



WWW.COLLEGEOFTHEDESERT.EDU

# Annual Report

## 2017 – 2018

*Investing in Student Success*

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE



Established in 1958, College of the Desert in Palm Desert is an accredited community college serving eastern Riverside County.

The College serves more than 17,000 students each year and is the number one source of transfer students to the California State University, San Bernardino, Palm Desert Campus.

*By The Numbers 2017-2018*

ENROLLMENT:

**17,000+**



VETERANS & MILITARY FAMILIES SUPPORTED:

**500**



TOTAL DEGREES & CERTIFICATES

AWARDED: **1,232**

ECONOMIC IMPACT

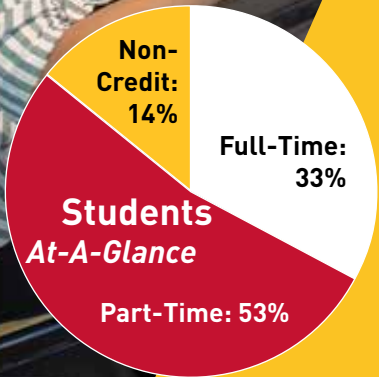
OPERATIONS:

**\$302**  
MILLION+  
ANNUALLY



ALUMNI:

**\$243**  
MILLION+  
ANNUALLY



BOARD OF TRUSTEES



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# BUILDING ON HISTORY

## TO DRIVE FUTURE SUCCESS OF THE COLLEGE, STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY



It is with great pleasure that I share with you this Annual Report on behalf of the Board of Trustees, faculty and staff of College of the Desert.

The past year was a celebration of a vision 60 years in the making. On October 15, 1961, at the college groundbreaking, Dr. Roy McCall, first college president, promised: "Our pledge on this occasion is to insure that the faith you have expressed in education by authorizing this college and the confidence you have expressed in your trustees by electing them shall both be justified by the development of an institution whose name you can speak with pride."

It took almost 15 years to get the college formation approved and construction started. Many thought it could not be done – yet here we are recognizing the growth, progress and achievements College of the Desert has realized over the course of six decades.

We can look back at the past year with an immense amount of satisfaction in what the College has accomplished. Our campuses around the Coachella Valley are continuing to grow and the College is providing new and innovative programs

to foster and support student success, from monetary to basic needs, expanding access to higher education to more and more students.

To continue our tradition of transforming lives, we must embrace change, so we can continue to create new academic programs and adapt to evolving labor markets and community needs. We are uniquely positioned to bring many partners together as true collaborators. Our efforts will improve both the lives of our students and the lives of everyone in our community.

Just as the commitment to academic excellence that we made 60 years ago became a reality, the decisions we make today will chart the course for the next six decades. It is this commitment that we lift up to drive the future of our campuses, the future of our students and the future of education.

In the coming years, we will continue to see a highly trained workforce developed at College of the Desert that is equipped to meet the needs of local business and industry. Together with the Regional Workforce Innovation Center planned for Palm Springs, continued expansion of our other campuses, technological developments and community collaboration, we are confident in saying we are prepared and ready for an extremely bright future.

Cementing our legacy requires we fulfill our promise of access, value and success. Together, we will **Create Tomorrow**.

**Joel L. Kinnamon, Ed.D.**  
**Superintendent/President**

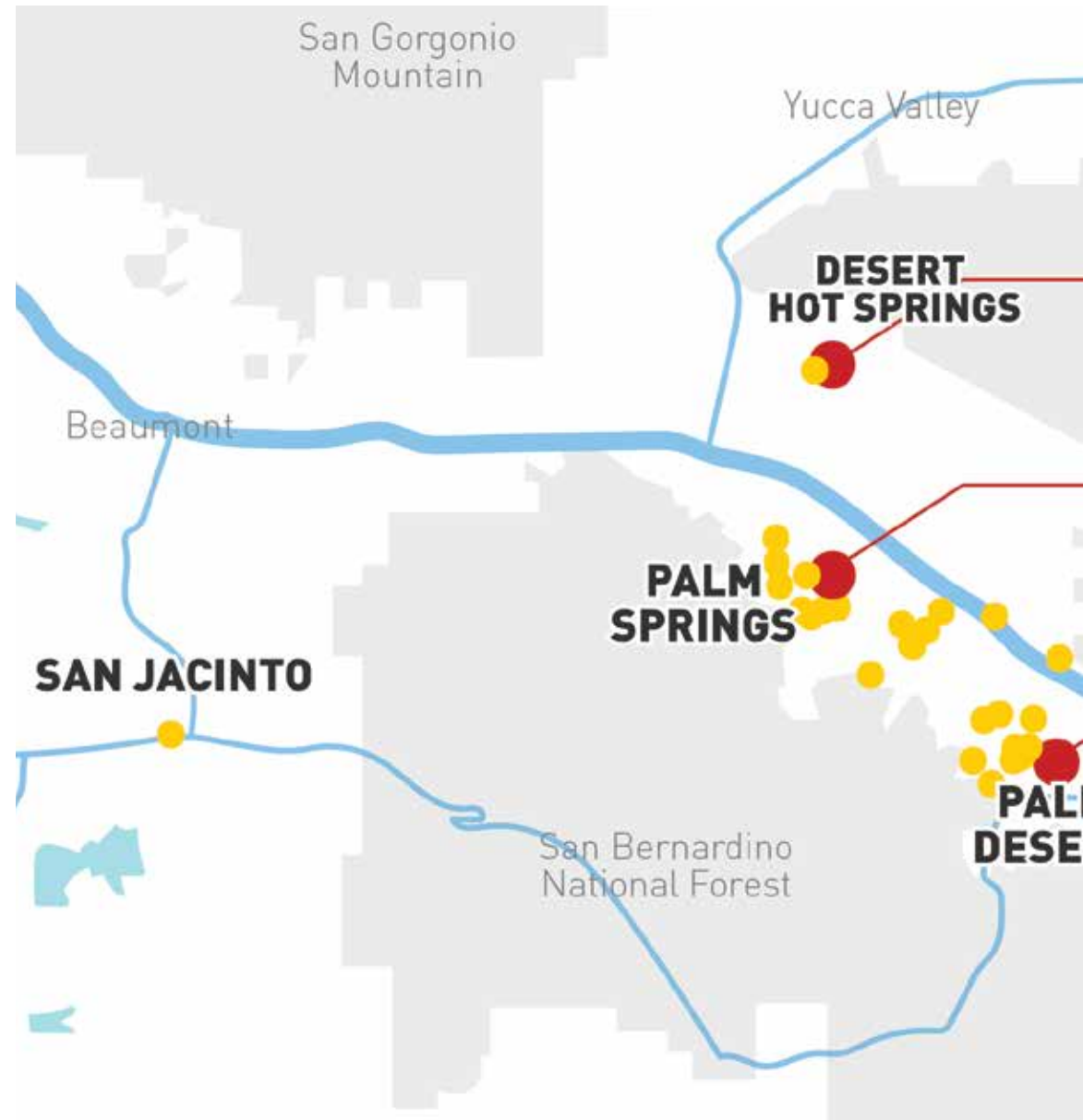
“

Now there is the future...a future stressing independence of thought and action as essential ingredients of a functioning democracy and the development and value judgments and self-discipline as the *sine qua non* (essential element) of education.”

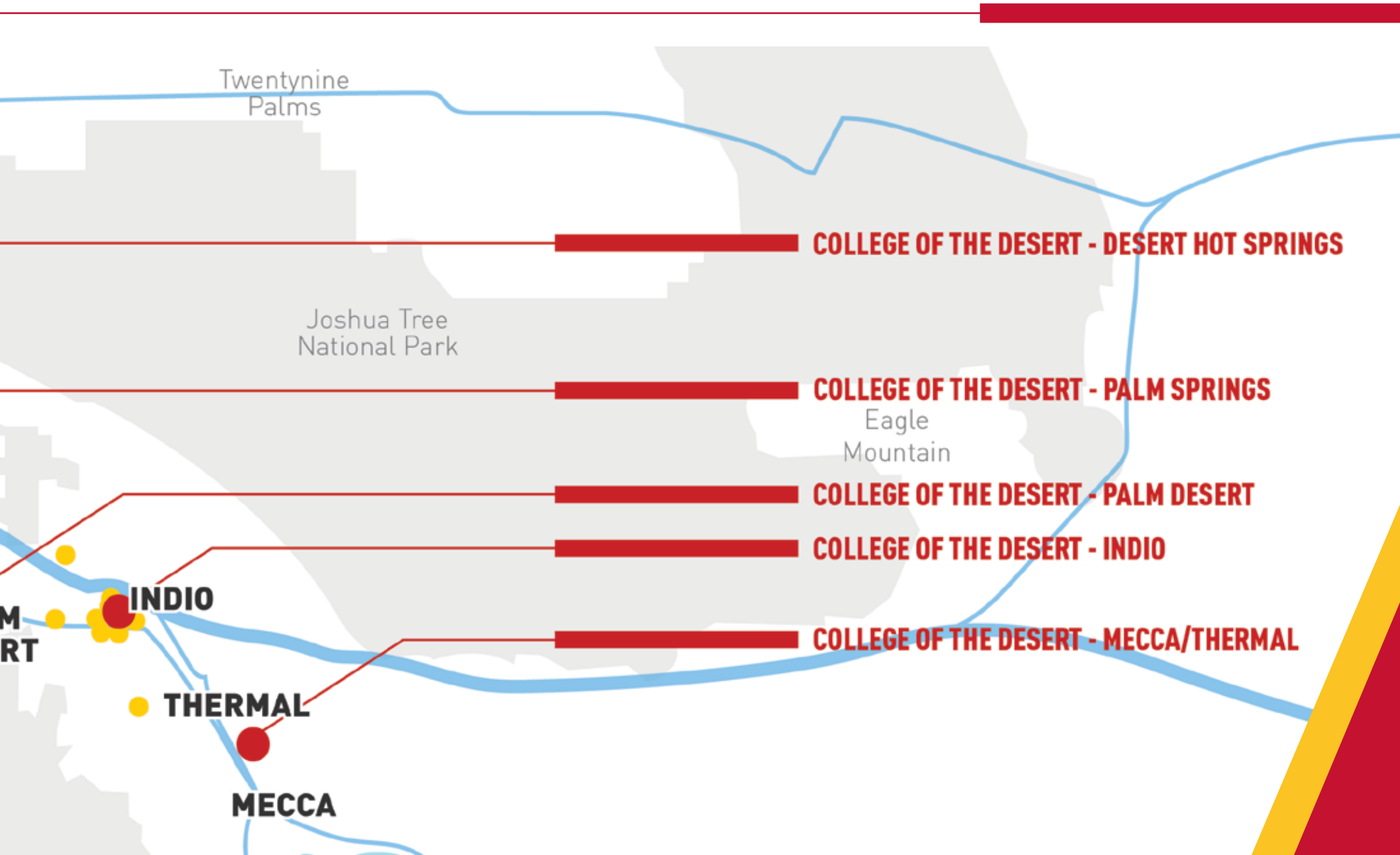
~ Pat Phillips Oliver, Palm Springs Life, November 1964

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INVESTING IN  
*The Future*

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# INVESTING IN THE FUTURE AT PALM SPRINGS CAMPUS

## Permanent site for campus secured

After years of negotiation, preparation and anticipation, the Desert Community College District was able to purchase the Palm Springs Mall in April 2018 for what will become the permanent home of College of the Desert's Palm Springs Campus.



The site will be a Regional Workforce Innovation Center where students can learn and train for 21st century jobs and careers in the areas of Digital Media and Film, Hospitality and Culinary Arts, Healthcare, and Sustainable Technologies.

"It has long been College of the Desert's intention to create a vibrant Palm Springs Campus to provide western Coachella Valley residents greater accessibility to college classes," said Joel L. Kinnamon, Ed.D., Superintendent/President.

The 29-acre campus will feature a student-operated boutique hotel and restaurant, teaching kitchen, childcare, modern instruction space, experiential labs, student commons and event space, faculty innovation center, and a high-tech digital accelerator space.

The location will allow the College to leverage its partnership with DIGICOM Learning to establish a Regional Center for Digital Media Education, where both K-12 and college students can learn skills in digital storytelling.

Demolition of the existing mall is expected to be complete by the end of 2019. Planning for the programs and the 330,000-square-foot facility, serving approximately 3,000 students, will also begin in 2019. Construction of the first phase could begin as early as 2023.

Since January 2018, courses in Palm Springs have been offered in classrooms and computer labs on leased land about a half-mile away from the mall. This temporary site will continue to operate until the permanent campus is ready for students.

"The innovative Palm Springs Campus will help us continue to meet the educational demands of tomorrow's students and produce the highly skilled workforce that is the engine of our economy," Kinnamon said.



# INVESTING IN THE FUTURE AT PALM DESERT CAMPUS

**Hilb renovation will achieve vision for centrally located learning complex**



**TAYLORE BRUCE** ALUMNI  
ASSISTANT PROJECT MANAGER  
**BERNARDS**

Construction began in 2018 to convert the Hilb Student Center into the College Library and consolidate other resources to create a centralized learning complex at the heart of the Palm Desert campus.

This exciting and long-awaited project will create a one-stop Library Learning Resource Center. The Tutoring and Academic Skills Center and related administrative and support programs – now housed in various buildings around campus – will be centralized in the newly renovated building.

The Central Campus Quad and Fountain of Knowledge will also be refurbished as part of the project.

The Hilb remodel brings the library back to its original home, where it resided from 1964 to 1998.

“By establishing a single, well-defined space for learning and study, the College is creating a central hub that better serves students and supports learning while maintaining the iconic Hilb building at the heart of our campus,” said Jeff Baker, Interim Vice President, Student Learning.

The three-level Hilb, named in honor of its benefactors, Jeane and Justin Hilb, will be rebuilt to environmentally sustainable standards while maintaining its mid-century modern style. The update will more than double the size of the existing library and improve functionality of the building by adding more natural light and creating a modern study space.

An adjacent building, originally home to the Student Center, built at the same time as the Hilb, also requires updating. When it reopens, it will house the Office of the President, a boardroom for monthly meetings of the Trustees and Foundation Directors and community meeting space.

The total cost of the renovations is \$37.6 million and will be paid for with Measure B funds. The work is scheduled for completion next year.

## CELEBRATED INSTALLATION ARTIST **PHILLIP K. SMITH III** GOT HIS START AT COLLEGE OF THE DESERT



Internationally renowned artist Phillip K. Smith III built his early portfolio of work as a student at College of the Desert.

Smith graduated from Palm Valley High School and attended the College before ultimately graduating from the Rhode Island School of Design.

"I remember sitting in the hallway of the Liberal Arts Building working on an abstract drawing of the arches of COD," Smith said of his time at the College. "I was taking these classes because I was interested in applying to architecture schools, to arts schools, and at that point, my portfolio was not up to snuff. I needed to build up the substance of my portfolio and I was able to do that by taking classes here at COD."



Today, from his Palm Desert studio, Smith creates large-scale, site-specific installations that incorporate space, light, shadow, environment and change.

In early 2018, Smith was commissioned to create a signature installation on the College's Palm Desert Campus, in honor of the school's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

"Growing up here in the desert, I've always been aware of the impact of College of the Desert," he said. "I look forward to working with COD to craft this icon that I hope will be able to represent College of the Desert in the community."



Smith has also created art installations for the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. Some of his other well-known pieces include *Lucid Stead*, a 2013 light and mirror installation in Joshua Tree, and *The Circle of Land and Sky*, which included 300 mirrored poles, that was part of the Desert X exhibition in 2017.

Smith's experience at College of the Desert will serve as the basis for the anniversary piece.

"It's a real honor to think about bringing to the artwork's concept the sense of impact, hope and transformation that happens on this campus, and all the COD campuses, to mark not only the history of the past 60 years, but also to look forward to the next 60," he said.



# INVESTING IN THE FUTURE AT DESERT HOT SPRINGS CAMPUS

Imagine entering college for the first time from high school or being a local resident returning to your education – and having everything you need just outside your front door.

The Desert Hot Springs Campus is part of a walkable two-block radius that does just that – weaving together community needs and college services.

Even high school students taking classes through the concurrent enrollment program benefit from the campus' location; which allows them to go just down the street to enroll and register for classes and meet with tutoring and academic support specialists.

"We're right at the center of it all," said Scott Adkins, Ed.D., Interim Director of Education Centers, West Valley. "Our proximity and ability to closely interact with support systems

allows us to build relationships within the community around the needs of our students. Our staff is dynamic and in tune with what's happening in Desert Hot Springs."

The campus is growing to meet the needs of the local community, including adding a new enrollment specialist and meeting the high demand for English as a Second Language classes, Adult Basic Education classes and High School Diploma Program or the GED (high school equivalency). In addition, the campus offers a variety general education and basic skills courses that students need during their first year of college.

For those who live and work in Desert Hot Springs, easy access to services like registration, enrollment and tutoring is key to their success and students appreciate all they can receive close to home.

## CERTIFICATE PROGRAM DEVELOPS SKILLED WORKFORCE **IN DESERT HOT SPRINGS**

Workers in search of training on regulations for the fast-growing cannabis industry enrolled in new certificate programs at the College's Desert Hot Springs Campus.

Beginning in 2018, College of the Desert's Partnership and Community Education (PaCE) program worked with industry leaders and Highroad Consulting Group to develop certificate training programs on human resources and state compliance for the cannabis industry. Two additional tracks, on leadership skills and customer service, will be offered in 2019.



"Part of our mission at PaCE is to train the local workforce. Cannabis is one of the fastest-growing industries in the Coachella Valley," said Veronica Izurieta, PaCE Program Manager.





# INVESTING IN THE FUTURE AT **INDIO CAMPUS**

## Campus plans to double in size to meet area needs

With increasing demand for affordable, local higher education, College of the Desert is planning to update and double the size of its Indio Campus.

Groundbreaking could begin as early as this fall, with the doors opening to accommodate another 3,000 students in summer 2021. Indio opened five years ago and is already at capacity; it is the largest of the College's four satellite locations.

"Additional classrooms and science labs are needed to serve the growing student body and meet the needs of local business and industry for a skilled workforce," said Dr. Annebelle Nery, Vice President, Student Success. "We are looking forward to adding more space where students can get the education and training they need to succeed."

In addition to more academic classrooms and laboratories, development on the Indio Campus will include a library and Career Placement Center, and expansion of Early Childhood Education facilities.

Also open on campus is the Roadrunner Café,

a unique space where students work and learn business concepts while receiving school credit.

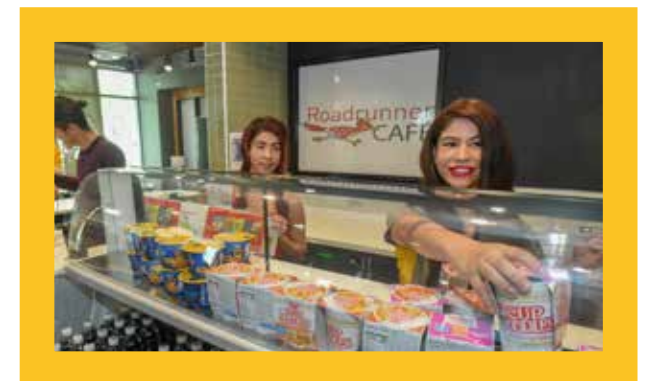
The café provides hands-on learning for students wanting to enter the fast-growing industries of culinary, hospitality, retail, food-service and business. As part of a work experience class, students receive restaurant management experience while learning concepts that apply to any business environment, giving them a head-start on their career.

The student staff plans, organizes, operates and manages the café as a real start-up business – including everything from marketing and inventory to managing accounting, merchandising and scheduling. Each semester represents an entire business life-span and revenues sustain café operations and assist with student scholarships.

The café provides a space for students to stop between classes, making it easier to stay on campus during breaks. It serves pre-made sandwiches from

the local TKB Deli & Bakery, grab-and-go snacks, fountain drinks, coffee and more, and is open to the public.

The café is one of many unique features at the Indio Campus. Located near the Larson Justice Center, College of the Desert Indio also provides a focus on administration of justice, business or liberal arts transfer degrees and early childhood education classes.



# INVESTING IN THE FUTURE AT MECCA/THERMAL CAMPUS

## STEM emphasis continues with observatory, future programs

The 2018 opening of an \$850,000 observatory on College of the Desert's Mecca/Thermal Campus, now offering full student support services, marked a major milestone in the school's emphasis on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education.

A 1-meter and 17-inch telescope, astronomy camera, software, a computer and the funds to build the observatory were made possible by a donation from IvoJ Kudrnac, a Palm Desert resident, to honor his late partner, Mary Reagan.

The observatory benefits students in astronomy and STEM disciplines both in person and remotely in classrooms at all College of the Desert campuses. While the main function of the observatory will be teaching and learning, the College will also extend access to K-12 and community partners as well as to the public in future education events.

## 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- New multi-disciplinary wet lab for biology and chemistry, allowing the campus to offer these courses for the first time
- One-stop Wednesdays, where students have full access to wrap-around support services
- Expansion of workshop offerings, including adding sessions from the Career and Workforce Solutions Center
- Largest EDGE summer attendance to date
- Continued work with PaCE partners, including hosting the Robotics Camp for middle school students
- FIND Food Bank access on campus

"We are excited by how much the campus is growing and by the hands-on STEM opportunities we are able to provide," said Karen Tabor, Dean, School of Math & Science. "The opening of the Mary Reagan Observatory in 2018 brought students amazing possibilities, and we are developing programs to further that growth."

The observatory serves as the anchor of an interdisciplinary research center planned for the campus on the border of Mecca and Thermal. In the coming years, it will include laboratories for studying the nearby Salton Sea. Roadrunner Farms will also be added as a working agricultural operation that will teach about pest and water management, sustainable growing and agri-business while supplying produce for the culinary arts program.

About 300 students are enrolled at the Mecca/Thermal Campus, which opened in 2009. With a bond-funded expansion in 2016, the campus includes classrooms, administrative offices, science and computer labs, and a common area for students.



WE ARE FOREVER GRATEFUL TO  
IVOJ KUDRNAC (JANUARY 26, 1926  
- JUNE 25, 2018) FOR  
ENCOURAGING OUR STUDENTS  
TO REACH FOR THE STARS.









INVESTING IN  
*Students*



## EDGE/pLEDGE PROGRAMS

### Foster success by eliminating financial and educational hurdles

In a region alive with opportunities for qualified workers, College of the Desert is helping students land those jobs through two groundbreaking programs designed to remove academic and financial barriers to the college education they need.

The effort began in 2012 with a summer program called EDGE (Engage, Develop, Grow and Empower), a three-week intensive math and English review. The program for Coachella Valley high school graduates had just 22 participants that first year, but since has attracted about 1,500 students for the skill-building designed to jumpstart their college careers.

In 2017, the College enhanced EDGE by adding a financial support component called pLEDGE. The donor-funded pLEDGE program supplements traditional financial aid and scholarship resources, creating two years of free college education for local high school graduates. It also provides educational support, including a clear outline of goals and pathways to success.

**“The trustees and administrators saw EDGE/pLEDGE make a difference and it changed the way we think about student support. College of the Desert believes a wrap-around approach best serves our students, their aspirations, and their needs,” said Katie Chartier, Assistant Director, First Year Experience.**

As part of pLEDGE, students are required to give 10 hours of community service each year to local organizations such as FIND Food Bank, Humane Society of the Desert or Family YMCA of the Desert. Since the program began in 2017, pLEDGE students have completed nearly 7,000 hours of community service.





IN ITS FIRST YEAR, pLEDGE  
ENROLLED MORE THAN  
1,000 STUDENTS

IN 2018, THE  
PROGRAM ADDED  
HELP WITH BOOKS,  
TUTORS AND  
CHILDCARE, AND  
ENROLLED 1,400  
STUDENTS

THANK YOU MELINDA DRICKEY FROM  
THE ROBERT BROOKE FOUNDATION  
FOR GIVING STUDENTS THE ABILITY  
TO CREATE TOMORROW.



“I have lots of friends who came back from their four-year colleges because they couldn’t afford it,” said Christopher Olguin, pLEDGE student. “I didn’t want to be one of those people.”

Proof of the programs’ merit is borne out in the numbers. Completion of two-year degrees or credential/certificate programs **increased 43 percent in the five years since they began**, and **transfers to the California State University system grew 41 percent**.

“It is the mission of College of the Desert to provide quality educational opportunities and close the college achievement gap, particularly among low-income and first-generation students. The EDGE and pLEDGE programs are helping us do just that,” said Joel L. Kinnamon, Ed.D., Superintendent/President.



# BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

## Free food, transportation and tuition programs ease financial burdens for students

Balancing the cost of education with the high price of food, transportation and other basic needs leaves many college students facing some difficult choices: Eat or buy textbooks? Pursue a degree or pay for child care?

College of the Desert has implemented numerous programs to eliminate such decisions for students, about three-quarters of whom qualify for financial aid.

Community partnerships and grants support food giveaways and free public transportation for College of the Desert students, enabling them to focus on their education instead of worrying where their next meal will come from or how they will get to class.

“It’s an investment that comes back full circle to our community,” said Dr. Annebelle Nery, Vice President, Student Success. “Around 80 percent of COD graduates stay or return to live and work in the Coachella Valley. This means we are providing the foundational support for these students to then turn around and help our economy and community grow.”



## FOOD FOR ALL

According to a 2018 report by researchers at Temple University and the Wisconsin HOPE Lab, 36 percent of students at 66 colleges and universities do not get enough to eat. Nearly one in 10 community college students have gone a whole day without eating over a one-month period.

College of the Desert is fighting back against hunger through a partnership with the FIND Food Bank and the Hunger Free Campus Grant. FIND and the Office of Student Life bring a food truck to the College’s five campuses twice a month to provide free food to students. Student volunteers help distribute fruits, vegetables and non-perishable goods.

The state-funded Hunger Free Campus Grant helps expand these efforts by allowing the College to purchase extra food to store and distribute free to students on a case-by-case basis from food pantries on all College of the Desert campuses.

## REACHING STUDENTS WHERE THEY LIVE AND WORK

Transportation can be another barrier to student success. That's why the College and SunLine Transit Agency teamed up on Haul Pass, which provides free, unlimited SunBus rides for current students to anywhere in the Valley.

College of the Desert is the first college to partner with SunLine on free student transit. The first year of the program is funded by a \$696,048 grant from California's Low Carbon Transit Operations Program and the College will cover the second and third years. Eventually, SunLine hopes the program will grow to include other schools and become self-sustaining.



For many years, the College's Alumni Association has contributed \$50,000 a year for student bus passes, a contribution that will now go toward the Haul Pass program.

"Transportation challenges have long been a hurdle for many of our students and prospective students," said Becky Broughton, Chair of the Desert Community College District Board of Trustees. "Providing these free SunBus rides to our students will further provide them access to a higher education at our College of the Desert campuses across the Coachella Valley."

## FREE TUITION

To boost college-going rates among Coachella Valley students, College of the Desert offers two years of free tuition through the innovative pLEDGE program.



By eliminating the cost of full-time enrollment, this game-changing program drew 1,400 high school students who graduated in 2018.

"The pLEDGE is a powerful commitment to the educational and economic futures of our students, college and community," said Joel L. Kinnamon, Ed.D., Superintendent/President. "Our message is clear: If you want to go to college, you can at COD."

# 2017/2018 DONATION BREAKDOWN

## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

STUDENT SUPPORT \$325,000

RECOGNITION & ENGAGEMENT \$55,000

## COLLEGE OF THE DESERT FOUNDATION

COLLEGE SUPPORT \$562,921

SCHOLARSHIPS \$690,693



# INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS EARN NATIONAL RECOGNITION

College of the Desert collected national accolades for innovative programs aimed at boosting student success and preparing graduates to enter the workforce.

“At College of the Desert, we constantly strive to improve the quality of our programs and outcomes for our students. Being recognized for academic distinction on such a grand scale is not only an honor, it proves we are on track for achieving that goal,” said Joel L. Kinnamon, Ed.D., Superintendent/President. “I am delighted to share information about the awards with the community.”

Among the College’s many honors was the Bellwether Award, the nation’s most competitive and prestigious recognition given to community colleges for outstanding and pioneering programs that other colleges might consider replicating. The award is part of the Community College Futures Assembly, sponsored by the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Florida.

College of the Desert competed against hundreds of programs for the Bellweather Award and came out on top for EDGE (Engage, Develop, Grow and Empower), its three-week summer review of math and English skills for incoming students. Additionally, EDGE offers ongoing support such as student success coaching, financial aid assistance, peer mentoring and counseling to increase completion rates.

“EDGE is one of several initiatives College of the Desert has implemented to close achievement gaps, increase graduation rates and expand the ability of students to realize their educational goals,” said Dr. Annebelle Nery, Vice President, Student Success.

By offering pre-college help in math and English, EDGE ensures under-prepared students start the school year ready for college-level work. This approach minimizes the courses they need to take to graduate and saves them money.

EDGE garnered other attention as well, emerging as a finalist for the Examples of Excelencia for accelerating Latino student success in higher education. As a finalist, EDGE became part of Excelencia’s Growing What Works online searchable database, which serves as a resource for institutional leaders, funders, policymakers and others interested in evidence-based practices that focus on assisting Latino students.

“It is humbling and exciting to have programs at our college that have achieved such academic distinction. It is testament to our commitment to student success,” Kinnamon said.







# AWARDS FOR COLLEGE OF THE DESERT

## BELLWETHER AWARD



College of the Desert won a Bellwether Award for the EDGE program. The prestigious national Bellwether Awards, part of the Community College Futures Assembly and sponsored by the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Florida, are given in three categories. They focus on innovative programs that other colleges might consider replicating. College of the Desert was the only college nominated in two categories, winning in the Instructional Programs & Service category.

Winning the award has placed College of the Desert in the national spotlight with many requests coming in from other colleges about how to replicate EDGE/plEDGE.

### Including:

- California State University, San Bernardino
- California State University, Monterey Bay
- Chemeketa College
- Contra Costa College
- Los Angeles Harbor College
- Morton College
- University of California, Davis
- Western Nevada College

## EXCELENCIA IN EDUCATION

The Excelencia Award is an annual program of the Washington, D.C. based organization, Excelencia in Education. The organization promotes evidence-based practices that help accelerate Latino student success in higher education and the award recognizes institutions generating student success outcomes for Hispanic/Latino populations. In Spring 2018, College of the Desert applied for the award highlighting its EDGE/plEDGE initiative as a program closing the equity gap for our predominantly Hispanic/Latino student population (73 percent). The College competed against 139 other colleges and was selected as one of 21 finalists. Participation in the award process highlighted College of the Desert's work to create higher education access for all on the national stage.

## STRONG WORKFORCE STARS

Multiple programs were honored for outstanding post-college student outcomes in employment, earnings gains and regional living wages. The Registered Nursing Program was recognized with a Gold Star for achievements in all three categories. Silver Stars, for achievements in two categories, were awarded to Vocational Nursing; Early Childhood Education, Teacher; Environmental Horticulture; and

Business Administration. Bronze Stars were earned by Business and Commerce, General; Drafting Technology; Alcohol and Controlled Substances; Computer Graphics and Digital Imagery; Police Academy; and Culinary Arts.

## GOLDEN MICROPHONES

Student radio station KCOD 99.9 FM won three first-place awards and 14 finalist honors at the 78th annual Intercollegiate Broadcasting System's national awards ceremony in New York City.







## NURSING PROGRAM HONORED AS STRONG WORKFORCE STAR



When the **Nursing Program** at College of the Desert accepted its first students in the late 1960s, it was a small but dedicated program that was created to meet a local need for healthcare workers.

Fifty years later, the nursing program is robust and has been honored as a Strong Workforce Star for feeding trained graduates into jobs in the regional healthcare industry and beyond.

"We are fortunate to have some of the most advanced and capable healthcare professionals in the country — homegrown, right here in our valley," said Carol Scobie, Director, Nursing and Allied Health.

The College's Nursing Program has become a model for other community colleges seeking to start their own.

The program focuses on training workers for specific healthcare jobs, so some 70 percent of its nearly 5,000 graduates have found work in the region. Students receive their clinical training at 15 local medical facilities and the three Coachella Valley hospitals, all of which partner with the program.

The college recruits students by offering help with basic skills they need for college entry and scholarships. In 2017, donors provided more than \$680,000 in scholarship funds to nursing students.

Sheila Trexler, who graduated in 1973, could not have imagined where her degree as a registered nurse would lead her. She was one of the first nurses hired at Eisenhower Medical Center. After five years, she was recruited to run a hospital emergency department in Las Vegas. Trexler went on to earn a bachelor's degree in nursing and then a law degree, specializing in medical malpractice.

After joining Neil Dymott Attorneys in San Diego, Trexler convinced the firm to open an office in Indian Wells so she could return to her desert roots.

"College of the Desert opened the door to my career in healthcare and changed my life," Trexler said. "The faculty cared about students as people, as individuals. That makes all the difference."

The College's Nursing Program was recognized in 2018 by the Strong Workforce Stars initiative of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The Strong Workforce Stars Program invests \$200 million annually to spur career education in the 114-college system. The awards are based on student success, including their ability to earn the local living wage.

The Registered Nursing Program won a gold star, with students seeing a 131 percent increase in earnings; 92 percent of students attaining the regional living wage; and 100 percent employed in a job similar to their field of study. The Vocational Nursing Program was awarded a silver star with students seeing a 96 percent increase in earnings and 100 percent of students attaining the regional living wage.

"We're extremely proud of the success of our graduates at the College and are honored to receive the Chancellor's recognition," said Leslie Young, Dean, School of Health Sciences and Education. "We know that education and training are the keys to a job, a career and a better life for our students. And we're here to help them succeed."

For Morley Berenbach, who graduated with an Associate of Arts degree in the 1970s, the training led to a 42-year career as a registered nurse. He worked in hospital emergency departments, refugee camps and hospice care, and as a resource nurse and teacher.



"It has been a really rich and satisfying career," Berenbach said. "All on a two-year Associate of Arts degree in nursing from College of the Desert."



## COLLEGE OF THE DESERT'S FIRST MALE NURSING GRADUATE REFLECTS ON 50-YEAR CAREER



A young Michael Summers was working as a custodian in the 1960s when he met some nurses who changed the course of his life.

After talking to them about their careers,

Summers enrolled in nursing courses at College of the Desert. It was a bold step considering he was the first – and only – male in the program.

“COD provided a terrific foundation for me,” Summers said. “My instructors were absolutely fabulous.”

These days, male nursing students are no longer a rarity, but 50 years ago, the makeup of the nursing class and the learning techniques were quite different.

“We all had to practice on each other because we didn’t have simulation labs ... we needed to practice giving shots and bed baths,” he said.

Summers had to recruit a fellow player from the football team for the sponge baths because there were no male students in the program for him to practice on.

After graduating from College of the Desert in 1968, at the height of the Vietnam War, Summers went on to earn a bachelor’s degree at California State University, Los Angeles, and later, a master’s degree. He trained at various military hospitals

before moving to the Army’s Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, the largest American hospital outside the United States. His final stop was the San Antonio Military Medical Center in Texas, where he worked as a clinical nurse specialist in the psychiatric ward, helping burn victims and their families.

Summers is forever grateful to the nurses who led him down the path to a rewarding career.

“My philosophy is, ‘Don’t ever turn down an opportunity, always take the chance.’ That’s what I have done and fortunately, I’ve had a good life and career and I have also had a lot of fun,” he said.

## NURSING STUDENT FINDS HER NICHE THROUGH HANDS-ON TRAINING

The practical, hands-on approach of the nursing program at College of the Desert is what attracted Jennifer Gary to the profession.

“Beginning first semester we had clinical rotations at local hospitals and in-class training with our state-of-the-art mannequins and simulation scenarios,” she said. “We also had a chance to collaborate with nurses and other healthcare professionals that enriched our experience as students.”

As part of her studies, Gary worked at local hospitals, including Eisenhower, JFK Memorial and

Desert Regional.

“The interactions with patients was a huge asset for building confidence, as well as practicing skills we had mastered in class,” she said.

Gary graduated in December 2018 and passed her state licensing exam. She went to work for a company providing home infusion therapy and is searching for a full-time nursing job in the Coachella Valley.

In the meantime, she is volunteering at Martha’s Village and Kitchen in Indio, training as a Red

Cross Disaster Medical Services volunteer, tutoring College of the Desert nursing students and working on her bachelor’s degree in nursing online.

“The skills and the confidence gained at College of the Desert, not to mention the networking connections, helped to make the transition from student to nurse that much easier,” Gary said.



# WOMEN'S SOCCER GOALIE SCORES STUDENT ATHLETE AWARD

Maranda Palmer's success as one of the top-ranked soccer goalies in California while attending college under extraordinarily difficult personal circumstances earned her statewide recognition in 2018.

A College of the Desert sophomore at the time, Palmer was presented with a 3C4A Achievement Award by the California Community College Counselors / Advisors Academic Association for Athletics convention in Northern California. The honor is given to student athletes who overcome great personal, academic and/or emotional odds to achieve success while participating in intercollegiate athletics.

The story of Palmer's perseverance is astounding, according to athletic counselor Angel Meraz, who nominated her for the award.

"Hearing about her story and the sacrifices she made, it's kind of amazing," Meraz said.

When Palmer was a senior at Twentynine Palms High School and living with her father, who was a single parent, she was a stand-in mother for her three brothers. She made sure they were fed, bathed and driven to appointments.

Once she enrolled as a chemistry major at College of the Desert, Palmer left her house at 3:30 each morning, giving her just enough time to make the 90-minute drive and be ready for soccer practice at 5:30 a.m. After her car broke down and there was no money for repairs, she moved in with a teammate closer to campus. Still without a car, she biked 13 miles to school every day for much of the soccer season.

"Her perspective, when she would struggle with things, it was never a feeling of defeat but 'How am I going to fix this?'" Meraz said. "She just really stood out, her dedication and her attitude. She was always positive and smiling."



# ROADRUNNERS EXCEL

**Numerous College of the Desert athletics programs excelled in 2018. Some noted Roadrunner highlights:**

- » Football won the coveted Palms-to-Pines Trophy over Mt. San Jacinto College and student athlete Luis Castellanos was named to First Team All-State.
- » Women's Soccer players Melita Pena, Analise Anzaldua, and Taylor Doyle were named to the All-Pacific Coast Athletic Conference team.
- » Men's Tennis clinched the Conference tournament, winning singles and doubles titles, and sent three doubles teams and five singles players to the CCCAA State Finals in Ojai.
- » Women's Tennis returned to the court after a one-year hiatus and won the Conference singles and doubles championship.
- » Men's Golf won the Pacific Coast Athletic Conference Championship.



# CAREER PROGRAMS, COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS DEVELOP SKILLED LOCAL WORKFORCE



College of the Desert plays a leading role in workforce training in the Coachella Valley, offering students pathways to employment in industries ranging from cyber security to construction. More than 100 business and career programs at College of the Desert teach students the skills they need to secure well-paying jobs and ensure positive economic growth for the region.

“Our programs are developed in response to the needs of local business and industry,” said Zerryl Becker, Dean, School of Applied Sciences and Business. “We also work with local employers to develop on-the-job training.”

Hands-on career and technical education classes are offered in culinary arts, video and filmmaking, healthcare, automotive repair and early childhood education, among others. Industry advisory committees for each career track help to drive the focus and keep standards up to date.

In March 2018, the college announced a partnership with Palm Springs-based DIGICOM Learning to create the Regional Center for Digital Media Education, which will serve as a focal point for the study and application of digital media. The center will be based at the College’s new West Valley Campus in Palm Springs.

“Everybody needs to be able to communicate through video, so as much as this is for students, hopefully it will also be for continuing education,” said DIGICOM CEO David Vogel, a former Disney executive.



The College also provides hands-on radio experience at student-run KCOD, which recently added an FM transmitter to expand its reach. The station cultivates new radio personalities, plays a variety of music and features new artists for listeners online, on the Tune-in app, on 1450 AM across the Coachella Valley, and on 99.9 FM.

Contract Technical Education programs offered by the College provide students with opportunities in over 40 career and technical fields. These programs include integrated academic and technical instruction, work-based learning, dual credit opportunities and potential for continuing education at the baccalaureate level.





Depending on the area of study, College of the Desert graduates can go straight into a career or prepare to transfer to a four-year college or university. For example, the College offers a pathway for students interested in cyber security or computer science that prepares them for entry into a cyber defense training program at California State University, San Bernardino.



Integrating academic and technical instruction and work-based learning are important components of career training programs. The College's farm-to-table initiative gives students in several different academic departments the training they need to work in high-demand industries.

"The College works across disciplines to provide real-world experiences that can give students a leg up in the job market," Becker said.

In the farm-to-table program, a nearly one-acre campus farm serves as an outdoor laboratory for plant science courses and provides several hundred pounds of fresh produce each year for culinary arts courses and for the children at the McCarthy Family Child Development and Training Center.

"We know that education and training are the keys to a job, career and a better life for our students," said Joel L. Kinnamon, Ed.D., Superintendent/President.





COLLEGE



COLLEGE OF THE DESERT



INVESTING IN  
*Leadership*







# GROWING OUR OWN FACULTY, STAFF AND ADMINISTRATORS PURSUE DOCTORAL DEGREES



More than two dozen faculty, staff and administrators are taking advantage of a unique opportunity supported by College of the Desert to obtain a doctoral degree in education focused on community college leadership.

“We’re investing in our homegrown talent,” said Sara Butler, a College of the Desert political science professor who coordinates the program. “It’s taking these 25 members of the college community and getting them ready for senior level leadership roles such as faculty senate president or dean or vice president.”

The three-year program covers topics such as planning, finance and resource development, ethics and values, the community college mission and closing achievement gaps.

The College’s inaugural class started its first eight-week course in Fall 2018. The program uses a

hybrid approach with face-to-face student meetings, online sessions with community college experts, teleconferencing with national leaders, team work, webinars and a practicum to address emerging college issues. Class sessions include travel to observe college leaders and collect data and information on institutional effectiveness.

The participants will use what they learn to develop projects and dissertations focused on solutions to pressing issues at College of the Desert. The end goal: helping students succeed.

Advancement of faculty and campus leaders is a College of the Desert priority, which is why the College is covering a portion of the cost of the program.

“This program doesn’t just benefit the faculty and administrators who are earning their doctorate degrees. It strengthens the very foundation of College of the Desert and supports the students who come here for a quality education that provides them with the skills they need to prosper,” said Dr. Mark Zacovic, Interim Vice President, Human Resources and Employee Relations.

**“ ON THE  
EXPERIENCE  
AND ABILITY  
OF THE FACULTY  
RESTS THE REAL  
SUCCESS OF A  
COLLEGE.”  
- DAILY NEWS,  
NOVEMBER 11, 1962**



## FACULTY MEMBER OF THE YEAR TELLS GRADUATES “NEVER GIVE UP”



Anthropology professor Dr. Ellen T. Hardy, honored as College of the Desert’s faculty member of the year for 2017-18, was like a lot of students when she started out — not quite ready for college.

Dr. Hardy didn’t like her classes and dropped out of college in her sophomore year, she said in an address to the 2018 graduating class.

Years later she tried again, having discovered, also like many community college students, how difficult it was to get by on minimum-wage jobs.

Dr. Hardy enrolled at Los Angeles City College, knowing it would be her pathway to UCLA. But once a Bruin, she was initially overwhelmed.

“By the end of finals week my first quarter, I had a migraine headache,” she said.

But it got better. She passed her classes and took up photography, back when cameras used film that she learned to process and print.

“I had no idea this would take me anywhere,” Dr. Hardy said. “But later, I discovered archaeologists were notoriously poor picture takers and I was invited to participate as an expedition photographer in Costa Rica and Syria.”

Her smartest move, though, was learning to speak Spanish.

“I received grants and scholarships to study and conduct research in Costa Rica, largely because I demonstrated I could communicate with those in the host country,” she said.

As a professor, Dr. Hardy finds that by talking to her Spanish-speaking students and their parents in their language, she demonstrates her respect for them and their ancestry.

When it came to advice for the new graduates, Dr. Hardy offered one short sentence: “Never give up.”

“I was never the smartest, but I persisted, outlasted, out-survived, and became successful because I didn’t give up,” she said. “When you are dead, you can rest. Until then, persevere.”





# AWARD-WINNING INSTRUCTOR SHARES SKILLS IN CAREER TRAINING PROGRAM



Pitted against some of the best heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) teachers in the world, College of the Desert instructor George Brown took top honors in a timed skills competition that included wiring components, finding leaks and assembling systems.

In March 2018, Brown logged a perfect score on a timed written test at the Teachers and Trainers Instructors competition at the National HVACR Educators and Trainers Conference in Las Vegas. Then he nailed a hands-on contest to beat more than 50 other participants and won more than \$3,500 in equipment and tools for his training program at the College.

The conference helps HVACR instructors like Brown keep pace with regulatory changes and learn ways to improve student outcomes and approaches for

incorporating the industry's rapidly changing technology into their programs.

The HVACR program at College of the Desert provides the training and resources to develop qualified entry-level technicians who can meet increasing market demands.

**“Our instructors at College of the Desert come from industry and constantly upgrade their skills to ensure they’re providing students the latest 21st century training they need to succeed,”** Brown said.

Brown leads the College's Building & Energy Systems Professional (BESP) program, which provides entry-level skills, knowledge, and industry-driven competencies through stackable credentials. Courses are available in HVAC, energy systems, architecture, building inspection technology and more.

The program aligns 15 energy-related career occupations to the statewide mandate for Zero Net Energy. This approach enables students to complete a single certificate; stackable certificates; or a degree.

BESP is also offered as a free, non-credit program to help workers elevate skills leading to employment in the growing energy field.



The program is surfacing as a state and regional model, with several colleges expressing interest in similarly aligning their energy-related certificates.

“We are very proud of our Career Education program, which greatly benefits our community and its essential industries,” Brown said.







INVESTING IN  
*Community*





## A YEAR OF SPECIAL EVENTS MARKS COLLEGE'S 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

In 2018, College of the Desert celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a year of special events and projects tracing its progress and achievements.

Much has changed since the College's founding in 1958, on 160 acres that once produced dates and grapes in Palm Desert. The College has added new programs and facilities and established satellite campuses in Desert Hot Springs, Indio, Mecca/Thermal and Palm Springs.

Today, more than 17,000 students take advantage of award-winning career training and certificate programs, and many more are expected in the coming years through the College's tuition-free pLEDGE program for Coachella Valley high school seniors.

"We have reached an important chapter in the history of the College. The opportunities before us are endless and it is up to us to bring them to fruition," said Joel L. Kinnamon, Ed.D., Superintendent/President.

At the school's Marks Art Center in Palm Desert, the evolution of the College from empty farmland to a five-campus system was traced in a visual timeline of the school's history that was part of "Celebrating 60 Years of COD,"



**"College of the Desert has come a long way since its humble beginnings. We could not be prouder of the programs we have developed and look forward to many more educational innovations," Kinnamon said.**



# HOMECOMING EVENTS **WELCOME ALUMNI**

College of the Desert's Boone Field was packed with students, alumni, faculty and staff for Homecoming 2018.

Hundreds of football fans visited the Palm Desert Campus to root on the Roadrunners, who prevailed over Victor Valley College in the October 27 game.

To coincide with the school's 60th anniversary, College

of the Desert alumni were treated to a pre-game barbecue, where they reconnected with friends, classmates and professors.

"This was a special year for College of the Desert, so it was important to bring back as many of our 125,000 alumni as possible," said Dr. Jennifer Mezquita, Director, Alumni Engagement. "It was great to hear their stories and feel their school spirit."



# ONCE A ROADRUNNER **ALWAYS A ROADRUNNER**

**In 2018, College of the Desert renewed its efforts to connect with and serve its more than 125,000 alumni**

Growing an alumni network that is involved, informed and connected expands the resources the College can offer beyond earning a degree and increases much-needed philanthropy for improving programs, facilities and student experiences.

"In its 60 years, College of the Desert has graduated some amazing people who excel in every field and have established themselves as leaders in the community," said Dr. Jennifer Mezquita, who was hired in 2018 as the College's Director of Alumni Engagement. "It is critical for the College's continued success to realize the potential of our alumni to open doors, generate ideas, support students and elevate College of the Desert with their time and talent."

Alumni Engagement is working to increase the services, programs and activities that resonate with alumni and creating opportunities for them to give back to current students.





# 2018 FAMILY NIGHT

# HIGH SCHOOL VISIT DAYS



# CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

## High School Visit Days

College of the Desert hosted thousands of high school seniors during its high school visit days. Besides touring the campus, participants learned how to enroll at the College and how to participate in the EDGE/plEDGE programs. They also were invited to attend a Career Party to learn about different paths available to them as College of the Desert students.

## Unity and Diversity Theme for Desert Hot Springs Festival

Students, faculty and staff participated in the 2018 Pride Festival, which highlighted the diversity of the entire Coachella Valley community. Participants were asked to bring an open heart and mind, offer and accept support to the community, and help build sustainability for a stronger tomorrow while enjoying the company and friendship of kindred spirits of every color.

## Palm Springs Pride Parade

College of the Desert students, faculty and staff participated in the 2018 Palm Springs Pride Parade. The Greater Palm Springs Pride Festival is the largest LGBT gathering in the Coachella Valley. The event serves as a gathering spot for friends, family and visitors from around the world to celebrate the diversity and unity of our LGBT community. The festival includes music stages, DJs, dancing in the streets, food vendors, exhibitors and non-profit organizations.

## Covered California visits College of the Desert

The Covered California bus made a pit stop at College of the Desert to show how “Life Can Change in an Instant.” Encouraging Californians to sign up for health insurance, the statewide tour features a live, three-minute original dance performance by local dance group, Amazing Crew. Local officials and executives from Covered California discussed open enrollment efforts, including key dates and deadlines.

## Family Night

College of the Desert hosted more than 600 families from across the Coachella Valley during Family Night. Representatives from almost every area of the college were on hand to guide students and provide them with the tools and information needed to attend College of the Desert.

Besides learning how to apply for admission, attendees learned about various programs and services that are available to help make the transition from high school to college more successful. They also learned about how to apply for financial aid and the state resources available for undocumented students and families who are also interested in becoming college educated.



Desert Hot Springs 2018 Pride Festival



Covered California at College of the Desert



Palm Springs Pride Parade



## MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE ONE VOLUNTEER AT A TIME

**Giving back – whether a mile away or across the globe – is a critical component of life at College of the Desert.**

Many students and faculty volunteer their time feeding the hungry, mentoring youth, and teaching in other countries.

Students in the College's pLEDGE program are required to participate in 10 hours of community service, mentoring or internships during the academic year to remain eligible for the two years of free tuition through pLEDGE.

"Participating in the community around us and being able to interact with people from different backgrounds and experiences is important to developing well-rounded citizens who understand the value of volunteering," said Katie Chartier, Assistant Director, First Year Experience.

Dr. Wendy Sanders, a professor of Early Childhood Education, has spent the last two summers teaching a course on serving children with special needs to master's degree students in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. She is also developing a bachelor's degree program in Holistic Child Development for the Evangelical Theological College there.

The experience differed from her previous volunteer missions in Africa working with desperately poor children and teachers, Sanders said.

"I was really struck by the impact of an educated middle class, which shared a similar range of experiences and opportunities as we have. Despite working full-time and raising families, they spent their weekends volunteering at their church, at orphanages, visiting children in prisons, coaching soccer," she said. "This social capital is what can really build a nation. I was inspired as to the importance of our work here at College of the Desert and how that is exactly what we strive to support – an educated middle class."

Sanders said the experience taught her about respect for learning and opportunities and humility, because the people she worked with in Ethiopia were doing so much with so little. "And so often, we break down collaborations and partnerships over materials and things. We have much to learn."







Students volunteering at local elementary schools



FIND Food Bank



Martha's Village

# LEILANI SILVA READING AT THEODORE ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL









INVESTING IN  
*Tomorrow*





# LUCIE ARNAZ FLAUNTS HER 'LATIN ROOTS' AT 2018 STEPPING OUT FOR COD EVENT

Desert resident Lucie Arnaz, daughter of actors Desi Arnaz and Lucille Ball, drew a crowd of nearly 1,000 to the Stepping Out for COD fundraiser in March 2018.

Arnaz's "Latin Roots" show featured a 12-piece band and clips of "I Love Lucy" in honor of her famous parents. The music, inspired by her Cuban bandleader father, was an eclectic Latin-American mix in English and Spanish.

"The show was more than a crowd-pleaser. It was a successful fundraiser for the College of the Desert Foundation, which supports so many important programs that eliminate financial barriers to higher education," said Dr. John Mosser, Foundation Executive Director.

Stepping Out for COD at the McCallum Theatre is the largest single benefit of the year for the Foundation. Proceeds from the annual gala directly support student success at College of the Desert by providing money for scholarships, textbooks, meal cards, child care, veterans services and more.



From Left to Right: Diane & Hal Gershowitz, Lucie Arnaz, Lenny Eber, Diane Ruben

Jim & Jessica Greene



Nancy Stone & Vern Kozlen



Joanne & Bill Chunowitz



## PEGGY CRAVENS' GIFTS PROVIDE ENDURING IMPACT



The legacy of philanthropist Peggy Cravens and her late husband, Donald Cravens, is woven throughout College of the Desert, from the Student Services Center that bears their names to the Marks Art Gallery.

Mrs. Cravens said she found her calling in helping young people attain an education, particularly at the community college level.

"Our fine community college is not only affordable but allows students to earn a degree and stay here in the desert to put their training to immediate use," she said.

In 2018, Mrs. Cravens continued to fund a \$3.5 million endowment to the College, the largest single gift in the school's history.

The Donald and Peggy Cravens Student Services Center provides admissions, counseling and other services for more than 17,000 students and serves as an enduring tribute to their generosity.

The Cravens' patronage of the College began years before, when they stepped up to provide initial leadership funding for the development of the Marks Center for the Arts, which opened in 2003. The couple played a key role in engaging others to help make the cultural resource a reality and a gallery is named in their honor.

"It's important to share. That's what life is all about," said Mrs. Cravens, a College of the Desert Foundation Board member and former Board President.

## RICHARD BROOKE FOUNDATION SUPPORTS pLEDGE PROGRAM

It was a newspaper story about College of the Desert's free tuition program for Coachella Valley youth that caught Melinda Drickey's eye.

"We were new to the area and were actively looking for organizations to support," said Mrs. Drickey, executive director of her family's Richard Brooke Foundation and now a member of the College of the Desert Foundation Board. "The College's pLEDGE program fit perfectly with our mission to help young people."

In July 2017, the Richard Brooke Foundation made its first grant of \$75,000 for the pLEDGE scholarship program for 2017-2018. It was the largest single donation to pLEDGE, which is designed to make higher education accessible for all Coachella Valley high school graduates by offering two years of attendance tuition-free.

Drickey's foundation, based in Omaha, Nebraska, supports college programs that prepare students for careers. She was impressed by the variety of vocational courses at College of the Desert, from culinary arts to early childhood education.

"It's so great for the young people in this Valley to have the type of education that will lead to a career and allow them to stay here and work," said Drickey, whose family recently moved from Omaha to Rancho Mirage full-time.





## 2018 SCHOLARSHIP DAY



## VERN KOZLEN'S COLLEGE CONNECTION BEGAN NEARLY SIX DECADES AGO



Vern Kozlen was a student at College of the Desert in 1962, the year the school opened its doors.

That history led to a deep connection with the College, one he maintains today as a benefactor and Board member of the College of the Desert Foundation.

Last year, his gift supported the College's Public Safety Academy, funding new firearms and ammunition for cadets to use on the practice range. He also provides scholarships for students in Nursing and Public Safety.

"Those are two programs where students have to provide their own equipment and it's expensive," he said.

Mr. Kozlen said he is impressed with the College's curriculum, which not only prepares students for transfer to a four-year university but also includes certificate programs in firefighting, golf course management and automotive, among others, that help them get good jobs.

"The graduates of these programs are the lifeblood of the community," he said. "College of the Desert is the only place where we're able to provide that type of training for people in the community, whether it's students getting out of high school or people who have been out of school and want better jobs to support their families."

## MYRON AND JOANNE MINTZ SUPPORT NURSING PROGRAM

College of the Desert is able to offer its students the latest and best technology for their fields of study with the help of generous donors like Dr. Myron and Joanne Mintz of La Quinta.



The couple donated \$50,000 in 2018 to be used for a simulated patient for the Nursing Simulation Lab and in honor of the College's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The couple were particularly impressed by the Sim Lab, which they discovered while taking a Community Engagement Tour of the campus. At the Sim Lab, student nurses put their knowledge to work in a clinical setting, practicing on computerized mannequins with realistic vital signs and symptoms.

"We were just so taken with the lab for the nurses and the skills that it provides. But the mannequins don't live forever, and we were happy to donate to help support the program," said Mrs. Joanne Mintz, a member of the College of the Desert Foundation Board.

The Mintzes' gift was combined with another donation to the College of the Desert Foundation and used to purchase a \$125,000 mannequin.

Dr. Mintz, a retired podiatric physician and surgeon who began his higher education with an associate degree, appreciates the value of academics and technical skills that can be gained at a community college.

"My career would not have been possible were it not for the community college system and the GI Bill," Dr. Mintz said.

## ACADEMIC ANGELS' SPRING LUNCHEON







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*Investing in Student Success*

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

