



## **San Joaquin Valley Water Technology Cluster**

February 7, 2002, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.  
Central Valley Business Incubator  
2555 Clovis Avenue  
Clovis, CA 93612

### **I. Welcome and Introductions.**

Co-chair Claude Laval welcomed the participants, and self-introductions were made.

### **II. Action Team Presentations and Discussion**

The chair of each of the Action Teams presented the results of the group's activity since the last cluster meeting.

#### **A. Workforce Preparation Action Team.** Bob Early (Chair), Russ Densmore, Richard Meno, John Showalter, Ashley Swearengin, Denise Stelling, Sheri Abercrombie.

- Russ Densmore presented the summary of the January 30 committee meeting. Participants in the meeting included Mark Bell and Fred Mattern (American Welding Society); Rick Christl, Stan Neal, and Robert Fransen (FCC); Joe Russo and Jim Studebaker (Reedley College); Denise Stelling and Mike Kent (Fresno Valve); Robert Garcia (Laval Corp.); Bob Early (Grundfos); Willy Cash (Floway); Russ Densmore (AVK); and Ashley Swearengin (Futures Institute).
- Meeting Purpose
  - Determine if gaps exist between what is being taught in the welding programs and skills needed by water cluster companies.
  - If gaps exist, begin process for finding solutions.
- Summary
  - Students who complete the two-year welding programs at FCC or Reedley College will have the educational background and enough hands-on experience to satisfy entry level welding needs in the water cluster companies represented at the meeting.
  - Students completing only first-year of program do not have adequate background needed by cluster companies.
  - Few students actually complete the two-year program. Most go to work full-time after completing the first-year.

- At FCC 30% and at Reedley College 70% of the first-year welding students are taking all required core welding courses.
- Enrollment in welding classes has declined. Few high schools throughout the state offer welding classes. A few rural high schools offering Ag welding. Result is the lack of interest among high school grads to pursue welding as a career.
- Methods must be found to interest more high school graduates in welding as a career and keep community college welding students in the program through the full two-year program.
- Potential Solutions/Need to motivate students to stay in the program for two years.
  - Initiate intern programs to employ students part-time during the two-year program.
  - Utilize scholarship money from the AWS to encourage students to stay in the program for two years. AWS can also provide low cost student loans.
  - Possibly develop a compressed welding program modeled on the program at Carson City Junior College.
  - Investigate the recruiting program at College of the Canyons.

**B. Technology Collaboration Action Team.** Angelo Mazzei (Chair), Claude Laval, Ray Dunn, Nick Dvorak, David Zoldoske.

- Angelo Mazzei presented action team activities
  - President Welty has appointed David Zoldoske as interim director for the ICWT.
- A working group needs to be set up to move forward with the ICWT.
  - Claude Laval suggested that the current subcommittee serve as the interim board.
  - Angelo will organize interim board.
- Contacts with legislators are needed. Anyone with contact information should send it to Laura Ramos ([laura\\_ramos@csufresno.edu](mailto:laura_ramos@csufresno.edu))
  - Suggested contacts include Sarah Woolf, Bill Thomas (chair, budget committee). Patricia Geringer (legislative representative for Radanovich) will receive a copy of the legislative information packet.
  - A meeting with Senator Costa, John Harris, John Welty, and others is being arranged to discuss federal funding.
- The Taylor Group made a presentation on the preliminary structure of the ICWT. Copies of the architectural renderings were distributed.
  - They are creating plans for a building that says “technology, fabrication, and engineering are needed for daily living”.
  - World class building
  - Building will showcase landscape, water treatment, efficient use of water, hydraulics, etc.

**C. Industry Advocacy Action Team.** Sheila DeLany, Nick Dvorak, Ashley Swearengin, Don Thompson.

- Don Thompson presented Industry Advocacy activities.

- Areas of focus include expansion of the committee, business development, public relations, and advocacy.
  - Need to expand committee to create a marketing group
  - Public relations: media, presentations, web site, develop brochure, official logo and name.
  - Advocacy:
    - What agencies should the cluster work with?
    - Need face-to-face meetings with elected officials
    - Develop relationships with business organizations that will benefit from the cluster

### **III. Update on University Programs.**

- Amy Chubb (UBC)
  - Job referrals to Workforce Connection are still needed from cluster companies.
  - Information on SBA Innovative Research grant is coming. She is working with Eduardo Torres to put a program together.
- Dan Clawson.
  - CALIFT attended an Ag show in Sinaloa, Mexico. Four cluster companies attended. Two of the companies plan to go back next year with their own booths.
  - CALIFT will host an international reception February 12 at 4 p.m.
- David Zoldoske
  - Need to form an interim board of directors for ICWT.
  - Met with University Farm Lab Committee regarding location for ICWT. No specific location selected yet.

### **IV. ICWT Interim Board.**

- The Technology Collaboration Action Team plus Don Thompson will comprise the interim board of directors for the ICWT.

### **V. Wrap-Up/Next Steps.**

- Possibly combine Advocacy and Technology teams. Advocacy team needs additional members for marketing.
- Juan Almanza (California Trade & Commerce) will have a delegation (20) from Turkey and 4 from Argentina coming to the Tulare Ag Show.

### **VI. Adjourn.**

- The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

