

## POLICY WATCH – May 2017

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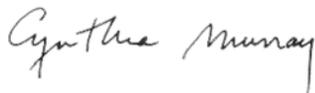
The lovely month of May – a time to enjoy spring, seek renewal and realize the year is almost half over! In this issue, we delve into more details about the upcoming State of the North Bay – do you think it's outlook is rosy or gloomy? Join us on June 7th to find out.

We also look at why ethics and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are growing in importance and need. Read our article to learn what your organization will gain from having a robust CSR with a strong ethics component.

As we cope with hearing about wrong-doing on a daily basis, we need an antidote to that bad news. We suggest that you think about the amazing people and organizations in the North Bay that have proven to be the leaders we need. And when you have identified your favorite leader, please submit a nomination so we can all feel better about our local do-gooders!

We leave you with some inspirational thoughts on ten commitments you can make to improve yourself and the world from a graduation speech given this month. As we see three million students graduate from college around the U.S. we pin our hopes on a brighter future they will seek for all of us.

Best,



Cynthia

## What's the State of the North Bay? Find Out on June 7th



North Bay Leadership Council is presenting the first State of the North Bay Conference on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

In this conference, we hope to ask and answer a lot of questions about what the State of the North Bay is. How well is our region faring in comparison with the rest of the Bay Area? By identifying the North Bay's assets and liabilities, will we have more success in achieving a healthy economic ecosystem? If we want to ensure the resiliency of our economy and our communities, we need to understand what opportunities are before us and how best to take advantage of them. At the same time, we face major challenges in housing, transportation, workforce readiness and business climate.

Studies show that many millennials are abandoning the Bay Area for places with cheaper housing. What happens if we lose the next generation of workers due to our housing crisis? Companies are also feeling the pinch of not being able to fill key positions, pushing them to grow where the talent is rather than in the North Bay. How many companies are at risk of leaving our region because of a skills mismatch to the jobs they are generating?

For decades, we have been trying to widen Highway 101. Now we also have a traffic nightmare on Highway 37. How many employees are fed up with gridlock and looking outside of the North Bay for a new job? How long will it take for us to get the funding to improve our commute corridors? Will the SMART train make a big dent in the traffic?

Many employers are embracing new technologies that will automate job functions with robots and artificial intelligence. How are employers and educators preparing the workforce to partner with machines? Do we have the ability to upskill the workers who may be displaced? Do we have the systems in place to continuously reskill workers so that their skills match the skills we need for North Bay jobs? If not, what can we do to create that system?

Is the North Bay business-friendly? Do our governmental and regulatory agencies work to help businesses grow here? What kinds of businesses do we want to attract to the North Bay? What kinds of companies offer jobs that have salaries commensurate with what it costs to live in this region? What industry sectors are dynamic and what are fading away?

We look forward to beginning a lively discussion of the North Bay today and what it can be in the future. We hope you leave this conference armed with knowledge and resolve to ensure the State of the North Bay is the best it can be.

The Keynote speaker is Dr. Micah Weinberg, President, Bay Area Council Economic Institute. The panelists are Hamish Gray, Keysight Technologies; Jim Geist, Nelson Family of Companies and Kevin Bradley, W. Bradley Electric. The conference is at the Sheraton Hotel, Petaluma, on June 7th. Registration is at 7:00 a.m. The program runs from 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Tickets are \$75/each. For more information or to purchase tickets, click [here](#).

## Corporate Social Responsibility and Business Ethics

Ethics is a hot topic of late, both in business and government. There is an interesting connection between Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility. From [Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility in the Corporate World](#), ([Chegg Study](#)), is a discussion on how these two concepts are linked.

Chegg details how “Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society, the environment and its own prosperity, known as the “triple bottom line” of people, planet, and profit. Not only do responsible, sustainable and transparent approaches help build brand and reputation, they help strengthen the community and therefore the marketplace.”

“Business ethics examines ethical principles and moral or ethical problems that arise in a business environment,” says Chegg. “It applies to all aspects of business conduct and is relevant to the conduct of individuals and entire organizations. Generally business ethics involves coming to know what is right or wrong in the workplace and doing what's right -- this is in regard to effects of products/services and in relationships with stakeholders. Business ethics can be strong preventative medicine.”

According to Chegg, “Social responsibility and business ethics are often regarded as the same concepts. However, the social responsibility movement is but one aspect of the overall discipline of business ethics. The social responsibility movement arose particularly during the 1960s with increased public consciousness about the role of business in helping to cultivate and maintain highly ethical practices in society and particularly in the natural environment. Many companies believe they have a responsibility to “give back” to society. This focus includes contributions of time and money, a duty to provide environmentally friendly products and services, and a desire to improve the lives of individuals here and around the globe.”

From the Institute for Sustainable Development ([Source](#)), we learn that some of the drivers pushing business towards CSR include:

### 1. The shrinking role of government

In the past, governments have relied on legislation and regulation to deliver social and environmental objectives in the business sector. Shrinking government resources, coupled with a distrust of regulations, has led to the exploration of voluntary and non-regulatory initiatives instead.

### 2. Demands for greater disclosure

There is a growing demand for corporate disclosure from stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, employees, communities, investors, and activist organizations.

### 3. Increased customer interest

There is evidence that the ethical conduct of companies exerts a growing influence on the purchasing decisions of customers. In a recent survey by Environics International, more than one in five consumers reported having either rewarded or punished companies based on their perceived social performance.

### 4. Growing investor pressure

Investors are changing the way they assess companies' performance, and are making decisions based on criteria that include ethical concerns. The Social Investment Forum reports that in the US in 1999, there was more than \$2 trillion worth of assets invested in portfolios that used screens linked to the

environment and social responsibility. A separate survey by Environics International revealed that more than a quarter of share-owning Americans took into account ethical considerations when buying and selling stocks. (More on socially responsible investment can be found in the 'Banking and investment' section of the site.)

#### 5. Competitive labor markets

Employees are increasingly looking beyond paychecks and benefits, and seeking out employers whose philosophies and operating practices match their own principles. In order to hire and retain skilled employees, companies are being forced to improve working conditions.

#### 6. Supplier relations

As stakeholders are becoming increasingly interested in business affairs, many companies are taking steps to ensure that their partners conduct themselves in a socially responsible manner. Some are introducing codes of conduct for their suppliers, to ensure that other companies' policies or practices do not tarnish their reputation.

Some of the positive outcomes that can arise when businesses adopt a policy of social responsibility include:

##### 1. Company benefits:

- Improved financial performance;
- Lower operating costs;
- Enhanced brand image and reputation;
- Increased sales and customer loyalty;
- Greater productivity and quality;
- More ability to attract and retain employees;
- Reduced regulatory oversight;
- Access to capital;
- Workforce diversity;
- Product safety and decreased liability.



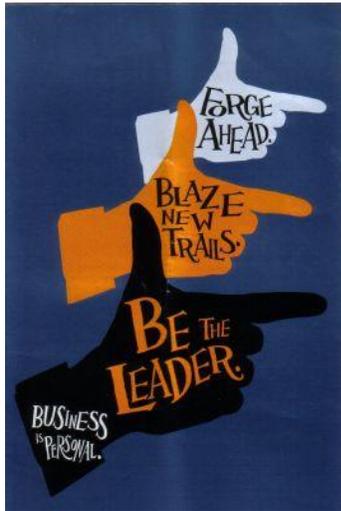
##### 2. Benefits to the community and the general public:

- Charitable contributions;
- Employee volunteer programs;
- Corporate involvement in community education, employment and homelessness programs;
- Product safety and quality.

##### 3. Environmental benefits:

- Greater material recyclability;
- Better product durability and functionality;
- Greater use of renewable resources;
- Integration of environmental management tools into business plans, including life-cycle assessment and costing, environmental management standards, and eco-labelling.

## Why Your Leader Should Be Recognized



In 2017, we seem to be in short supply of hearing about the good people are doing. And while the news focuses on the wrong-doers, NBLC wants to focus on the local heroes who are making lives, community and/or planet better through their actions. We encourage you to submit a nomination of your favorite leader – be it a person, organization, team or partnership – to be considered for a Leaders of the North Bay Award.

The prestigious 2017 awards will recognize leadership in Marin and Sonoma counties in the following categories:

- **United We Stand - Community building:** Recognition of leadership in corporate philanthropy or volunteerism, civic engagement, or other community initiatives.
- **Paint the Community Green - Environmental stewardship:** Recognition of leadership in green business, green building and/or environmental stewardship.
- **The “Light Bulb” Went On - Innovative/entrepreneurial spirit:** Recognition of creativity, innovation and the entrepreneurial spirit.
- **Empowering the Latino Community - Leadership within the Latino community:** Recognition of efforts to empower and strengthen the Latino community through education, job training, cultural awareness, and business development resources.
- **From Red Tape to Red Carpet - Leadership in Government:** Recognition of local governments that cut through red tape, eliminate barriers to economic growth, enhance efficiency of service, improve the business climate through innovation and best practices.

To get a nomination form, click [here](#).

## 10 Commitments to Live By

In OPINION: The 10 commitments to live by by Matthew Dowd ([ABC News, May 19, 2017](#)), Dowd offers ten commitments to live by for graduating students. Dowd gives wise counsel.

1. Let us pursue meaning or purpose before we pursue happiness. It is through finding our authentic mission that we will find joy and happiness. And a life of mission is not without pain or hurt, but it is one that will touch your heart and soul. As the poet Mary Oliver wrote, “What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?”

2. Your mission will be found in your frustration. As you watch the news or listen to others, what makes you frustrated or angry? What upsets you in a profound way? That is a signal of what your mission should be.

3. Money and power are not wrong in themselves. It is how we use those things that determine whether they are constructive or destructive for humanity. Like fire or water, money and power can warm us and our fellow humans, or light the way, or satisfy our thirst, or they can destroy like a wild fire or a flood.

4. Chose love over fear at every opportunity you can. At each important point in life, you will have a choice between responding to love or fear. Choose the path of love.

5. Make choices of overwhelming joy. Much of your life happens to you, and you don't always have a choice. Those choices that you do have, like your purpose or profession, or who you are in relationship with, make sure it is so over whelming that it moves you. Don't do 50 balance sheet analysis or you will end up feeling hollow.

6. Integrity matters, in your personal life and in leadership broadly. As Gandhi said, you will find joy when what you think, what you say, and what you do is in alignment. That is integrity.

7. Pursue diverse sources of information and knowledge. Get out of your silos. Too often I look at the bookshelves of leaders, and those shelves are filled with information that is 90 percent one area or one subject. Push yourself to examine truths in all aspects – politics, business, philanthropy, spirituality, and even sex.

8. Think big, and act small. All too often we don't set a big enough goal for ourselves and we are satisfied with accomplishing too little. And we also don't see the incredible power of acting in the smallest circles of our life to bring about real change.

9. We can only bridge the divides in our world if we figure out and bond with people on shared joys and sorrows. You can't break an emotional connection someone has with a president or a party or a policy with a rational argument. Relate to people first in the depth of their joys or sorrows.

10. Finally, let us recapture faith and patriotism in this country. It has been held captive for too long by small groups of people who only define it in a limited and judgmental way. If someone tells you that in order to love God or your country, you have to hate someone else, they are neither a patriot nor a person of faith.



## NBLC Endorses No on C



In the June 6<sup>th</sup> special election in Santa Rosa, Measure C – the Rent Stabilization Measure -- is on the ballot. NBLC urges a No vote on Measure C. We agree with the Press Democrat that “rent control is poor housing policy. The overwhelming majority of economists support that view with their research. Rent control tends to benefit a select few — those with the good fortune to be renting a covered apartment when it takes effect. But many times those who benefit are not the ones cities hope to assist... But at a time when Santa Rosa desperately needs hammers for the construction of more affordable housing, Measure C provides an ax, one that

would divide the community between the haves and have-nots and between winners and losers. This is not the tool that Santa Rosa needs.”

## Members in the News

### Redwood Credit Union Ranks Among Nation’s Top Performers

Numerous reports highlight RCU’s leading performance in U.S.

### The Buck Institute for Research on Aging's Impact Circle Picks its 2017 Project

When given the option of research projects to support, Buck Impact Circle members recently pooled their resources and chose to invest \$120,000 in research aimed at exploring the protective effects of a ketogenic diet on the complications of diabetes.

### Friedman's Home Improvement and Sonoma Raceway 4th annual STEM Race Car Challenge

Thirty-Three North Bay Schools and Clubs Take Part in STEM Race Car Challenge

### Midstate Construction Completes Camphora Apartments

Owner Eden Housing and general contractor Midstate Construction Corporation recently completed Camphora Apartments in Soledad, CA.

### Sonoma Raceway Hosts Pacific Gas and Electric Military Career Day

To highlight PG&E's 1,000 Careers Project and its commitment to hire 1,000 veterans by 2023, PG&E has joined forces with Sentinels of Freedom and Sonoma Raceway to invite you to participate in the 3rd annual Military Career Day event.

### Redwood Credit Union Races to Support Local Nonprofits

RCU contributes over \$45,000 to local communities through three regional Human Race events

### Redwood Credit Union Voted Best Credit Union

Marin Independent Journal readers name RCU Best Credit Union in Marin County

### Arrow Benefits Group Develops Proprietary Process That's Bringing in More Business

At 31 years old, Andrew McNeil knows he needs to prove himself when meeting with a prospective client.

### BioMarin wins FDA approval for life-changing drug for kids — with a \$700,000-per-year cost

Rare disease drug developer BioMarin Pharmaceutical Inc. won regulatory approval Thursday of a drug that promises to change the course of a fatal childhood neurodegenerative disease.

Read more online at [www.northbayleadership.org/news](http://www.northbayleadership.org/news)



## Who We Are

Over twenty five years ago, business leaders founded the North Bay Leadership Council on a simple premise: We can accomplish more by working together. Today, the Council includes 54 leading employers in the North Bay. Our members represent a wide variety of businesses, non-profits and educational institutions, with a workforce in excess of 25,000. As business and civic leaders, our goal is to promote sound public policy, innovation and sustainability to make our region a better place to live and work. For more information: Call

707.283.0028 / E-mail [info@northbayleadership.org](mailto:info@northbayleadership.org)

[www.northbayleadership.org](http://www.northbayleadership.org)