



NEWS

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VALLEY FORWARD LUNCHEON FOCUSES ON CIVIL DISCOURSE: WHAT, HOW AND WHY NOW?

PHOENIX (Jan. 25, 2011) – An interactive panel of local experts will discuss civil discourse, the shifting of politics in Arizona, consensus building and regional thinking at Valley Forward’s luncheon on Wednesday, Jan. 25, at the Tempe Mission Palms Hotel.

Panelists include: Paul Johnson, former Mayor of the city of Phoenix and manager of Southwest Next Capital Management; Chuck Coughlin, president of HighGround Public Affairs; and Steve Rizley, senior vice president and general manager of Cox Communications. Tara Jackson, president of Arizona Town Hall will serve as moderator.

“Civil discourse seems to be the topic of many conversations these days. But most still wonder what exactly is it and how can we achieve it,” said Diane Brossart, president and CEO of Valley Forward. “It is evident that society is calling for a concerted effort to find a different way of electing our leaders, solving our problems and interfacing with each other.”

According to the National Institute for Civil Discourse, the definition of civil discourse is robust, honest, frank and constructive dialogue and deliberation that seeks to advance the public interest. The topic of civil discourse is especially relevant in this presidential election year, which also marks Arizona’s centennial celebration and the 50th anniversary of Arizona Town Hall.

The speakers will address what the role of civil discourse is in our lives and in the political process, how the tone and type of discourse has changed in recent years and what they believe could make political debate more constructive. They will provide their thoughts on who is responsible for the current level of discourse and what specific steps can those in the audience take to promote or support civil discourse.

Valley Forward is a 43-year-old, non-profit public interest organization that brings business and civic leaders together to convene thoughtful public dialogue on regional issues and to promote cooperative efforts to improve the sustainability and livability of the Valley and state.

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