Economic Development Council have believed for many years. He spoke about San Diego County and northern Baja California as being a single economic region that already benefits from enormous amounts of trade that cross the border every day.

However, Mayor Honold said that Washington D.C.'s attitude toward the border region is only hindering the true economic potential of the region.

"Building fences is another way of saying, 'I don't like you,'" the mayor explained. "The United States is trying to make friends around the world but here on our border, it is building fences to protect itself from Mexico, a country that has been a good neighbor, a peaceful neighbor for all these years."

The mayor went on to say that our competition is China, not each other.

"We need to come together as partners, friends, primos y hermanos," he said, "so as to promote ourselves as the economic engine that it is. We need to build bridges instead of fences."

And that is just what events like the Economic Summit are meant to do, according to Doug Paul, 2007 president of South County Economic Development Council. "Businesses in South San Diego

County know that residents of Tijuana provide a huge return to their businesses."

Morning panelists at the Economic Summit from both sides of the border spoke about specific projects that are spurring economic growth in the northern Baja region. Hugo Torres, mayor of Rosarito Beach, spoke of hundreds of condominiums being built along the waterfront from Tijuana to Rosarito that are being purchased by Californians.

"They want the same beachfront and scenery that you can get in La Jolla but at a much lower price," Torres quipped.

Torres added that the new condominiums are helping to improve his city's infrastructure, explaining that a fee on each new condo helps pay for sidewalks, street lighting and better police services throughout the city.

California State Assemblywoman Mary Salas spoke of a plan to

*(continued on page 6)*



**Many new condominium developments up and down the coast of northern Baja are attracting new investment into the Tijuana region. Trump Baja Resort is located above this bluff at Punta Bandera.**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The South County Economic Development Council (SCEDC) has long held the position that education and economic prosperity are inextricably linked. It should be no surprise then that one of the emergent themes of this year's Economic Summit was the need for the state of California and the entire nation as a whole to rededicate itself to providing our country's future workforce with access to very best education available.

Lt. Gov. John Garamendi and Dr. Sally Ride, two of the event's three keynote speakers and two tremendously well-respected voices in the community, both spoke to this need. The points they made were both salient and eye-opening and we at the SCEDC would like to echo their sentiments.

Providing ready access to quality public education and cutting-edge workforce training is imperative to our region's economy, and we must continue to work closely with our schools at all levels to maintain the competitive edge that has helped this region achieve such prosperity in recent years. It's clear that everyone benefits when we prepare our students to enter the workforce fully equipped with the skills and know-how to keep our economy thriving, locally, nationally and internationally. This year's SCEDC agenda will include an increased emphasis on further improving the educational opportunities available to all of the region's employment clusters as

By **Doug Paul**, South County Economic Development Council

well as to our emerging next generation of workers.

When Lt. Gov. Garamendi spoke, he suggested the state's investment in a future qualified workforce would be the best move to help California's economy — an investment in highly skilled professionals to combat a slowing economy. He indicated that further emphasis needs to be placed on working to keep the best and the brightest graduating from California's state colleges in California and contributing to the workforce.

"It's crucial that the colleges involve themselves in the business community and the business community does the same," he said. "Out of that relationship will come the skilled workers you need in your employment."

Dr. Ride spoke eloquently of the need for further emphasis among young students on math and science. She is of course right.

*(continued on page 5)*



## County Working to Help East Otay Mesa Realize Full Potential

One of the main priorities for the County of San Diego and County Supervisor Greg Cox is to focus on bringing East Otay Mesa to its full economic potential. In large part because of its proximity to the U.S./Mexico border, East Otay Mesa plays a pivotal role in the regional economy.

Two recent events illustrate the County's commitment to enabling the Otay Mesa and East Otay Mesa area to become the region's next great economic engine.

In October, Supervisor Cox traveled with a delegation of more than 40 elected officials, community and business leaders to Washington, D.C., on a mission to advocate for federal funding and support for a number of local projects, such as the proposed third border crossing, SR-905 and SR-11, and a potential cross-border air terminal along the San Diego border. The message the delegation took to Washington was that the South County's ports of entry are the gateway to California's and, arguably, the nation's economy.

Approximately 1.4 million trucks cross the border annually, helping to bring in \$29.8 billion in trade, according to the San Diego Regional Association of Governments (SANDAG). Finding funding for improvements to the border area is important to avoid future gridlock at the region's ports of entry and a failure to plan and invest now in the border area will damage the local economy. SANDAG estimates \$12 billion in future trade opportunities will be lost through the year 2014 because of border delays.

It is therefore imperative to businesses on both sides of the border, as well as to Otay Mesa property owners, that a new border entry is built and opened as soon as possible. Good news was received on that front as State Department officials told the delegation that by next summer, the presidential permit needed for the construction of a third border crossing should be in place.

The excitement about East Otay Mesa continued after the Washington trip as Supervisor Cox held his annual status meeting with area property owners. More than 30 stakeholders in East Otay Mesa's future accepted Supervisor Cox's invitation to the County Administration Center for the meeting. Representatives from the City of San Diego, SANDAG, Caltrans, South Bay Expressway and the Otay Water District were also on hand. The

meeting served as a forum for interested parties and local governments to learn about and discuss the challenges being faced in the ongoing effort to develop East Otay Mesa.

The meeting went a long way in laying out a road map for achieving goals for East Otay Mesa.

"We have met many times over the years with property owners and interested parties to update them on the County's planning for East Otay Mesa and to hear their issues and concerns," said Cox. "But the enthusiasm at this most recent meeting far surpassed what we have seen before at our gatherings. Of course, the road to success in East Otay Mesa has had a few bumps along the way, but what has kept me and many other interested parties energized and motivated are the untapped and exciting possibilities of East Otay Mesa."

There is a greater feeling now than ever before that East Otay Mesa is ripe for the creation of jobs and businesses to help fuel the region's economic prosperity, according to Cox. Entrepreneurs are beginning to tap into the area's potential, creating a new vibrancy and excitement.

The energy and activity the County of San Diego is investing in the area is clearly evident for everyone to see.

"None of this would be possible without the closer working relationship we have built among various government agencies that are working to help realize the future of East Otay Mesa," said Cox. "That coordination only comes from aggressive leadership. My goal is to keep various agencies, along with the stakeholders, working on East Otay Mesa so that we can make South County a place to live, work and dream. Working together, we intend to keep our eyes on the prize."

## Chula Vista Nature Center Reaches A Milestone

This August the Chula Vista Nature Center welcomed its one-millionth visitor. The internationally recognized zoo/aquarium, which has been enjoying the yearlong celebration of its 20th anniversary, presented the milestone visitor with a special gift basket.

Since its opening on July 4, 1987, the Nature Center has become a leader in wetland-related programs and exhibits. In 1988, the Center won an Orchid Award for building design and was accredited by the American Association of Museums in 1992. More than \$6 million has been invested in new exhibits and habitats at the center since 1998.

The Nature Center boasts a state-of-the-art aquarium, sandcasting art by well-known local artist Charles Faust and, its latest addition, an impressive Bald Eagle exhibit to add to its diverse collection of animals native to San Diego Bay and wetland environments.

The Chula Vista Nature Center is open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. Guided tours are available.



*The Chula Vista Nature Center reached a milestone this August when it played host to its one-millionth visitor.*

## City Working To Complete Otay Mesa Community Plan Update

The city of San Diego is currently appropriating the funding required to complete the Otay Mesa Community Plan update (OMCPU). Once appropriated, staff will generate Request for Proposals and negotiate contracts with consultants in order to complete the OMCPU. With input generated from the stakeholders, the Community Planning Group and the Planning Commission, the city has created a fourth scenario for public discussion. Bill Anderson, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, introduced the draft scenario at an Open House held on October 18th at San Ysidro High School Library.

## San Ysidro Working On Reconfiguration of Port Of Entry

The San Ysidro community continues to work diligently with the Federal General Services Administration on the design for the reconfiguration of the Port of Entry.

Through an Environmental Justice Grant from Caltrans, Estrada Land Planning is currently working on the San Ysidro Mobility Strategy (SYMS). The SYMS will identify strategies to improve traffic circulation, address increased parking demand, promote walkability and bicycling, and improve accessibility to

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public transit for residents, visitors and the business community.

## Coronado's Beach and Bay Areas Bring Home an A+ On Report Card

**T**he Heal the Bay organization has awarded Coronado's beach and bay fronts the highest rating for water quality in its 17th Annual Beach Report Card.

Heal the Bay's report card summarizes the results of beach water quality monitoring programs along California's coast over the preceding 12 months.

"We are pleased and proud that Coronado's beaches continue to be among the cleanest in the state," said Mark Ochendusko, Coronado's city manager. "Clean beaches and bays are a source of pride for the Coronado community and make significant contributions to the quality of life enjoyed by residents. Preserving high quality water in the beaches and bays will protect the health of residents and visitors, as well as the environment."

The city performs water quality monitoring year-round at North Beach, Central Beach and the beach off of Avenida del Sol near the Coronado Shores, with contaminate levels being tested two times each week.

Monitoring the water quality consists of taking samples in the surf zone of the ocean and bay and testing the levels of contaminants. If testing reveals that allowable levels of any



**With zero beach closures during the past year, Coronado's beach and bay areas received the highest water quality rating in the annual report from the Heal the Bay organization.**

contaminants are exceeded, the city will notify beach-goers and post warnings at the affected beach or bay front until the water tests clean. During the past year, Coronado has had zero

beach closures.

In 2004, the city installed 11 structures to prevent urban runoff from reaching surrounding waters, which successfully diverted millions of gallons of tainted water into Coronado's sanitary system instead of onto the beaches.

## Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve Celebrates 25th Birthday

**T**he 25th anniversary of the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve was celebrated in August as national and state officials gathered to recognize a quarter-century of efforts made to educate the public on the importance of coastal wetlands and help shape estuary restoration practices internationally.



**The Tijuana National Estuarine Research Reserve has now spent more than a quarter-century working to educate the public on the importance of coastal wetlands and help shape estuary restoration practices internationally.**

The event at the Tijuana Estuary Visitor Center included appearances by Tim Keeney, deputy assistant secretary for oceans and atmosphere at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, United States Representative Bob Filner, State Assemblyperson Mary Salas; State Parks Director Ruth Coleman, and Tijuana Mayor Kurt Honold.

Located in Imperial Beach, the Tijuana National Estuarine Research Reserve is the 10th estuary in a network of protected wetland areas in the United States managed for long-term research and education.

"California has lost more than 90 percent of its wetlands, and this is a rare reserve in that the entire area is not crisscrossed by either a road or rail line," said Dr. Jeff Crooks, research coordinator for the reserve. "While threats still remain, we are fortunate to have one of the best

coastal wetlands in Southern California."

The Tijuana National Estuarine Research Reserve is one of only a few locations in the United States that has been designated "a wetland of international importance" by the United Nations Ramsar Convention. Over 370 bird species have been sighted at the reserve, including a number of endangered and threatened species.

"In 25 years, we have helped shape estuary restoration practices internationally, and taught children and adults of the critical importance of coastal wetlands," said Clay Phillips, reserve manager and south sector superintendent for California state parks. "Coastal training staff have built important binational partnerships with their counterparts in Tijuana and Mexico that will result in better land management and improved protection of the estuary. The best is yet to come."

## National City Unveils Morgan Square Plaza

**N**ational City recently held a celebration at its Morgan Square Plaza and unveiled several new pieces of public art, including mosaic fountains designed by artist Paul Hobsons. The "Portals in Time," as Hobsons named the artwork, highlight the different cultures and eras in National City's vibrant and diverse history.

Funding for Morgan Square Plaza came from a \$2 million grant from SANDAG's Pilot Smart Growth Incentive Program. This grant is also being utilized by National City to improve National City Boulevard's streetscape. The Morgan Square Community Benefit District, which was jumpstarted by the grant, is the Downtown National City Property Business Improvement District, which maintains and beautifies Morgan Square. The District represents over 100 properties and is led by a group of business and property owners in downtown National City.

Elected officials from National City and the Morgan Square District leadership took advantage of the festivities and honored former Mayor Kile Morgan, who was a councilman from 1960 to 1966 and later mayor from 1966 to 1986, with a surprise unveiling of his bust, soon to be in bronze and appropriately located in Morgan Square. In addition, both former Mayor Kile Morgan and former Mayor George Waters were presented with engraved plaques, designating them as Mayors Emeritus of National City in appreciation of their years of

service and dedication to improving the city.

The Morgan Square Plaza celebration took place as part of National City Week's Community Development Day. The event also included the Heritage Square Art Show and open houses by neighboring establishments. The Victorian homes in Heritage Square were open to the public and residents and business owners had a chance to stroll through the Palace Salon, Hanna Lee's, and the Kimball Museum, formerly National City founder Frank Kimball's home.



**National City Mayor Ron Morrison (standing, right) was among those on hand at the opening of Morgan Square Plaza. The event included a surprise unveiling of a bust of former National City Mayor Kile Morgan (seated in wheelchair).**

## Department of Homeland Security Selects Port of San Diego for New Project

This September, the Department of Homeland Security announced that the Port of San Diego and Washington's Puget Sound are to be a part of a three-year, \$10 million effort to detect radiological and nuclear weapons.

The project, which has already been implemented in Puget Sound, is scheduled to begin operation in San Diego in 2008 and could be expanded to other ports if successful.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, small boats have been used by criminals to smuggle drugs and migrants and could potentially be used to transport nuclear or radiological weapons into the country.

The San Diego and Puget Sound ports were selected because of their military and economic importance.

"The department has identified the Port of San Diego as a strategic port because of the military's presence and because of the proximity to the international border and the airport. By doing so, this initiative will help protect our waterways, the land and the air," said Sylvia

Rios, chair of the Port Commission.

The pilot program is focusing its efforts on exploring ways to get detection equipment to law enforcement and on board vessels, such as those used by the Coast Guard and San Diego Harbor Police.

"We expect to deploy nonintrusive, passive detection sensors, such as human-portable radiation detection equipment, mobile sensors and fixed-position detectors," said the Department of Homeland Security in a published statement.

The department will determine what type of equipment might be used in the plan, which could include hand-held equipment or equipment that is placed near a strategic location. They say most boaters and commercial operators will not notice much of a change.

## South Bay Expressway Opens November 19

South Bay Expressway, the highly anticipated 10-mile state-of-the-art toll road extending from state Route 54 in Spring Valley to Otay Mesa Rd./state Route 905 near the International Border crossing opened to traffic on Monday, Nov. 19.

Motorists traveling the new highway are able to take advantage of the latest in high-tech toll collection, which allows for tolls to be paid electronically while driving non-stop at highway speeds using a FasTrak electronic transponder mounted on their vehicle.

As a special thank-you to the community for their support, South Bay Expressway is offering an unprecedented promotion: Anyone who opens a FasTrak account with South Bay Expressway will receive free unlimited driving on South Bay Expressway until midnight Jan. 13, 2008. Those who have already opened a South Bay Expressway FasTrak account will automatically receive this deal as well.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (continued from page 2)

Scientific advancements will be at the forefront of economic growth and development going forward. It is incumbent upon all those in the community to encourage, promote and reward youth achievements in math and science so that our region will remain flush with young minds well-versed in the technology of the day.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Tatum  
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## BRIEFINGS:

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## Elected Officials Encourage Binational Cooperation

An esteemed panel of South County's elected officials met at last month's Economic Summit to discuss the future of the region's binational relationships and their impact on future development.

The panel included Assemblymember Mary Salas of the 79th District, Imperial Beach Mayor Jim Janney, Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox, Rosarito Mayor Hugo Torres, Councilmember Ben Hueso of San Diego, Councilmember Al Ovrum of Coronado, City Manager Chris Zapata of National City and Port Commissioner Robert "Dukie" Valderrama.

Each of the panel members stressed the importance of binational relationships to the economic growth of the South County region.

"Mexico is a very important neighbor," said Hueso. "The spirit of collaboration and cooperation is what makes some of the exciting projects we have on the horizon possible."

"Binational relationships are growing,"

said Valderrama. "There's been lots of progress over the past 20 years and we need to continue in that direction."

Mayor Cox brought attention to the need for bi-national improvements in public safety, transportation and job creation.

"The most important step in that direction is the third border crossing," she said.

*"The spirit of collaboration and cooperation is what makes some of the exciting projects we have on the horizon possible."*

*– Councilmember Ben Hueso,  
San Diego*

Councilmember Hueso was quick to echo those sentiments, pointing out the importance of efficient border crossings.

"We'd like to see a better gateway to California from San Ysidro and Otay Mesa," he said. "We need to focus on a world-class border crossing at San Ysidro."

In addition to unanimously agreeing on the need to continue developing bi-national relationships, the panelists also agreed that

South County represents the future of San Diego's economic growth and development.

"I see the South County as the future of San Diego," said Hueso. "Everytime we have a new business locate near the border, it does well."



**A panel of South County's elected officials met at the 17th annual Economic Summit to discuss issues impacting the region with the major theme being the need to focus on forging meaningful binational relationships.**

Mayor Cox took it even a step further.

"The only thing better than this great Summit we're having right now would be if in five years we were having it at the Gaylord Convention Center in Chula Vista," she said to thunderous applause.

## Holiday Breakfast Just Around The Corner

Can you believe that the holidays are right around the corner? Well, the South County Economic Development Council has a holiday tradition of its own and we want you to be a part.

Every December, the SCEDC holds an annual meeting where members meet and interact with other members. Last year, this December breakfast meeting became our one and only new member recruitment event of the year. This is the only meeting of the SCEDC where non-members are encouraged to come, to network with our members and to find out what the buzz is all about in the South County. And did we mention that breakfast is free?

Start making your list of who has been naughty and nice and invite them all to our upcoming Holiday Breakfast. More details

are to follow but you can be guaranteed to hear from a dynamic guest speaker, to have a fabulous and filling breakfast, and to meet hundreds of South County's movers and shakers.

Members who bring potential new members will be entered into a drawing for some fabulous prizes.



**The annual holiday breakfast provides a great opportunity to strengthen the SCEDC by showing non-members the many benefits of joining the growing council.**

## BRIDGES NOT FENCES (continued from page 2)

allow American students to get their nursing training in Tijuana since California's nursing schools are extremely crowded and are turning away future nurses that are so desperately needed in our state. Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox spoke enthusiastically about expanding Tijuana's Rodriguez International Airport so as to allow U.S. travelers to access terminals directly from this side of the border. And Adrian Mejia, secretary for economic development in Tijuana, said his city is building a major cargo station to handle freight coming across the border.

"If you learn to understand Mexico, you will have the best partner and friend that you could ever have," concluded Mayor Honold of Tijuana at the end of his luncheon address. The South County Economic Development Council is helping member organizations do just that.

## Many Honored at 17th Annual Economic Summit

Three deserving individuals and three outstanding companies were honored as award winners at the 17th annual Economic Summit held September 28 at the San Diego Convention Center.

The late Marilyn Lassman, one of the founding members of the South County Economic Development Council (SCEDC), was honored with the SCEDC-sponsored Golden Dedication/Lifetime Achievement Award. The award, which will be permanently renamed in Lassman's honor, was accepted by her daughters, Lisa and Carra.

An active member of numerous charitable organizations throughout the community, Lassman remained involved in the SCEDC until her death this summer, serving on the board of directors and chairing the Workforce and Education Committee. The first woman ever elected to the Southwestern Community College Governance Board, Lassman also represented the South County on the Workforce Partnership Board and was a valued member of both The Corky McMillin Companies and the Gillman Group.

Robert McGill of Neighborhood National Bank was recognized with the Pioneer Award, given annually to the community leader whose visionary contributions helped break down traditional social, political or economic barriers. McGill's work was instrumental in helping Neighborhood National Bank receive the first municipal deposit of any community bank in San Diego County.

Also recognized was Angelika Villagrana of the Alliance for Border Efficiency, who was named winner of the Bi-National Endeavor Award. Villagrana has worked extensively advocating an increase in border infrastructure and pressing for policies that promote more efficient border crossing.

The Corky McMillin Best of South County Award was presented to the San Ysidro Health Center (SYHC) for its continued commitment to improving the

quality of life of South County residents. The SYHC is responsible for providing primary medical care services to low-income, at-risk South County residents.

IRE Development was honored with the Regional Leadership Award for its leadership in creating Eastlake Design District and Eastlake Commerce Park.



***Lisa Johnson and Carra Rhamy (fourth and fifth from right) accepted the SCEDC's Golden Dedication / Lifetime Achievement Award on behalf their mother, the late Marilyn Lassman. Also pictured (left to right) are Tijuana Mayor Kurt Honold, Lt. Gov. John Garamendi, SCEDC President Doug Paul and Port of San Diego Commissioner Robert "Dukie" Valderrama.***

Southwestern Community College Small Business Development and International Trade Center was also recognized with the Outstanding Corporate Citizen Award, honoring the organization that went above and beyond in making contributions to the South County.

## Members Invited To Monthly Board Meetings

Since the formation of the council in 1989, members always have been invited to the monthly board meetings of the South County Economic Development Council. More and more members are starting to take advantage of that opportunity.

"As someone who now attends board meetings on a regular basis, I can say with the utmost confidence that this is something all members should be taking advantage of," said Julia Simms of j. simms

agency and a newly elected board member of the SCEDC. "It gives you the opportunity to interact with community leaders and take part in vibrant discussions about the future growth and prosperity of a region that means so much to all of us."

Simms and other members of the marketing committee for the SCEDC have made it their mission to get more members involved on a regular basis in the council and to come and participate at the board meetings.

"There is a half hour at the beginning of every board meeting for networking and then the actual business of the meeting can be quite informative and educational," Simms added. "A guest speaker is a part of every meeting, discussing a topic that is quite timely."

"Every month I go away with information I could not have received anywhere else — on every region of our county, south of downtown San Diego and into Mexico as well."

Board meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 8 a.m. at the South County Regional Education Center — two minutes east of Interstate 5 at 8th Avenue in National City. Networking begins at 7:30 a.m. If you aren't receiving the agenda and minutes monthly in advance of the meetings via email, please contact Cindy Gompper-Graves at [cindy@sandiegosouth.com](mailto:cindy@sandiegosouth.com) and she will make sure you receive the meeting notices regularly.

### *ECONOMIC SUMMIT*

*(continued from page 1)*

reason for needing a workforce well-versed in scientific thought.

"We need to develop technologies to solve the coming climate crisis and to do that we need a workforce that is properly trained to meet that challenge," said Dr. Ride.

Garamendi called climate change an issue that confronts everyone.

"This is an incredible challenge that we must face" he said. "The answer is education. That's why it's our most important investment. Education is not an expense, it's an investment."

# Enthusiastic Crowd Fills Elected Officials Reception

A crowd of more than 300 South County government officials, city dignitaries, community stakeholders and local business owners filled the Bayside Park in Chula Vista on September 20 as part of the third-annual South County Elected Officials Reception. The event was jointly hosted by the South County Economic Development Council (SCEDC), the city of Chula Vista, the Port of San Diego and the South County Chambers of Commerce.

Among those on hand were San Diego County Supervisor Greg Cox and Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox, both of whom addressed those in the attendance with upbeat messages about the current and future growth and development prospects for South County.

Mayor Cox pointed specifically to Gaylord's waterfront redevelopment project, which includes a 400,000-square-foot convention center, up to 2,000 hotel

rooms and 60,000 feet of retail and restaurant space on 30 acres located along an extension of H Street in Chula Vista, directly north of the existing marina.

"The entire South County is going to benefit enormously from having an accessible waterfront," she said.

County Supervisor Cox echoed the mayor's sentiments and added that he sees great things in the South County's future.

*"The entire South County is going to benefit enormously from having an accessible waterfront."*

*– Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox*

"This region holds great opportunity," he said. "Over the course of the next 20 years, South County is going to be the place to be."

Due to the overwhelming success and growing popularity of the event, the SCEDC



***More than 300 people were on hand to take part in the third-annual South County Elected Officials reception, making it the most successful such reception to date.***

announced that going forward it will hold the annual Elected Officials Reception in the spring instead of the fall to allow for further attendance growth.



South County Economic Development Council

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***The South County Economic Development Council wishes to extend our deepest sympathy to all of those whose lives were impacted by the recent wildfires. We also wish to thank the many firefighters and the countless officials and volunteers across the county who worked tirelessly and selflessly throughout this disaster. Your efforts will not soon be forgotten. Thank you all for making the citizens of this great region proud.***

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