



Ohio

Providing Economic Opportunity and Quality of Life

An Interview with The Honorable Ted Strickland, Governor of Ohio

EDITORS' NOTE *The son of an Ohio steelworker, Ted Strickland attended Asbury College and Theological Seminary in Kentucky where he received a bachelor's degree in history and a master's degree in divinity. He continued his studies at the University of Kentucky, receiving a doctoral degree in counseling psychology. He has served as a minister, a psychologist, and a college professor. He was an administrator at a Methodist children's home, an Assistant Professor of psychology at Shawnee State University, and a Consulting Psychologist at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility (SOCF). Strickland was elected to congress from Ohio's sixth district in 1993 and during his 12-year tenure, helped author the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), a federal initiative that now provides health insurance to millions of children of working parents. He was elected Governor on November 7, 2006 and was sworn into office on January 8, 2007.*



The Honorable Ted Strickland

You ran for Governor on a platform of aggressive educational reform. Now that you have been elected, what specific initiatives do you plan on implementing for improving Ohio's schools?

In terms of education, I think progress has been made in recent years, but we have got a long way to go, and I'm committed to leading initiatives to get us there. We are in the process right now of working with various business groups, as well as other stakeholders, to try to identify what the needs are and how we can best meet those needs. But everything we do, quite frankly, is based upon a deeply felt conviction that there is an unbreakable link between economic development and living-wage job creation. And having a highly educated workforce with high-level skills is going to be a prerequisite for creating the jobs of the future. And so we're going to be developing a comprehensive system beginning with the youngest children. We are going to make significant new investments in early childcare and education. And we are working to make sure that we have a system of elementary and secondary schools that are adequately funded. But we're not going to stop with just funding considerations. We are determined to reform education at the elementary and secondary levels, so that we are providing the best curricula and highly qualified teachers, as well as embracing the kind of standards necessary to make sure Ohio students are not only able to measure up to, or com-

pete with, students in neighboring states and throughout the U.S., but can compete internationally as well. And we're quite serious about that. Now, when it comes to higher education, Ohio already has a collection of magnificent universities, liberal arts colleges, and technical schools. So we will be working to develop all of those various institutions into a system of higher education that provides high-quality, affordable access, and advanced training. Beyond that, we are also committed to instituting an adult-workforce training and development initiative that will enable our adults who may be transitioning into a different career, or may be in need of developing higher-level skills, to have access to that training. So our commitment to education is total. It was the central part of my campaign for Governor and I believe the future of Ohio depends in large part upon our ability to achieve the goals that we're setting out for ourselves.

How confident are you about the awareness that exists among major corporations and the global business community about the opportunities that exist in Ohio? And what are you doing to increase that awareness?

We are beginning to work with an existing program here in Ohio, the Ohio Business Development Coalition, in an effort to make sure that Ohio becomes known as a place where businesses can locate, for one, but also known as a place that provides two things: economic opportunity and a quality of life that may not be available elsewhere. In other words, Ohio

wants to honor balance without compromise. Ohio has a lot to offer; the problem is that many people, both in this country and throughout the world, do not see us as we deserve to be seen. Therefore, we are going to work to ensure that we present Ohio and the advantages Ohio can offer in a way that emphasizes our strengths, both for individuals and for companies.

You have come into the role of Governor from a rather untraditional background. What made you feel it was the right time to make the commitment to run for public office?

It's true that my earlier professional involvements weren't very similar to what most people have when they run for Governor. I started out in my professional career as a United Methodist minister. Later I became involved in childcare efforts and then became a licensed psychologist and practiced psychology in different settings. But I believe that the decisions that are made at every level of government, certainly at the state and national levels, have a direct impact upon not only my life, but the quality of life that others experience. And at some point, I decided that I wanted to become a part of the decision-making process, rather than simply be a recipient of political and public-policy decisions. That led me to seek congressional office and I served in the congress for 12 years. Then I decided that if I really wanted to be able to have a direct impact upon the lives of people and on the things that most immediately matter, in terms of social, political, and economic concerns, that the most appropriate office would be the Governor's.

How much of a challenge is it to get young people involved in public service? And are talented people today willing to sacrifice the economic incentives of the private sector to serve in the public sector?

One of the thing things that I hope to do while in this office is fight the growing cynicism about politics and public service in the minds of younger people, because we cannot lose this resource. I've always felt, since I've been in the congress and now that I'm Governor, that whether I'm successful or not depends in large part on the quality of the people that I surround myself with, associate with, and depend upon for advice, counsel, and inspiration. I can't speak for every person who is in an elective office, but I personally have been inspired by the quality of people, who, when given an opportunity to be involved, choose to do so. ●



Ohio

Economic Growth and Development

An Interview with The Honorable Lee Fisher, Lieutenant Governor of Ohio

EDITORS' NOTE Raised in the Cleveland area, Lee Fisher graduated from Oberlin College and later earned his law degree from Case Western Reserve University and his master's degree in nonprofit organizations (MNO) from the Case Mandel School for Nonprofit Organizations. His career has spanned the private, public, and nonprofit sectors. In addition to work as a private attorney, a public company board director, and a federal appellate law clerk, Fisher served as the President and CEO of the Center for Families and Children in Cleveland and has been a State Representative, a State Senator, and Attorney General. He is the founder and former Co-Chair of the Mental Health Advocacy Coalition and serves or has served on many nonprofit boards, including the National Leadership Board of the Cleveland Clinic Cancer Center, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and Oberlin College. He was appointed by President Bill Clinton as Chair of the National Commission on Crime Control and Prevention and to the World Board of Governors of the United Service Organizations (USO). In addition to his role as Lieutenant Governor, Fisher is leading the Ohio Department of Development.

What issue do you feel won you and Governor Strickland the election?

Every day of our campaign over the past year, Governor Strickland and I emphasized that the key to growing Ohio's economy is strengthening and reinforcing the unbreakable link between education and prosperity. Unfortunately, over the last several decades that link has been weakened by a lack of investment and a lack of focus. So our priority is to strengthen these connections at every level. First are the connections between our research universities and the commercialization of new ideas and new products. Second are the connections between our two-year community colleges and our state-of-the-art workforce development system. And third are the connections between our primary and secondary systems and the world-class skills that high school students need to have in science, technology, engineering, and math in order to compete in the global economy.

How do you see your role as Lieutenant Governor specifically working towards those goals?

The Lieutenant Governor role is different from state to state. And in most states,



The Honorable Lee Fisher

it's defined more by the relationship with the Governor than it is by statute. From the outset of our partnership, Governor Strickland and I agreed that it would be to our mutual benefit, but more importantly to the mutual benefit of the state, if I had a focused portfolio of responsibilities that centered on economic growth and development. So although I do have other responsibilities, my primary focus from the moment I get up in the morning until I go to bed at night is economic growth and development. And I think that's very positive, because if I were to try to do too many things, I wouldn't do anything well.

What is the biggest impediment to bringing high-paying jobs to Ohio?

When I talk to CEOs around the country, it becomes increasingly clear that the single most important criteria for companies competing in this global environment is a skilled, highly educated, flexible workforce that can adapt quickly to the short- and long-term needs of the company. Ohio's workforce development system has access to one of the most extensive university systems in the world. Our challenge is in harnessing that infrastructure and aligning the different local and state programs in a way that makes it nimble, flexible, and responsive to the demands of global corporations.

Do you expect to have a healthy working relationship with Ohio's business leaders?

Governor Strickland and I are Democrats.

And sometimes our friends in the private sector don't expect Democrats to be pro-business or pro-tax reform. But we are both. I've been extremely pleased by the attitudes of the business community and their willingness to partner with the Department of Development, which I run. We believe that it is inappropriate to view public/private partnerships in the context of a landlord/tenant relationship. We prefer instead to be risk-sharing partners with businesses. And that requires that we serve as catalyst, accelerator, and investment partner. We want to share the risk with businesses as they invest capital in our state.

You and Governor Strickland have an ambitious agenda. Are you able to attract the talent you need?

The single most important thing that any executive can do, whether it's in the public, private, or non-profit sector, is to build the strongest team possible and attract and recruit the best and brightest talent. All the strategies in the world are worth very little without the talent to execute them. So the Governor and I are spending most of our time in these early weeks of our administration building that team. Now, it's no secret that the pay structure of state government is not competitive with the private sector. So we are trying to appeal to people's nobler senses. The good news is that we've been extremely successful in attracting major talent, much of it from the private sector.

What made you realize it was the right time to run for Lieutenant Governor?

To me the most exciting place to be is at the intersection of the public, private, and non-profit sectors. And this is the single most exciting opportunity I've had in my career. Not only am I at the intersection, I'm in a position to make the most significant impact to date.

Are you ever really able to relax and get away from the office?

That's a great question. And the answer is that, on a personal, level it's probably my single greatest challenge. The irony is that the Ohio brand promise is "balance without compromise." In other words, we believe that one of the things that makes Ohio unique is that it not only has an attractive and inviting business environment, but also an exceptional quality of life that allows executives and their colleagues to live balanced lives. But, of course, we're here working 24/7 to get the message out. In the long run, we recognize that balance is very important. ●



Ohio

Improving the Lives of the World's Consumers

An Interview with Mark A. Collar, President,
Global Pharmaceuticals and Personal Health, The Procter & Gamble Company, Cincinnati

EDITORS' NOTE A graduate of Northern Illinois University, Mark Collar joined Procter & Gamble (P&G) in 1975 as a Sales Representative and grew into positions of increasing authority, from Brand Manager to eventually running a division. In 1991, he was appointed Vice President and General Manager, Deodorants/Old Spice. By 1997, he was Vice President-Global Pharmaceuticals for Procter & Gamble Worldwide. Collar was appointed by Ohio's Governor Taft as Chairman of the Third Frontier Advisory Board and sits on a number of other boards. He was appointed to his current position at P&G in 2005.

COMPANY BRIEF The world's number one maker of household products, Procter & Gamble (www.pg.com) is divided into two global units: health and beauty, and household care. More than 20 of P&G's brands are billion-dollar sellers (including Actonel, Always/Whisper, Bounty, Charmin, Crest, Downy/Lenor, Folgers, Iams, Olay, Pampers, Pantene, Pringles, Tide, and Wella). P&G bought Clairol in 2001 and a majority of Wella in 2003. Its purchase of Gillette in late 2005 was the biggest buy in the company's history. P&G (NYSE:PG) employs more than 135,000 working in more than 80 countries worldwide. In 2006, the company reported total sales of over \$68 billion and over \$8.6 billion in net income.

Have you been happy with the strength of Procter & Gamble's global pharmaceutical and personal health business, and are you optimistic for future growth?

We are very excited to see where health care is going. The consumer is beginning to play a much bigger role within health care. And we view that as a very good thing given our company's heritage in improving the lives of the world's consumers. So as we analyze our over-the-counter [OTC] business and prescription drug businesses, and we look at the trends, we feel very good about how we are positioned.

P&G is such a big company, spread throughout many businesses. Is there much integration between business units?

We view the consumer as the real starting point. If you look at the consumer's drive for wellness, and then you think about how Procter & Gamble can serve these consumers across business units, we expect to provide holistic solutions that could span prescription drugs,



Mark A. Collar

OTC medicines, other consumer products, natural remedies, devices, diagnostics, and even services. We are not independent, but rather integrated, guided by the consumer's health and wellness needs.

How much of a role is technology playing in lowering drug costs?

New science is democratizing R&D across every point of innovation: from academia to biotech and pharmaceutical companies of all sizes, in the pursuit of knowledge and the identification of opportunities for new pharmacological therapy. A network of innovation for drug discovery is spreading around the world, and companies are taking advantage of it to form new alliances that would not have existed 10 years ago. We are all seeking the best technology where we can find it, then developing it, and taking it to the marketplace.

Are you happy with the way the state of Ohio is branding to the rest of the world?

I am very pleased with the work Ed Burghard is doing as part of the Ohio Business Development Coalition in taking a strategic approach to marketing the distinctive benefits that Ohio offers companies looking to expand and relocate. The reality of marketing is that it takes time to build awareness. It takes time to dispel old points of view. But we are definitely on the right track. Ohio has a lot to offer, and we are getting the word out.

Will you explain the work you're doing as Chairman of Third Frontier?

What has always interested me as a P&G person is taking a strategic approach to problem solving. The approach we've taken with Third Frontier is to identify those technology bases within the state that are highly competitive on a national and international level, and then use state money to motivate the formation of public-private partnerships to commercialize the technology within them. There has not been a sufficient focus on cross-sector collaboration to develop the technology within these areas of strength, or thinking about how to commercialize these technologies. We don't have that in our DNA like California does. And it occurred to a number of people that a stimulus program like Third Frontier was needed to prime the pump and get some of these actions started.

As part of this, Third Frontier is sponsoring the Entrepreneurs in Residence Program, which will help pair up creative business people with gifted scientists and academics. We have also recognized that we need more venture capital in the state and Third Frontier money has stimulated the formation of new funds.

Has Ohio provided P&G with the level of talent that you need to propel innovation?

Because P&G is a global company, we look around the world, to universities and other places, for the best talent we can find to drive growth in our company. Ohio has been and will continue to be an important source of that talent. I personally recruited at Miami University for a number of years. That school has a solid track record of supplying successful future leaders within the Procter & Gamble Company. And that's just an example of one Ohio university. There are many others around the region that have contributed. So we are finding good talent here, and we're able to recruit these people because of the unique balance they can realize between achieving their professional career aspirations and the quality of life that Ohio offers.

As someone who has been with the same company for over 30 years, are you finding that the new generation of leaders has the same sense of loyalty?

That's a very interesting question. Every generation is different. The key is in creating an environment where people can thrive and grow, and in creating a company that has a reputation as a winner, with compelling purpose, values, and principles. I think P&G has this image and this image fosters loyalty. ●



Ohio

Connecting the World's Knowledge

An Interview with Jay Jordan,
President and Chief Executive Officer, OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc., Dublin

EDITORS' NOTE Jay Jordan graduated from Colgate University with a bachelor's degree in English literature and served as a U.S. Army officer in Germany. He held positions with the 3M Corporation in Europe and the United States, and had a 24-year career with Information Handling Services, an international publisher of databases, where he held a series of key positions in top management, including President of IHS Engineering. In 1998, he became the fourth President in OCLC's 40-year history. Jordan is a Fellow of the Standards Engineering Society and serves on the boards of Franklin University, Pica B.V. (The Netherlands), TechColumbus, the School of Information and Library Science of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Children's Research Institute, as well as the governing board of publishing for the American Chemical Society. He is also a member of the Management Development and Compensation Committee for Children's Hospital, Inc.

COMPANY BRIEF Founded in 1967, OCLC Online Computer Library Center (www.oclc.org) is a nonprofit, membership driven, computer library service and research organization dedicated to the public purposes of furthering access to the world's information and reducing information costs. More than 57,000 libraries in 112 countries and territories around the world use OCLC services to locate, acquire, catalog, lend, and preserve library materials that include more than one billion items spanning 4,000 years of recorded knowledge. With its member libraries, OCLC created and maintains WorldCat, a database that contains more than 85 million bibliographic records and 1.1 billion location listings from the merged electronic catalogs of libraries around the world. This unique resource spans 4,000 years of recorded knowledge and is now available to people everywhere on the Internet.

What is the Online Computer Learning Center and what range of products and services do you offer?

We are a nonprofit, membership cooperative organization that provides network-level services to libraries around the world. We provide computing platforms on which libraries can do their work more efficiently. Specifically, that's cataloguing, interlibrary lending activities, and collection analysis, which allows libraries to analyze their collections and make difficult decisions about what to keep and what to let go.



Jay Jordan

And they can compare their collections against other benchmark group collections. So it's really an information commons with an untold number of users. And now we've exposed the holdings of these libraries through Google, Yahoo, Microsoft, and other online sources, so when someone does a search on the open Web, they can very quickly find out in which library the item is held.

How much of what you do is advocacy and alerting the public to what is available?

Increasingly, what we do involves helping libraries expose the richness of their assets, their collections, and the knowledge they can provide. A library is a place. It's a peaceful quiet place to go as an individual for serious reading or for serendipitous discovery. And high-speed Internet is still not available to everyone in the home. So at least in the United States, you can go to a public library and enjoy that. We try to get out the message that these resources are available, not only in libraries, but also increasingly in historical societies, archives, and museums as well. These places are where the cultural artifacts, research materials, and the scholarly record of a society are held, and they are available to everyone.

What does the research arm of the OCLC do?

OCLC Research is devoted exclusively to exploration, innovation, and community building on behalf of libraries, museums, and ar-

chives. We have research scientists who look at global standards for interoperability. They determine how best to transform objects from print into digital and then how to categorize those items so that search engines recognize them in the appropriate way. Our society's cultural heritage, which has been so carefully stewarded, preserved, described, and curated by librarians all these many centuries, is now being reformatted.

Has Ohio provided you with the kind of environment that you need to effectively conduct your business on the global stage?

Ohio is the home to many significant nonprofits and it was university presidents from Ohio who founded our organization. Chemical Abstracts Service, which is a major entity of the American Chemical Society, was born here. The Battelle Memorial Institute, which is a huge, important research institute, is here. The Ohio State University is a key element of the fabric here. Cardinal Health, Wendy's International, and Nationwide Insurance are also here and do a lot for the community. So all of this suggests that there are sufficient assets here: people assets. It has been a very hospitable place for OCLC. We have benefited from our affiliations with the University and the other nonprofits, and we found that we can attract the appropriate talent, much of it locally. The challenge is to convince the world that there are exciting technological advancements being led by an entity in Ohio, and that they can in fact collaborate with some very exceptional people here.

Have you been happy with the state's re-branding efforts, which are currently underway?

Yes. The Governor has formulated his Third Frontier Program, which provides substantial state funding for entrepreneurial activities. There's some very sophisticated data manipulation going on in Central Ohio. In Dayton, there is the Wright Patterson Air Force Base and Wright State University, as well as NCR and Lexus Nexus, which are all very sophisticated from a technological standpoint. And the government has been establishing Wright Centers where tech companies apply for aid and become part of an incubation platform. I think that we're on a good path. Ohio is reinventing itself. The state is moving away from smokestack businesses and it has been a very interesting effort. We're not there yet, but we're getting there. ●



Ohio

Partnering to Grow the State's Economy

An Interview with Richard Stoff, President,
Ohio Business Roundtable, Inc., Columbus

EDITORS' NOTE Richard Stoff earned his BA in political science, with honors, from Northeastern University and his MPA from The Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University, where he concentrated in public finance. He spent 16 years in management consulting, as a Partner with Ernst & Young and before that as a Senior Consultant with Touche Ross & Co. (now Deloitte & Touche), where he worked with the firm's landmark engagement to install an integrated financial management system for the City of New York during the City's period of default and financial recovery. In 1992, Stoff helped found the Ohio Business Roundtable where he continues to serve as President.

COMPANY BRIEF The Ohio Business Roundtable is an independent, nonpartisan organization of the chief executive officers of the state's largest and most influential business enterprises. The Roundtable's purpose is to apply the knowledge, experience and insight of its members, working in partnership with public leaders, to solve the most complex problems affecting Ohio's overall economic and social vitality.

What is the mission of the Ohio Business Roundtable?

We work in partnership with elected officials to improve the economy and the standard of living in this state. As a partnership of the chief executives of the state's major businesses, we represent all sectors of the economy. But we're very selective about which public policy concerns we take on. Therefore, we have developed a reputation as an organization that can be counted upon to get things done. Our mission requires we address the issues that have the most dramatic consequences for the future of Ohio. We have addressed issues like tax reform, tort reform, and workers' compensation reform that directly impact the competitiveness of our businesses in this state. We also focus on those social issues that have enormous economic consequences, like the reform of our K-12 education system, as well as work we've been doing in higher education, science, and technology.

How did the Business Roundtable help change Ohio's tax structure?

Our former tax code was aptly characterized as the "perfect gateway to the economy of the 1930s." So the business community and our elected state leaders successfully collaborated to enact the most profound tax reform legisla-



Richard Stoff

tion in 75 years – reform that helps dramatically improve the business climate and enables Ohio-based companies to be more competitive in global markets.

Led by our immediate past Chairman John Barrett, CEO of Western & Southern Financial Group, in concert with the Governor, Speaker of the House, Senate President, and other legislative leaders, the tax reform was designed to accomplish six goals: reduce the tax burden on families and individuals; foster new capital investment; broaden the tax base to include all sectors of the economy; stimulate entrepreneurial and start-up activity; make the tax code fair, equitable, and simple for taxpayers; and rein in state spending. We engaged Ernst & Young to build sophisticated tax forecasting and economic models for us and to help us crunch the numbers. It wasn't easy work, but the vision was right: to ensure Ohio's new tax climate would be viewed as a distinctive public asset that would grow both the economy and the standard of living for Ohioans.

The result is welcome tax relief for all our citizens, reducing personal income tax rates by 21 percent and eliminating more than 500,000 low-income citizens from the tax rolls altogether. Ohio's average tax rate on new capital investment is now the lowest in the Midwest and among the lowest of our benchmark states.

Ernst & Young has recently assessed the impact of the reform after the first year of implementation and concluded that tax reform is

having a significant and positive impact on the Ohio economy.

How involved can the private sector really be in improving public schools?

Over the past 10 years, business has not only been leading the K-12 standards-based reform movement in this state and across the country, but we have also been working alongside educators and policymakers to accelerate the pace of reform. Jerry Jurgensen, CEO of Nationwide Insurance, is leading our education advocacy, and he brings enormous passion to the issue.

In a policy arena that yearns for a "silver bullet," we do have a simple, but compelling formula that connects educational quality with economic growth: Innovation + Talent = Prosperity. We call it "the new IT." America's most "prosperous" states are those which invest in technology commercialization and produce the most highly educated and trained workforces. Any business leader will acknowledge that the growth of their own internal talent and the quality of their top management and workforce is imperative. We have taken that message and translated it into public policy, and by identifying the levers that help grow the talent base and by creating a world-class technology infrastructure. Several strong initiatives are underway to better prepare our high school students for college, work, and citizenship, as well as to increase baccalaureate degree production in this state in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

When you founded the Ohio Business Roundtable, did you think it was an organization that you would still be with 16 years later?

Indeed. To help grow the standard of living and the economy in this state is very rewarding. The opportunity to work alongside high-performance chief executives is unique and extraordinarily enriching. I've had the privilege to observe hundreds of CEOs, and it's an amazing group. They're all well studied and extremely dedicated, especially my current Chairman, Mike Morris, CEO of American Electric Power. I view my role as a servant leader – and try not to get "ahead" of my leadership, always recognizing that the chief executives set the organization direction and serve as the face of the organization. With 62 *Fortune* 1000 companies based here today, Ohio has a rich history of business leadership from the Rockefellers and the Ketterings to the Smuckers and the Timkens. We stand on all their shoulders. ●



Success Through Collaboration

An Interview with Ty Marsh,
President, Columbus Chamber of Commerce, Columbus



Ty Marsh

EDITORS' NOTE Ty Marsh graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University with dual bachelor's degrees in political science and economics. This is Marsh's second tenure at the Chamber: From 1991 to 1999, he served as Executive Vice President of Policy and Strategy and Senior Vice President of Government Relations. He has also served as Chief of Staff to Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman and former Ohio House Speaker Vern Riffe.

CHAMBER BRIEF Founded as the Columbus Board of Trade in 1884, the mission of the Columbus Chamber of Commerce is leading and supporting economic growth and development for Greater Columbus.

The organization is focused on creating the jobs of the future, retaining jobs, and helping build strong businesses.

In what ways does your organization implement its mission?

Our strategic plan calls for us to be focused on four areas. One is attracting new companies and employees to our region. Two is helping existing companies grow and expand, while concurrently helping start-up companies and entrepreneurs. Three is ensuring that we have the right product, such as infrastructure, workforce, and quality of life. Four is to add value to our members to help them grow and prosper. In large part, we accomplish each of these through marketing the region to business decision makers. For example, we now have a premier Web site for business development that explains how we meet all the various criteria that companies are looking for in relocation as well as all relevant demographic data. We're just now implementing a Geographic Information System [GIS] system to this, so that you not only see pictures of potential sites, but can locate them on a GIS map as well. All of these are tools designed to ease the decision-making process.

Have you been pleased with the progress you've been making?

We are the second-fastest-growing major metropolitan area in the Midwest. And we have recently been receiving a lot of positive attention for our progress in tax reform. Columbus gets high marks from site selectors across the board. A lot of that has to do with greater awareness, but it's also because we have a thriving economy and an excellent quality of life.

How closely do you work with areas throughout the state and region?

We do collaborate with other regional chambers, which is something I don't think happened much in the past. If you look at Columbus as a region, we have had plenty of growth and prosperity throughout our history. For a long time, there was never an economic crisis that knocked us on our knees. Because of that, there was never any need for collaboration. But recent recessionary activity in the region was a big wake up call for us all to get on the same page. So now we collaborate with chambers from all the surrounding communities. There is a new dialogue and it's very encouraging. We feel that it's through collaboration, being a catalyst, and being very focused that success is achieved. That goes for marketing, prospect management, and product development. And all of it, ultimately, is about helping our members. ●



Lobbying for a Greater Cleveland

An Interview with Joseph Roman,
President and CEO, The Greater Cleveland Partnership, Cleveland



Joseph Roman

EDITORS' NOTE Joe Roman has a bachelor's degree from the State University of New York and a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University. He has worked on Capitol Hill, as both a congressional staff person and as a lobbyist for several manufacturing trade associations, and was Executive Director of Cleveland Tomorrow, an organization comprised of chief executive officers from the largest companies in Northeast Ohio, before leading efforts to create the Greater Cleveland Partnership.

PARTNERSHIP BRIEF The Greater Cleveland Partnership is a membership association of companies in Northeast Ohio created to increase the overall economic vitality of Northeast Ohio. With approximately 16,000 members, it is the largest private-sector economic development organization in Ohio and one of the largest metropolitan chambers of commerce in the nation.

How do you define your role at the Greater Cleveland Partnership and why is what you do important?

My chief role is to be an advocate for the private sector and to create an environment in our region where more wealth and more investment can flourish, across the board. The work that private-sector, nonprofit organizations do is critical. And it's becoming more critical. Whether it's in developing a more exciting downtown, which attracts the best employees to a vibrant area, or lobbying for a friendly tax environment; these things are critical. And it's really only private-sector organizations that can be the catalyst for those kinds of ideas.

Is there a focus on creating a diverse workforce?

I'm pleased to say that the business community in Ohio is challenging itself and measuring itself on diversity issues. We're tracking the diversity of our board membership. We're tracking changes and improvements in the diversity of our senior management. We're tracking the progress we're making in supplier diversity. And we're tracking the progress we're making in growing more minority businesses to scale, so as to create more wealth in the minority community.

Are you confident that companies in Ohio are positioning themselves for competition globally?

Absolutely. For instance, our manufacturing programs today are focusing heavily on connecting small- and medium-sized manufacturers with a global marketplace. That's how they're going to grow. That's how they're going to create more employment and more wealth in the United States and in Northeastern Ohio. And that's how they're going to create partnerships in other parts of the world.

How do organizations like yours compete against the private sector to attract the level of talent you need?

There are a dozen leadership groups that have emerged in Northeastern Ohio in the last couple of years. And they were created by young leaders in our town. There is growing energy among young people who want to be more engaged in their towns and in their regions. And I think that is the best signal that these individuals will stay and help make this a competitive place for themselves and for us. And I think that's the most exciting part of what we do. ●