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JOHN C. ALKIRE TO BE INDUCTED INTO WESTERN FAIRS ASSOCIATION'S HALL OF FAME

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, January 12, 2010...The Big Fresno Fair Management, Staff and its Board of Directors are proud to announce that CEO, John C. Alkire will be inducted into the Western Fairs Association's (WFA) Hall of Fame at their annual conference, which will be held in Reno, Nevada, January 24th – 27th.

“During his career John Alkire has positively affected every fair he's been involved with. He's greatly impacted and benefited the fair industry as a whole with his innovative spirit and drive,” said Stephen Chambers, Executive Director of Western Fairs Association. “He has helped transform the image and landscape of The Big Fresno Fair and has shared his innovative ideas with other CEOs, Fair Managers and staff so that they can try and implement those concepts at their respective fairs.”

Alkire will become the 77th person inducted into the Hall of Fame since its inception in 1953. The WFA Hall of Fame honors distinguished achievement or outstanding contribution to the fair industry. Selection of the recipient(s) of the Hall of Fame Award is made solely by the WFA Board of Governors.

“It is truly an honor to join the distinguished list of individuals that have been inducted into the Western Fairs Association's Hall of Fame,” said Alkire. “I firmly believe that you're only as good as the people you surround yourself with and I've been blessed in my career to work with incredibly talented people.”

Alkire, who has served as CEO of The Big Fresno Fair since 2004, has a long history of involvement in the fair industry. He grew up around fairs with his father serving as a fair CEO and consultant for more than 23 years. Alkire continued that tradition with a lifelong interest in agriculture and livestock and a 26-year career of his own in the fair industry. During his career, Alkire has served as CEO of Kings County, Tulare County and The California Mid-State Fair.

Throughout John's career, his affiliations to groups and organizations have included serving as President of the

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Western Fairs Association, being an active member of the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE), Rotary International and The Fresno Chamber of Commerce, serving on the advisory boards of two Secretaries of Agriculture for the State of California and is currently serving on the Board of Directors for the Fresno Convention & Visitors Bureau and the California Authority of Racing Fairs (CARF). In 2008, Alkire was named as Chairman of the Board of Directors for CARF.

As a CEO, Alkire's focus is the continual improvement of the fairgrounds he is overseeing. With each capital improvement project he embarked on, Alkire was responsible for creating a vision and concept, securing finances and supervising construction. While at The California Mid-State Fair, he oversaw \$5.3 million in capital improvements and to date \$8.5 million in capital improvements at The Big Fresno Fair. Alkire is known for his creativeness, vision, drive, leadership and passion for the fair industry.

Alkire has accomplished many goals for The Big Fresno Fair since becoming the CEO in 2004. He's overseen the five-year development of the popular kids area known as the Table Mountain Rancheria Park, which includes the award-winning Pirates in the Park, Catfish Falls, McCaffrey Miner's Town, Dairyville USA, Land O'Lakes Butter Barn Laser Shooting Gallery, Fort Fresno, and The Water Tree, solar powered by PG&E, just added in 2009. He has also championed the addition of the 72 spot RV Parking Lot; permanent Landscaped Seating Area; and the "Cow Palace" Milking Barn. Other recent capital improvements included: the two-year Kings Canyon Gate Entrance remodel; Found Children's Gingerbread House; and the new Luxury Deck in the Grandstand. Alkire also oversaw the expansion of the Fair's "Clean & Green" Program, which included the installation of recycled rubber flooring throughout the fairgrounds; a \$5 million solar panel project; the planting of roughly 6,100 trees throughout the grounds and installation of 2 ½ miles of pop-up sprinklers to the horse racing track. Additionally, in 2009, due in large part to Alkire's capital improvements projects and innovative programs such as "Clean & Green" and Fair Education, The Big Fresno Fair was selected as the first-ever California Feature Fair, putting The Big Fresno Fair in the history books of the fair industry.

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Attachment:

- **Photo, John C. Alkire**



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