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Coachella Valley Housing Coalition Keeps Students Mentally and Physically Active During Summer Break

The Coachella Valley Housing Coalition (CVHC) is keeping students of all ages active, both mentally and physically, during summer break by offering a variety of health and fitness classes. The various programs, ranging from science and robotics to leadership and a tennis camp, are designed for residents of CVHC housing developments.

"It's important for children of all ages and family income levels to have the opportunity to stay active during the summer months," said John Mealey, Coachella Valley Housing Coalition's founding executive director. "We offer these free programs so they can learn new skills, meet new friends, gain a sense of accomplishment and ultimately boost their self confidence."

The Summer Science Camps, offered at four of CVHC's apartment complexes in Coachella and Mecca, exposes school age children (second through sixth graders) to the different facets of science through experimentation and research. Each week a new theme challenges and exposes youth participants to the diversity and mysteries of science, from exploring the corrosive power of water to studying earthquakes.

For the 11 sites throughout the Coachella Valley and Moreno Valley where CVHC and Family YMCA of the Desert operate an after-school program during the school year, summer means weekday Summer Kids Clubs catered to children ages six through 17. The Summer Kids Clubs operate on a mission to keep kids educationally stimulated through the summer months by organizing a variety of activities from arts and crafts and computer instruction to organized physical enrichment. Activities include swim excursions, raucous scavenger hunts and an annual dance-a-thon.

For CVHC's older age youth, our leaders of tomorrow, a Youth Leadership Program is offered at three sites: Mecca, Coachella, and La Quinta. This youth empowering program engages teenagers in a Life Skills curriculum that facilitates activities in decision making, job preparedness, managing time and money, and much more.

"We couldn't offer these services to our residents and their children without the financial help of the community," said Mealey. "We thank our generous partners for their continued support."

For the tech savvy, CVHC has partnered with SMaRT Education to provide week-long Summer Robotics camps at four locations in Mecca, Coachella and Desert Hot Springs. This camp exposes young participants to the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) curriculum, often reserved for affluent schools and communities, but central to the innovative careers of tomorrow. At the STEM Robotics Camp, students have the opportunity to learn through fun and innovative channels, including the basics of building and programming a Lego Mind Storm Robot Kit.

And to keep their heart rates up, now in its 14th year, CVHC's Summer Tennis Camp promises to provide CVHC residents (ages eight to 14 years) with a fun way to learn a new sport in one of the world's best tennis centers. In partnership with the Indian Wells Tennis Garden, Rabobank, and the Coachella Valley Unified School District ASES program, students are transported to the Indian Wells Tennis Garden where retired and semi-professional players teach them proper tennis skills and prepare them for fun-filled and competitive matches on the official BNP Paribas Open tennis courts.

In addition to mental and physical stimulation, CVHC also works with community partners to provide the neediest children with a proper meal each weekday over the summer. In partnership with the Coachella Valley and Palm Springs Unified School Districts, the CVHC offers a summer lunch program for all youth up to 18 years of age that live in and around one of 11 CVHC designated apartment complexes. Lunch is served daily to all children, including those participating in the various summer programs offered on site.

For more information about summer camps and program, call the Coachella Valley Housing Coalition at 760-347-3157 or email nadia.villagran@cvhc.org.

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