



American  
Leadership  
Forum  
Silicon Valley

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**AMERICAN LEADERSHIP FORUM-SILICON VALLEY ANNOUNCES  
"UNCOMMON EXCHANGE" CONVERSATION SERIES  
*California State Senator Abel Maldonado Kicks Off Series on June 11***

May 12, 2009 Santa Clara, Calif. – American Leadership Forum-Silicon Valley (ALF) today announced a new breed of conversation series: *Uncommon Exchange*. Structured around themes of leadership, risk, courage and controversy in challenging times, the series will explore what it means for individuals and communities to make complex decisions in a high-stakes environment.

"ALF, in partnership with the Knight Foundation, is launching a new way of having community conversations," said **Chris Block**, ALF CEO. "Participants will engage in unscripted, real-time discussion, meaning no speeches or contrived interviews."

California State **Senator Abel Maldonado** (R-Santa Maria) is the first leader to be featured in the *series* that launches on *Thursday, June 11 from 4 – 6 p.m. at the Historic Hoover Theatre in San Jose.*

Abel Maldonado is the eldest son of immigrant field workers. He attended California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, and took the ideas he learned back to his family's small farm. Today, the former half acre of strawberries is an agri-business that employs more than 250 people on 6,000 acres and ships produce around the globe.

Abel ran for Santa Maria City Council in 1994 because he was disillusioned with the lack of customer service in government. He was elected to the City Council at the age of 26, and two years later was elected Mayor. After guiding the city out of a financial crisis, Maldonado took his leadership style to Sacramento in 1998 when he was elected to the California State Assembly. He was subsequently elected to the State Senate in 2004.

On February 19, 2009, Senator Maldonado cast the deciding vote in the longest budget stalemate in California history, saying, "This is not about my political career; this is about the health and safety of the people of California."

ALF Senior Fellow participants include **Jim Cunneen**, Partner, California Strategies and **Stephen E. Wright**, former Editorial Page Editor of the San Jose Mercury News.

The Uncommon Exchange conversation series is a new venture of the Common Good

Collaborative in partnership with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Conversations are open to the public. Locations and co-sponsors will vary throughout Silicon Valley. For more information visit [www.alfsv.org](http://www.alfsv.org) or call 408-554-2000.

**About American Leadership Forum-Silicon Valley**

American Leadership Forum-Silicon Valley (ALF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to building a better Silicon Valley community by joining and strengthening leaders to serve the common good. ALF was founded in 1988 to create a regional network of diverse senior-level leaders across private, public and nonprofit sectors. Graduates of the organization's one-year Fellows program, now numbering more than 400, have created a network that brings together a broad cross-section of leaders committed to building a stronger community, using collaborative leadership skills to identify and deal with complex regional issues, and creating opportunities to work together in ways that make a significant difference to Silicon Valley.

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