

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**WESTMARC PRESIDENT & CEO JACK LUNSFORD RETIRES;
CITES HEALTH REASONS**

In a one-page written statement WESTMARC President & CEO Jack Lunsford today announced he is retiring from WESTMARC due to health reasons. Lunsford also made the formal announcement during his annual report at WESTMARC's Annual Meeting and Economic Forecast Breakfast while unofficially celebrating his 7th anniversary as President & CEO.

Lunsford was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in October, 2009. He has since undergone chemotherapy and two related surgeries.

"In some respects the decision to retire was one of the toughest of my life," explained Lunsford, "because I love what I do for WESTMARC and the West Valley. On the other hand, it was one of the easiest, because I have an opportunity to get better for my family and the future."

Lunsford has just begun a clinical trial at Mayo Clinic and his oncologists are strongly recommending a bone marrow stem cell transplant.

"My team of oncologists and other physicians has strongly recommended me for a stem cell bone marrow transplant as a way to combat my lymphoma. After complete consultation with that team, my family, friends, and cancer survivors, and recognizing the chances for success in the transplant, I made the final decision this past weekend to undergo that process."

Lunsford continued, "My type of lymphoma is chronic but can come back often and aggressive. With this proposed transplant treatment it is the first time anyone has discussed even a remote possibility of a cure."

Lunsford wishes he could remain with WESTMARC to face the challenges and help lead the West Valley in the coming years. He mentioned WESTMARC's recent leadership in establishing and administering the Greater Maricopa Foreign Trade Zone (GMFTZ) as having great appeal to him.

"Continuing my leadership role in that exciting, most worthwhile economic development endeavor is by itself enough for me to want to stay with WESTMARC," Lunsford stated. "When the challenges of addressing the West Valley's infrastructure needs and demands are added---transportation, healthcare, and education---I can only wish for the opportunity to continue with WESTMARC. Sadly for me, that is not to be."

Lunsford indicated he will stay with WESTMARC as long as he can to assist with the transition, but that will be determined by his transplant date in a couple of months. Meanwhile, he

complimented the WESTMARC staff, saying that with its experience, knowledge and expertise WESTMARC is assured of being able to manage his transition.

“Amity Bravo, Amber Botamer, and Darah Mann have time and again demonstrated their commitment to WESTMARC’s mission, vision, and success,” complimented Lunsford, “and I am confident WESTMARC can and will rely on them.”

An original co-founder of WESTMARC and its 1st Chairman, Lunsford concluded, “I have always given more than 100% to any effort I have undertaken and when I can’t do that I end up frustrated. My commitment to WESTMARC has been unwavering, but I know I won’t be able to continue that for some time while I recover, likely six months or more. The West Valley deserves and needs someone who can provide the day-to-day visibility and leadership for this outstanding advocacy organization, something I won’t be able to do.”

Lunsford’s retirement is effective June 6, 2011, but his last official day will depend on the transplant date and any unused leave time he has earned. He has agreed to be available for a smooth transition.

About WESTMARC Founded in 1990, WESTMARC is the regional coalition of business, government, and education that promotes the West Valley and advocates on its behalf. WESTMARC promotes public policies leading to responsible growth, a positive quality of life, a healthy environment, strong community development and a favorable public image. WESTMARC represents 35 percent of the population of the county and the region includes the cities of Avondale, Buckeye, El Mirage, Gila Bend, Glendale, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Peoria, West Phoenix, Sun City, Sun City West, Surprise, Tolleson, Wickenburg and Youngtown.