



NEWS RELEASE

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DESERT HEALTHCARE DISTRICT AWARDS GRANTS TO CVEP'S PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS PROGRAM AND DESERT WOMEN FOR EQUALITY'S 'WE CARE' MAMMOGRAM PROGRAM

PALM SPRINGS, CA – March 23, 2011: Directors of the Desert Healthcare District (DHCD) have approved a grant of \$212,500 for the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP) *Pathways to Success (PTS)* program, and a grant of \$80,000 for the Desert Women for Equality (DWE) *We Care* mammogram program. The CVEP grant will help support the PTS program for District students who are pursuing college degrees in healthcare-related majors. The DWE grant will be utilized by the agency's "We Care" Free Mobile Mammography Program, and will assist approximately 800 uninsured and/or underinsured Desert Healthcare District residents. "These grants will allow both organizations to continue to provide these critical, broad-based programs" says DHCD Board President Mark Matthews.

Pathways to Success is a regional collaborative that seeks to provide scholarships and student support services for local low income students attending college, by assisting them in completing their academic goals and later linking them to employment opportunities in the region. From 2009-2010, the partnership with DHCD has provided fifty healthcare scholarships to District residents. This grant award allows for 25 scholarships for new students, as well as additional funds for 21 previous scholarship recipients who are completing their degrees. "We felt it was important that we continue to fund scholarships for those students already enrolled in the PTS program, as well as provide aid for new students entering fields of study related to the healthcare industry," Matthews added.

The PTS grant will provide healthcare students with scholarships for community college and four-year colleges/universities per year. To be eligible, applicants must reside within District boundaries, have at least a 2.0 GPA, be a full-time student with a minimum of 12 units, and meet low-income and college admissions requirements. Preference will be given to students completing career academic programs in healthcare in Desert Healthcare District high schools, or healthcare majors at College of the Desert and CSUSB Palm Desert.

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The goal of *Desert Women for Equality* is to make mammogram screenings available to all uninsured/underinsured women over 40 in the Coachella Valley. From April 2011 to March 2012, eight clinics will be held at various locations within the Desert Healthcare District and will provide approximately 800 mammogram screenings. Desert Women for Equality provides an invaluable service for the uninsured women of our community, and without continued funding, some women might not have access to mammograms.

Desert Healthcare District is a government agency, established by the state of California in 1948, to improve and support community health programs within a 457-square mile service area in the Coachella Valley. The District also owns and oversees the lease of Desert Regional Medical Center in Palm Springs.

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