

# COACHELLA VALLEY HOUSING COALITION

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## Press Release

For Immediate Release

Date: June 4, 2008

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<p><b>COACHELLA VALLEY HOUSING COALITION HONORS 47 LOCAL STUDENTS WITH 2008 JFM SCHOLARSHIPS TOTALING \$ 40,500</b></p>
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### **2008 JFM Scholarship Luncheon**

**Honorees:** 42 2008 JFM Scholarship Recipients and their families

**Where:** Amore Ristorante Italiano, 47-474 Washington St., La Quinta

**When:** Wednesday, June 11, 2008

**Time:** 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Indio** – The Coachella Valley Housing Coalition (CVHC) will honor 47 college-bound students Wednesday, June 11th with the 2008 JFM Scholarship for their commitment to higher education and their passion to give back to the community where they live. The awards luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday at Amore Ristorante Italiano, on Washington Street in La Quinta, where the 47 students will receive scholarship award certificates before friends and family.

The scholarship was created in 2002 by the employees and Executive Board of the Coachella Valley Housing Coalition in honor of Executive Director John Mealey's twenty plus years of service to CVHC. Scholarships of \$500 and \$1,000 are awarded to graduating high school seniors and college-enrolled students to help defray the cost of tuition and books. Donations come every year from employees, friends, and partners of the organization.

"For more than 25 years, CVHC has been serving industrious families with dreams of a better life for themselves and their children. The success of those dreams 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 many students who are pursuing degrees in architecture and medicine at prestigious institutions of higher learning such as UCLA,

Luther College, University of Redlands and UC Berkeley. The annual scholarship is open to students in good-standing whose families live in one of CVHC's affordable housing developments. The 47 chosen live in one of CVHC's 27 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 2008 scholarship recipients join a group of more than 132 students including three time JFM Scholar, Edith Lopez, a pre-med student at Luther College. She writes in her application: "In today's society, college is the first step to climb the ladder towards reaching a dream. It was the beginning of a new life, where college was the first step towards my goal [to become] a physician....two years later I am...planning my classes for my junior year...embarked [on] a journey that that would have been more difficult if my family's living conditions had not improved thanks to Coachella Valley Housing Coalition."

Since the program's inception in 2002, the Coalition has awarded more than \$120,000 in scholarships.

If you would like to interview one or more of the JFM Scholars or CVHC's founding Executive Director John Mealey, please contact CVHC at 760-347-3157.

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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 2007, CVHC celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 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, an art program, and tennis and recreational programs. For more information, visit [www.cvhc.org](http://www.cvhc.org)