

Workforce Innovations

November/December 2002

News and insights to meet the needs of an evolving community of businesses, job seekers, and educators

Feature Article:

CONNECT! Awards Luncheon Celebrates "New Beginnings"

"I commend you all for taking charge and writing the script of your own lives," said Master of Ceremonies Fred LaCosse to the nine alumni honored at this year's 12th Annual CONNECT! Awards Luncheon. Sponsored by the NOVA Workforce Board, the event was held September 25 at the Santa Clara Marriott Hotel.

Mr. LaCosse, a veteran news anchor and talk show host returning for his fifth year as emcee, was commenting on the honorees' decision to take action to improve their lives despite personal problems and the faltering economy.

Unlike last year's luncheon, which was overshadowed by the events of 9/11, this year's luncheon, entitled "New Beginnings," was pure celebration. Each award winner was feted as the "star" of a movie of his or her own making. In keeping with the movie theme, huge faux reels of film and make-believe film projectors decorated the corners of the banquet room. Everywhere were sparkling gold, silver, and black balloons. There was even a giant red-striped popcorn container filled with yellow and white balloon "popcorn." At each place set-

ting was a gold coin, embossed with the words, "You Are A Star." The décor was generously donated and created by NOVA Workforce Board Member Gloria Spanier of Polycom Corporation.

The awards luncheon recognized the achievements of individuals who had overcome seemingly insurmountable odds to put themselves on the path to self-sufficiency. One honoree, a veteran who had battled alcoholism and depression for 26 years, turned his life around with the help of the First Step Program, NOVA's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project, and the Employment Development Department's Veterans Services Division. Another honoree, a woman who had dropped out of school in the eighth grade and later became a teen mother, is today attending Foothill College thanks to the support of the Mountain View/Los Altos Adult Education's Young Parents' Program and the Neighborhood Self-Sufficiency Program.

Though not all award winners had achieved their ultimate career goals, all were grateful for the progress they had made thus far—progress made possible in great part from supportive CONNECT! agencies and institutions.

No doubt, the honorees and the audience were cheered even more by the testimonial a former client (and honoree) from three years ago gave at the end of the program. Since that time, she has worked her way up from a receptionist position to that of a human resources manager. She,



Fred LaCosse, Master of Ceremonies



Honorees and their sponsors on stage

Continued on Page 2: "New Beginnings"



- Advanced Micro Devices
- Analog Devices, Inc.
- Applied Materials
- Billmore Hotel
- Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy
- Center for Quality of Management
- Children's Discovery Museum
- County of Santa Clara
- Crest Financial Services
- De Anza College
- Department of Rehabilitation
- Emergency Housing Consortium
- Employment Development Department
- Hewlett Packard Company
- Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara
- Intel Corporation
- Intuit
- Ironworkers Apprenticeship & Training Program
- Kaiser Permanente
- Lockheed Martin Missiles & Space
- Microsoft
- National Council on the Aging, Inc.
- Network Appliance, Inc.
- Polycom Corporation
- PRI Automation
- San Jose Newspaper Guild
- Santa Clara Unified School District
- Solectron Corporation
- Sun Microsystems, Inc.
- Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce

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Chairperson

Barbara Malaspina,
Vice Chairperson

Clysta Seney,
Vice Chairperson

John Love,
Past Chairperson

Michael Curran,
Director

in fact, had become the boss of the person who had recruited her! This was a far cry from her status in life just a few years earlier when she was a laid-off single mom recovering from an abusive relationship. She tearfully said to the audience:

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I've been able to give my daughter a good quality of life. She's very proud of her mom."

In addition to the alumni awards, Outstanding Community Partner Awards were given to the Career Action Center,

the Institute for Career Development, Solectron Corporation, and former NOVA Workforce Board Member Nancy Erickson (recently retired from the California Employment Development Department).

Preceding the awards' presentations were opening remarks from Sunnyvale Mayor Fred Fowler, Santa Clara Vice Mayor Jamie Matthews, and NOVA Workforce Board Chairperson Clare Phillips.

Next year's luncheon will be held September 24, 2003. Save the date!

NOVA Program

CONNECT! TV

Tuning into an Informed Community



Over 26,000 households in the mid-peninsula communities of Atherton, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Palo Alto, and Stanford now have the opportunity to learn more about CONNECT! partner services. CONNECT! has joined the informative Community Journal news program. Community Journal increases the community's awareness about the services and events of local organizations. CONNECT! has signed on for six segments and will present local economic trends, career tools, and regional events.

The Media Center in Palo Alto makes this opportunity possible by providing electronic resources, such as audio and visual equipment, that are used as communication tools for the community. It produces several programs of public interest and facilitates an online

community discussion board. The Media Center provides an engaging and educational atmosphere. It also increases diversity awareness and provides a platform for individual expression. By highlighting the supportive and innovative services available to businesses and job seekers, CONNECT! segments will greatly assist the Media Center's mission to build a stronger and more informed community.

Community Journal's weekly half-hour airs every Tuesday and Thursday on Channel 27 and every Sunday on Channel 28 in the midpeninsula. Visit www.mpactv.org for Community Journal show times and information about other Media Center programs. For more information about CONNECT!, please visit <http://connect.one-stop.org>.

CONNECT! Partner

NOVA Joins Local Chambers

To better align with the interests of local business, NOVA has joined the Chambers of Commerce of their seven consortium cities—Cupertino, Los Altos, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Santa Clara, and Sunnyvale.

“Joining the chambers of commerce of our consortium cities truly exemplifies the value of community partnerships,” said NOVA Director Mike Curran. “Channeling our mutual interests regarding the concerns of the business community allows us greater participation in the challenges facing businesses.”

Chamber membership opens the door to a variety of opportunities and benefits. Chamber newsletters serve as an effective vehicle for CONNECT! to reach out to local businesses, and provides a means to introduce CONNECT! services and programs. In addition, business contacts made through networking supplement NOVA’s effort to strengthen the business community; and the monthly mixers sponsored by the Chambers provide additional exposure opportunities to link businesses with NOVA programs.

NOVA offers multiple services, including staffing and outplacement assistance and is considered a

valuable resource to both large and small Silicon Valley businesses. Also offered are technical training programs for employees, free of charge to qualified companies and businesses. These training programs, such as Skills Gap and TechForce, help prepare employees for highly skilled technical jobs.

NOVA’s Skills Gap program provides high-level technology training to employees for jobs in occupations where skill shortages exist. Skills Gap is currently accepting qualified employees for technical training in Linux or Oracle DBA. Employees must demonstrate U.S. citizenship or permanent residency to be considered for the program.

The TechForce program offers IT training in Internet and systems security, systems administration, network administration, and database management, only available to businesses with 250 or fewer employees.

To learn more about the services and programs offered by NOVA to the business community, call the CONNECT! Business Service Center at (408) 730-7830 or visit www.novaworks.org.

Bulletin Board



Making Sense of the Census



NOVA has published an in-depth analysis of the recently released 2000 Census data. Designed to provide the NOVA consortium with the information needed to plan effectively for future workforce needs, the report will be presented to the city manager and council members of each city during the month of November. More than just a recitation of Census data, the report effectively draws comparisons among NOVA cities, as well as comparisons to the rest of Santa Clara County, the Bay Area, and California as a whole.

A number of striking comparisons were identified, including the fact that the NOVA cities hold one of the richest concentrations of educated individuals—on average, 57 percent of residents in NOVA cities hold a Bachelor’s degree or higher. Palo Alto has the high percentage with 74.4 percent of its population holding a degree, and Los Altos is a close second with 71.3 percent. Although hard-copy distribution was limited to consortium city representatives, the report is available online at www.novaworks.org.

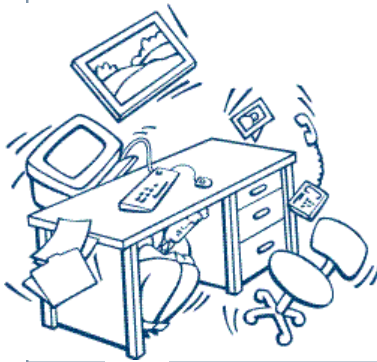
Labor Market Information

Comparing August 2001 to August 2002, the unemployment rate for Santa Clara County has risen significantly, and the labor force of the county declined.

Rising from 5.8 percent in August 2001, the unemployment rate in Santa Clara County fluctuated throughout the year, ending up at 7.7 percent at the same time this year. The rate dropped after remaining high at 7.8 percent during the months of June and July 2002. The California unemployment rate also grew from 5.4 percent in August 2001, to 6.3 percent this August. The U.S. unemployment rate rising 0.8 percent for the

year, jumping from 4.9 percent in August 2001 to 5.7 in August 2002. As in the State and the Nation, the significant increases in unemployment rates in Santa Clara County during 2001 have not been occurring during 2002.

The Santa Clara County Labor Force has dropped from 1,021,200 in August 2001, to 1,006,400 in August 2002. As of August 2002, NOVA's seven cities, reported a labor force of 320,200, which consists of 31.9 percent of Santa Clara County's labor force. Over the year, the labor force of the seven cities has dropped by approximately 6,000 workers.



Current Labor Force	August 2001	July 2002	August 2002	% Change
Santa Clara County Labor Force	1,021,200	1,008,800	1,006,400	-1.5%
County Unemployment Rate	5.8%	7.8%	7.7%	1.9%
California Unemployment Rate	5.4%	6.7%	6.3%	0.9%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	4.9%	6.0%	5.7%	0.8%

Source: www.calmis.ca.gov

Featured Website

Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group (SVMG)
www.svmg.org



Representing approximately 190 Silicon Valley employers, SVMG is designed to involve principal members of businesses in cooperation with government officials to address major public policy issues affecting the economic health and quality of life in Silicon Valley. Currently, SVMG is focusing its efforts on the following core issues: affordable housing, comprehensive transportation, reliable energy, quality education and a sustainable environment.

Search this website to find a variety of information, such as local activities and events, past and present legislation information, SVMG's goals for the future, and membership requirements.



505 West Olive Avenue, Suite 550
 Sunnyvale, CA 94086-7632
 (408) 730-7232
www.novaworks.org



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