



## The USC Schwarzenegger Institute – Bipartisan Solutions to Local and Global Issues

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On Sept. 24, 2012, the University of Southern California hosted the Inaugural Symposium of the USC Schwarzenegger Institute. According to the USC Schwarzenegger Institute website (2012), “The USC Schwarzenegger Institute will focus on the responsibility of policymakers to transcend partisanship to implement policies that most benefit the people they serve, with five priority areas: education, energy and environment, fiscal and economic policy, health and human wellness, and political reform.” The Inaugural Symposium included panelists with diverse backgrounds including journalists, current and retired federal, state, and local elected officials, a Nobel prize winner, and leaders in the entertainment and innovation sectors.

This fact sheet summarizes the principal issues addressed at the Symposium. Extension educators and other University of Nevada Cooperative Extension faculty and staff can benefit from the Institute’s focus on bipartisan collaboration and cooperation in addressing local and global problems by focusing on new ways of collaborative thinking.

The Symposium was divided into three sessions:

(1) A Morning Discussion was moderated by Cokie Roberts (NBC News) and consisted of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R-Calif.), Gov. Charlie Crist (I-Fla.), Sen. Tom Daschle (D-S.D.), Sen. John McCain

(R-Ariz.), Gov. Bill Richardson (D-N.M.), and Gov. Tom Ridge (R-Penn.).

(2) A Lunch Discussion moderated by Conan Nolan (general assignment reporter, NBC 4 Los Angeles) and consisting of R. K. Pachauri (Chair, United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) and Bob Foster (Mayor, City of Long Beach, Calif.).

(3) An Afternoon Discussion moderated by Ben Smith (editor-in-chief, BuzzFeed) and consisting of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R-Calif.), Rob Friedman (co-chairman, Lionsgate), Brian Grazer (co-chairman, Imagine Entertainment), Jimmy Iovine (Chairman, Interscope Records) and Ron Meyer (president and COO, Universal Studios).

The most common and major ideas for each session are summarized in this fact sheet.

### **MORNING SESSION: Political Leaders’ Views on the Importance of Post-Partisanship**

In his opening remarks, Schwarzenegger laid out three rules that he thinks critical in making important public policy decisions in a bipartisan way. First, the best policies are ones developed and implemented in the absence of fear. Second, the closer the policy is to the people, the better the policy action will be. And third, no ideology has a monopoly on good ideas.

Each of these three rules underscores the larger public policy issues that the work of the public service never stops and that the best ideas require political courage. More important is the idea that when it comes to delivering public services in times of crisis, people care little about political party affiliation and division. Take for example the case of a car that has been in an accident and one half of the car is in jurisdiction "A" and the remaining half of the car is in jurisdiction "B". The occupant of the car who has just been in an accident, and who may require medical attention, cares little about the political affiliation of jurisdiction "A" or jurisdiction "B", or of the paramedics, police officers or firefighters who respond to the accident. The occupant of the car only wants to be helped. Yet, as Kettl (2006) points out, we have divided the provision of public services along territorial and political boundaries, boundaries that serve no benefit to the delivery of public services.

McCain, Ridge, and Schwarzenegger each suggested that, in order to move beyond partisanship, policymakers and the public alike must focus on the critical issues that have to be solved. Additionally, McCain, Ridge, Schwarzenegger, and Crist each suggested that policymakers must begin to develop a new respect for politicians and policymakers on both sides of the aisle. Most importantly, policy makers must begin by asking questions such as, "What does the community need?", "How do we serve the people?", and "How does one avoid becoming a party servant?"

Although each panelist concluded that special interests have gained almost complete control of the policy agenda, there are several positive signs that show the promise of a postpartisanship world. According to Richardson, some politicians actively campaign on their records of working with members of the other political party, and moderates have been able to successfully raise money, mostly through

grassroots campaigns, to support their campaigns.

Schwarzenegger suggested that policymakers and administrators recognize the power of subnational (state, regional and local) governments to tackle complex problems. Pointing to the collaborative environmental policies of the Schwarzenegger administration in California, especially the bistate governance of Lake Tahoe between Nevada and California and the development of a regional coalition of federal, state and local government agencies and entities and various nonprofit organizations to manage the San Francisco Bay Delta, Schwarzenegger underscored the importance of policy development and implementation at the regional level.

The development and implementation of public policy and public service delivery at the regional level, according to the Morning Discussion panel, is the key paradigm shift that must occur in order to move beyond partisanship. This paradigm shift requires policymakers and those responsible for the implementation of public policy to think beyond historical political divisions and embrace new collaborative models that ignore political and partisan divisions while embracing long-term goals of providing public value and service.

### **LUNCH SESSION: Local Solutions to Global Problems – Environment, Energy and Climate**

Vig and Kraft (2009) broadly define sustainability as the capacity to continuously produce all the necessities of a quality human existence within the bounds of a natural world of undiminished quality. To do so, Vig and Kraft (2009) suggest a triple bottom line when thinking about the success of sustainable policies, programs and projects consisting of: (1) economic prosperity, in that any type of production must yield a positive return on

investment, (2) social well-being, in that the consumption of resources should leave society better off while not negatively impacting any one individual, and (3) environmental quality, in that the consumption of resources should not irrevocably create long-term degradation of the natural world.

During the Lunch Session of the USC Schwarzenegger Institute, the concept of sustainability, in the political context of the 2012 U.S. Presidential Election and other global pressures, were examined. Pachauri started by underscoring the importance of sustainable development in the United States, stating that, "If everyone in the world lived like an American, we would need 14 planet Earths worth of natural resources." The growing pressures on worldwide natural resources from the emerging consumer class in China, India and South America, coupled with ongoing unsustainable demand for energy and natural resources in the United States, continue to threaten the world's stock of available natural resources.

Pachauri and Foster underscored the importance of developing local and subnational regional solutions to the growing global problem of natural resource depletion and environmental degradation. Although national and multinational collaboration is important, Pachauri and Foster pointed to several local and regional programs, just in Southern California, designed to address the global problems of climate change and natural resource depletion.

One such program that both panelists highlighted was the Clean Truck Program and the inclusion of renewable energy development at the Port of Los Angeles and Port of Long Beach in the South Bay of Los Angeles County. According to a January 2012 Port of Los Angeles fact sheet, the Clean Truck Program was enacted in October 2008, requiring that all commercial

long-haul trucks that call on the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach meet 2007 US Environmental Protection Agency heavy duty truck emission standards. According to the Port of Los Angeles/Port of Long Beach (2012), "As of January 2012, 100 percent of the cargo gate moves at Port (Los Angeles and Long Beach combined) terminals are being made by trucks meeting US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) 2007 heavy truck emissions standards (Clean Trucks). This achievement allowed the San Pedro ports to meet their 2012 goal of 80 percent emissions reductions from overall drayage operations."

More important than the specifics of the Clean Truck Program, or any of the other programs and projects the panelists spoke about, is the approach to sustainable development Pachauri and Foster laid out. Both underscored the importance of properly identifying local and regional needs and concerns when it comes to sustainable development and environmental protection. A proper needs assessment and the development of appropriate policies, programs and projects must ensure that information on the needs of the community and region are properly communicated to the public. Additionally, compromise and collaboration among local and regional interests are key to solving the global problems of natural resource depletion and environmental degradation with local and regional solutions.

### **AFTERNOON DISCUSSION: The Power of People and Innovation – Media/Hollywood Leader's Perspective**

Unlike the two previous panels, the afternoon session emphasized the role of the private sector, and industries such as the entertainment industry in California in encouraging innovation and developing innovative local- and regional-level solutions to complex national and global problems.

In understanding complex national and global problems, each panelist emphasized the importance of social media and its ability to spark spontaneous discussion on important issues between divergent interests. The ability to bring divergent interests together is critical to the development of innovative local and regional solutions to complex global problems.

Each of the panelists underscored the critical point that when problems arise, instead of becoming obsessed with the details of the problem, policymakers and private sector leaders must focus their efforts on solving the problem. Each member of the panel pointed out that private sector organizations must routinely innovate around global challenges and changes in order to remain profitable and survive. This type of innovation, according to the panelists, is lacking in the public sector but could serve as a model for future public sector action.

## Conclusion

The Sept. 24, 2012 Inaugural Symposium of the USC Schwarzenegger Institute was an attempt by policymakers and private sector leaders to pool their resources and develop new ways of thinking when it comes to the development of local and regional solutions to global problems. Schwarzenegger's opening remarks, outlining three rules, including (1) that the best policies are the ones made in the absence of fear, (2) the best policy is made by those closest to the people, and (3) that no ideology has a monopoly on good ideas, can serve as a model for sustainable development policies, programs and projects sponsored by University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and Extension educators in Nevada.

## References

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