

# COACHELLA VALLEY HOUSING COALITION

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## Press Release

**For Immediate Release**

**Date: July 7, 2011**

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### **COACHELLA VALLEY HOUSING COALITION HONORS 89 LOCAL STUDENTS WITH 2011 JFM SCHOLARSHIPS TOTALING \$66,850**

**Indio** – The Coachella Valley Housing Coalition (CVHC) honored 89 college-bound students on Wednesday, July 13th with the 2011 JFM Scholarship for their commitment to higher education and their passion to give back to the community where they live. The awards luncheon celebrating students and their families began at noon at Terra Lago Golf Club in Indio, CA. The 89 students received scholarship award certificates before friends and family.

The scholarship was created in 2002 by the employees and the Board of Directors of the Coachella Valley Housing Coalition in honor of Executive Director John Mealey's twenty plus years of service to CVHC. This year, with the unfaltering support of CVHC's staff, board and community partners, scholarships of \$200-\$1,000 will be awarded to graduating high school seniors and college-enrolled students to help defray the cost of tuition and books.

"The industrious families who live in CVHC housing are committed to improving their lives and those of their children. The success of their hard work and determination is evidenced in the scores of brilliant students who have earned CVHC JFM scholarships, have gone off to great universities, and are now making a difference in their communities," said John F. Mealey, executive director of the Coachella Valley Housing Coalition.

This year's JFM Scholars include students who are pursuing degrees in architecture, mechanical engineering and medicine at prestigious institutions of higher learning such as UCLA, Cal Poly Pomona, University of Redlands and UC Berkeley. The annual scholarship is open to students in good-standing whose families live in CVHC housing. The 89 scholarship recipients live in one of CVHC's 29 multi-family housing developments, or have built their homes through CVHC's Mutual Self-Help housing

program. In the Mutual Self-Help program, low-income families come together to build their homes and those of their neighbors.

The 2011 scholarship recipients join a group of more than 300 students who have received a JFM Scholarship. Jesus Cervantes, a 2<sup>nd</sup> year JFM Scholarship recipient and Civil Engineering major at California State University, Long Beach, writes in his application: "The Coachella Valley Housing Coalition has aided me in providing my family with shelter, necessities, and at the same time, an educational opportunity. I longed for more knowledge, for a better future for my children than the one I had, and something to make my children and family proud."

Since the program's inception in 2002, the Coalition has awarded more than \$435,000 in scholarships.

If you would like to interview one or more of the JFM Scholarship recipients or CVHC's founding Executive Director John Mealey, please contact CVHC at 760-347-3157. The full list of the 2011 JFM Scholarship recipients is available at [www.cvhc.org](http://www.cvhc.org)

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Located in Indio, California, about one hundred miles east of Los Angeles, the Coachella Valley Housing Coalition (CVHC) is an award-winning non-profit housing development corporation dedicated to helping low and very-low income families improve their living conditions through advocacy, research, construction, and operation of housing and community development projects. In 2011, CVHC celebrates its 29<sup>th</sup> year providing affordable housing and community development programs to hundreds of underserved communities. To date, CVHC has built nearly 4000 homes and apartments for low-income households in Riverside and Imperial counties. In addition, CVHC has developed childcare centers, after-school programs, and medical clinics. It operates various services for its tenants and others including mariachi classes, English as a Second Language and Citizenship classes, a ballet folklórico program, and tennis and recreational programs. For more information, visit [www.cvhc.org](http://www.cvhc.org)