



AT A GLANCE (April 2009)

- **MCEDCO Workshop Retreat reveals cities and county of Merced are not prepared for regional economic development**
- **USDA technical assistance and outreach applications on behalf of Atwater, Gustine and Los Banos submitted for ARRA stimulus program funding**
- **Businessweek SmallBiz magazine to feature Merced County area and focus on small business and entrepreneurs responding to foreclosure crisis**
- **Staff attend CALED Annual Training Conference and participated with CCEDC outreach mission to Dallas**
- **Nineteen inquiries for facilities and property received.**

UPCOMING – Joint Board of Directors/Executive Committee meeting June 25th followed by open house at new MCEDCO office

- The MCEDCO retreat on April 24, 2009 at Stevenson Ranch Golf Course was attended by representatives of cities and the county of Merced as well as private business, utility providers and Congressman Cardoza's office. The intention of the retreat was to define the expectations for a regional economic development collaborative. Participants unanimously agreed that regional economic development was highly desired, unfortunately attendees also ranked the level of preparedness to compete for investment as only 2 to 3 out of five.
- MCEDCO prepared and submitted applications for several USDA programs citing the ARRA Stimulus and economic maladies of the region as a compelling reason for Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) and Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) as well as Department of Energy (Bioenergy Programs). The USDA requests were focused on technical assistance for businesses to capitalize upon opportunities such as the Enterprise Zone to secure funds and to fund more outreach to rural entrepreneurs.
- Businessweek SmallBiz, the sister publication of national publication Businessweek toured the cities and county of Merced with MCEDCO April 28th and 29th to speak with local; small businesses and entrepreneurs to see how they are coping with the sagging economy and foreclosure crisis. Despite harsh times, many firms and individuals are planning to invest and create more opportunities
- Staff attended the Annual CALED professional Development and Training conference in Monterey April 15th through 17th. The event included many sessions on accessing federal stimulus funds and offered new ideas for promoting local business retention and reducing retail sales tax leakages.
- Outreach activities to businesses was limited during the month due to vacations, professional development and most notably preparation of USDA grants by the April 30th due date. Lead generation increased dramatically as contacts from trade shows and missions in February (West Pack) and March (Renewable Energy) contacted CCEDC. A total of nineteen inquiries were received and forwarded to the local economic development officials.