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Coachella Valley Housing Coalition Awards Scholarships to 91 Students

The Coachella Valley Housing Coalition (CVHC) and its Board of Directors recently held its 11th annual John F. Mealey Scholarship Fund Awards luncheon at the Indian Springs Club House Grille in Indio. The Scholarship Fund awarded \$79,000 in college scholarships to 91 students. Julie Bornstein, Board Chair, hosted the luncheon featuring Dan Martinez, City Manager of Indio, as the keynote speaker. CVHC's Board of Directors was on hand at the event; Elaine Holmes, City of Indio Mayor; representatives from Congressman Dr. Raul Ruiz (D-Palm Desert) and Supervisor John J. Benoit (Fourth District, Riverside County Board of Supervisors); Jennifer Cusack and Nena McCullough of Southern California Edison; were also among the distinguished guests.

In addition, a \$2,000 scholarship and a paid internship with CVHC was awarded to a student who demonstrated outstanding community service in honor of Father Edward Donovan, a missionary to migrant field workers and a founding supporter of CVHC who passed away on Christmas Eve. Coachella resident and California State University Stanislaus student Gerardo Alva Chavez received this prestigious award.

"We are proud to be able to make a difference in the lives of these 91 students," said John F. Mealey, executive director and founder of the Coachella Valley Housing Coalition. "They have worked hard and are dedicated to fulfilling their dream of pursuing higher education. It's exciting and rewarding to play a part in the success of these students. We also congratulate their parents who encouraged and supported these scholars to focus on improving their lives through education."

Of the recipients, 75% are the first in their family to attend college; 23 are enrolled in a 2-year institution and 68 will attend a 4-year school. The students represent a variety of fields of study including arts, sciences, engineering, law, education and business, and will be attending schools such as UCLA, UC Davis, UC Irvine, Wentworth Institute of Technology, the University of Redlands, and College of the Desert, among others.

The John F. Mealey (JFM) Scholarship Fund is named for CVHC's founder and current executive director. The JFM Scholarship Fund awards scholarships annually to students residing in CVHC housing developments, who are seeking higher education at any accredited college, university or vocational training program. Since its inception in 2002, the Scholarship Fund has awarded more than \$464,000 in scholarships to 527 students. Funds are raised through the financial support of corporations, companies, CVHC employees and individuals known throughout the CVHC business network. This year, Southern California Edison contributed \$25,000 toward the college scholarship fund. For more information about the Coachella Valley Housing Coalition, please visit www.cvhc.org.

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