



"We have a strong commitment to promote the local economy through active participation in economic development," she says. "In order to achieve that goal, we needed a strong strategic partner with a proven track record of excellence in economic development. GPEC is that partner."

As the president and CEO of West Valley National Bank and West Valley Bancorp Inc., Wiest's job description is quite impressive. She is no novice when it comes to banking, having served as president of Inland Empire National Bank in Riverside, Calif., for 13 years.

Learning from that experience, Wiest believes that being a member of GPEC will only help in her current position at West Valley Bank as it navigates the turbulent waters of the economy.

"The only way to (increase shareholder value) is to participate in developing a strong local economy. As this region grows and prospers, all ships will sail on a rising tide — es-

pecially the ship I call West Valley National Bank," she says.

Despite current economic trends that have been "driven more by emotion than reality," Wiest is confident that GPEC can be "the voice of reason."

"(The) Valley still has strong employment, a reasonable cost of living, tons of amenities, and good in-migration," Wiest says. "GPEC is the perfect organization to tell the story of all the good things in Arizona."

