

San Francisco, CA, February 9, 2000 – The Silicon Valley Employers Forum and the North Bay Employers Coalition on Health Care announced today that they are both forging affiliate relationships with the Pacific Business Group on Health (PBGH). The strategic alliances—which are a first for PBGH—will add approximately 200,000 workers and dependents to the more than three and a half million people already represented by the nonprofit business consortium. PBGH statewide members currently include 33 large employers such as Bank of America, Chevron and Southern California Edison. In addition, last year PBGH assumed from the State of California responsibility for its small group purchasing pool. Known as PacAdvantage, the pool represents more than 8,000 small California businesses.

Silicon Valley Employers Forum

The Silicon Valley Employers Forum is an association of high-technology companies that has been meeting for four years. Members of the Forum include: Adobe Systems Incorporated, Applied Materials, Cisco Systems, KLA-Tencor, NEC Electronics, Oracle Corporation, SGI, Sybase and Symantec Corporation. "We are excited about this partnership.

Although high-tech employers have certain human resource issues specific to our industry, purchasers have a common agenda when it comes to health care. We value PBGH's health care expertise and track record—especially in the areas of quality and electronic data—and look forward to working together," said Peter Shott, director of benefits at Oracle Corporation and board liaison to PBGH.

North Bay Employers Coalition on Health Care

The North Bay Employers Coalition on Health Care is a consortium of mid-sized employers located in Sonoma County. Members of the Coalition—which has been active for several years—include: Agilent Technologies, F. Korbel & Bros. Incorporated, National Bank of the Redwoods, Optical Coating Laboratory Incorporated (OCLI), the Press Democrat, Sola Optical USA and other local firms. "Affiliating with PBGH member companies provides us with large firm leverage, while allowing us to retain our geographic focus," noted Jill Sanford, Manager of Compensation and Benefits at OCLI and board liaison to PBGH. "And by pooling resources we can accomplish more together."

PBGH President and CEO Patricia E. Powers affirmed PBGH's interest in the affiliate relationships. "Purchasers face tremendous challenges in the new millennium. We are seeing escalating health care costs combined with too little information for employees wishing to make informed health care choices. Teaming up with like-minded employers strengthens our position and offers the promise of greater efficiencies."

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