

CALIFORNIA'S COACHELLA VALLEY

# VISION

2013·14

PALM SPRINGS  
Like no place else



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CLIMATE FOR  
SUCCESS

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# PALM SPRINGS

75 YEARS OF LIKE NO PLACE ELSE! THE DESERT'S MOST LEGENDARY RESORT PLAYGROUND IS AGAIN ULTRA-COOL!

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Mayor Steve Pougnet greets President Obama at Palm Springs International Airport.

**2013 marks the 75th anniversary of the city of Palm Springs** — and it has been another spectacular year to remember for Southern California’s most legendary resort playground! Once a haven to Hollywood mega-stars like Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Liberace, Elvis Presley and Lucille Ball, Palm Springs has experienced a historic transformation over the past several years — again becoming “ultra-cool!”

Thanks to the City’s transformative Downtown Revitalization Plan, a host of innovative community and economic development projects, incentive programs, multi-million dollar hotel renovations and original special events and tourist attractions, the City has renewed itself as the hippest and most happening destination in Southern California for all generations of residents and visitors.

The most exciting project, the redevelopment of Desert Fashion Plaza, began in earnest and the Downtown Revitalization Plan is now in full swing, with plans for the opening of a sleek 190-room Kimpton Hotel in the near future. The new hotel will feature a magnificent roof-top pool, bar and signature restaurant along with meeting space — all wrapped in the City’s iconic mid-century modern architecture and surrounded by gorgeous mountain vistas. In addition, the City is working with Wessman Development to secure quality retail tenants for a dramatic new outdoor boutique shopping and dining complex in the heart of downtown.

JAY CALDERONI / DESERT SUN



Left: The Palomar, a Kimpton Hotel. Below left to right: Demolition of the old Desert Fashion Plaza. The Hard Rock Hotel under construction.



“After years of hard work by our City Council, staff and the developer, it is truly amazing to see real progress moving forward on a project that is so important to the economic success of Palm Springs and the entire Coachella Valley,” says Mayor Steve Pougnet, who notes that once the project is completed it will be transformational for our region and a tremendous economic driver.

“Everyone is buzzing with excitement,” says Pougnet.

Something else everyone is buzzing about is a new events venue, across from the Palm Springs Art Museum. This is expected to be the home of “Tachevah,” a hugely successful new music festival, created by Goldenvoice, the producer of the world famous Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. Last year more than 6,000 music lovers attended the inaugural event in downtown Palm Springs — and next year’s event is expected to be even bigger, according to Aftab Dada, Chairman of P.S. Resorts. P.S. Resorts,

the City of Palm Springs, local community leader Harold Matzner and *The Desert Sun* newspaper, are the lead sponsors of the event.

“The incredible success of Tachevah proves that there is a huge appetite for even more special events in Palm Springs — and we look forward to partnering to bring even more tremendous music talent to the city,” Dada says.

Beyond the Downtown Revitalization Plan, a host of other exciting improvement projects are currently under way in Palm Springs. From street paving to park improvements, residents and visitors can expect to see a plethora of transformational projects breaking ground.

“It’s a great time to live and work in the city of Palm Springs,” Pougnet says.

Another exciting development in Palm Springs is the 26-foot tall sculpture of Marilyn Monroe, sponsored by P.S. Resorts, a consortium of Palm Springs hospitality leaders. “Forever Marilyn” continues to be a huge hit with both residents and tourists,

according to Mary Jo Ginther, Director of the Palm Springs Bureau of Tourism.

“Marilyn has turned into a uniquely original special attraction that has truly put Palm Springs on the international stage,” Ginther says. “Everyone loves her and she’s been a tremendous tourism booster for our downtown.”

In fact, visit downtown Palm Springs and you’ll see residents and international visitors from all walks of life enjoying the town’s cool village vibe and eclectic shops, galleries, and dining destinations. Palm Springs is prominently featured in popular sitcoms, reality television and travel shows, fashionable magazines, and movies. Most recently, Academy-Award winning director Steven Soderbergh filmed part of the Emmy nominated HBO movie *Behind the Candelabra*, starring Michael Douglas as Liberace in August of 2012.

Not surprisingly, film and television producers from around the world flock to Palm Springs to shoot their productions — and with that in mind, the City Council

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## PALM SPRINGS STATS

**MAYOR** Steve Pougnet **MAYOR PRO TEM** Chris Mills **COUNCIL MEMBERS** Ginny Foat, Rick Hutcheson, Paul Lewin  
**YEAR INCORPORATED** 1938 **POPULATION** 45,712 **AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME** \$75,058  
**WEBSITE** [www.palmspringsca.gov](http://www.palmspringsca.gov)

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*The new 32-room Arrive Hotel.*

recently approved a new “Film Friendly” Incentive Program. The program provides a grant of up to \$5,000 for lodging, rentals, food and beverage and location assistance. Additionally, the Palm Springs Bureau of Tourism has developed a new “virtual film office” located at [PSFilmFriendly.com](http://PSFilmFriendly.com), that assists locations managers and filmmakers finding the perfect spot for their production while providing them with important introductions to local tourism partners.

“The City of Palm Springs wants the world to know that we are film friendly and ready to roll out the red carpet,” says Ginther.

Incorporated in 1938, Palm Springs is now most famous for being home to a variety of unique tourism attractions that include the breathtaking Indian Canyons, the magnificent Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, the renowned Palm Springs Art Museum, The Fabulous Palm Springs Follies and several hugely successful special events — including Palm Springs VillageFest, a popular weekly street fair held every Thursday night along Palm Canyon Drive, the spectacular Festival of Lights Holiday Parade, Palm Springs Modernism Week and the world-famous Palm Springs International Film Festival.

Consistently voted the Coachella Valley’s most popular special event, the film festival, founded 25 years ago by then-Mayor Sonny Bono, draws in thousands of visitors every January. It features a star-studded Awards Gala and has honored some of the best actors, writers and directors in the world — including George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Colin Firth, Clint Eastwood, Sean Penn, Bradley Cooper, Ben Affleck, Quentin Tarantino, Cate Blanchett, Helen Mirren, Anne Hathaway, Marion Cotillard, and many more.

“Every year the Palm Springs International Film Festival and Awards Gala gets bigger and better while showcasing some of the world’s most acclaimed cinema,” according to Ginther, who notes that the festival, beloved by fans and industry insiders alike, provides a huge boost to the local economy and is the biggest and most glamorous event of the Coachella Valley season.

Another major economic boon to the City’s economy is Palm Springs Modernism Week, a sophisticated 10-day homage to the ideals of mid-century modern architecture. The event, held every February, celebrates a renewed appreciation for the City’s famed modernist roots as well as vintage furniture, jewelry, clothing, and memorabilia.

Some of the more famous examples of mid-century modern treasures in Palm Springs include the 1946 Neutra-designed Kaufmann House, the home that John Lautner designed in Southridge for Bob Hope and his wife Dolores, and the famous Tramway Gas Station, (now the Palm Springs Visitors Center), designed by Albert Frey, John Porter Clark and Robson Chambers. It is their work that inspired Modernism Week — and this year organizers have added a new “Fall Kick-off,” Oct. 11-14, featuring a series of double-decker bus and walking tours, films, lectures, exhibitions, cool parties, and much more!

And when it comes to all things modern, downtown Palm Springs is celebrating new and emerging shops, restaurants and boutiques — many in the City’s Uptown Design District — that focus on modern décor and interior design. In addition, Downtown and Uptown Palm Springs continue to see a plethora of new and expanded eateries, including L’Atelier Deli, Casa de Frida, Jiao, Workshop Kitchen & Bar and a new Thai Smile that will replace La Casita on the corner of Tahquitz Canyon Drive and Indian Canyon Drive.

In fact, Palm Springs tourism and hospitality are thriving, according to Pougnet, who notes that continued tourism and hospitality gains over the past several years are the result of a more than \$200 million reinvestment in the City’s hotel stock, along with the implementation of the City Council’s popular Hotel Incentive Program.

New properties coming soon to Palm Springs include the 32-room Arrive Hotel, funded by early Facebook employee Ezra Callahan and a new J.W. Marriott Autograph Collection hotel at the site of the former Spanish Inn. Perhaps most exciting, a hip new 163-room Hard Rock Hotel will open in October 2013, replacing what was once the Hotel Zoso.

Other Palm Springs properties that have recently refreshed their looks include the Spa Resort Casino and the Hilton Palm



Top left: Tachevah, a new music festival. Right: Forever Marilyn statue on the corner of North Palm Canyon Drive and East Tahquitz Canyon Way. Below: Bradley Cooper at the 2013 Palm Springs International Film Festival Awards Gala.

PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL FILM SOCIETY

Springs, which underwent an \$8 million transformation. In addition, the former Holiday Inn is now the hip and sophisticated Saguaro Hotel, featuring a host of cool pool parties on the weekends and the popular new Basque-inspired restaurant Tinto, led by renowned Iron Chef Jose Garces.

“These new and/or upgraded properties allow the Palm Springs brand to renew itself and reach every generation of visitor,” Ginther says.

With downtown and uptown flourishing, the City Council is now turning its attention to assisting commercial landlords and tenants in other areas of Palm Springs that have not been as successful. In July, the Council created an Incentive Program to assist with improvements to commercial properties and attract new businesses in vacant locations.

Palm Springs is also a leader when it comes to local job creation, the City was designated by the state of California as one of six original “innovation hubs.”

The “iHub,” operated by the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership and located across from Palm Springs City Hall, serves as an incubator for green companies to create new jobs in the region. Now in its third year, the iHub nurtures startup companies in the fields of wind and solar as well as high-tech and bio-tech and continues to be an “economic game changer” for Palm Springs and the entire Coachella Valley, Pougnet says.

In fact, the success of the iHub has led to a new 10,000-square-foot Accelerator Campus at the Palm Springs International Airport, which currently houses iHub graduates who are ready to conduct research and prototype development, manufacturing, and commercialization of products or services with the goal of creating more local jobs.

And when it come to stimulating our economy and supporting as many as 1,000 local jobs during peak tourism season, the tremendous success of the City’s Airline Marketing Incentive Program at Palm Springs International Airport has proven to be another game-changing economic booster for the Coachella Valley. The City Council committed \$1 million to the program and popular Canadian airline WestJet was the first to take advantage; followed by United, Alaska, Frontier, Allegiant and most recently, Virgin America. This brings expanded service to Palm Springs and the entire Coachella Valley and coupled with the new \$25 million airport traffic control tower, new excitement to Palm Springs International Airport. “2012 was a record year for

passenger traffic and the opportunity for breaking that record in 2013 is looking very good indeed,” Pougnet says.

And finally, let’s not forget the important impact of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, whose community and economic development projects continue to boost the City’s economy and play a major force in the cultural and economic enrichment of their ancestral home. The Tribe is steward to 31,500 acres of land, including the popular Indian Canyons. As the owner of the Spa Resort Casino, it is one of the city’s largest employers.

“Rooted in rich history, the City and Tribal Council are dedicated to working together to improve the quality of life for our residents through a host of community partnerships,” says Pougnet. “From the construction of the Richard M. Milanovich Bridge on Belardo Road to plans for a new median along Tahquitz Canyon Way, the City’s important relationship with the Agua Caliente cannot be overstated and we thank them for their continued support of the City of Palm Springs.”

So as Southern California’s most famous resort playground celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, Palm Springs continues to transform and reinvent itself for every generation of resident and visitor looking for a unique place to relax, rejuvenate and enjoy year-round sunshine and an easy lifestyle.

When it comes to hip, happening and ultra-cool, according to Pougnet, “Palm Springs truly is like no place else!”

— Amy Blaisdell

## Nurturing Entrepreneurs From Startup to Profit

IHUB FOCUSES ON BUSINESSES THAT CAN ATTRACT CAPITAL, CREATE JOBS, AND THRIVE

**Great ideas** can be born anywhere, but they come to Greater Palm Springs to thrive. Only two years after opening its doors to 14,000 square feet of business incubator space, the Coachella Valley Innovation Hub (CViHub) has added a 45,000-square-foot Accelerator Campus and graduated its first class of entrepreneurs, with more in the pipeline.

The iHub model for business incubation — rooted in the triple bottom line theory of people, planet, and profit — “breaks down barriers to entry,” says Wesley Ahlgren, chief operating officer of the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership, which the cities of Palm Springs, Desert Hot Springs, and Cathedral City engaged for the program.

“We view the iHub/ Accelerator Campus concept as the new economic growth model for the state. It’s focused on jobs,” says Tom Flavin, CVEP president and CEO.

The iHub helps grow businesses from idea to execution in three critical growth areas: healthcare and life sciences; clean technology and energy; and creative arts, media, and design, with the



CHRIS MILLER/IMAGINE IMAGERY

EV Enterprises technician Temo Nunez, President Bill Schlanger, and Operations Manager Matthias Wilken work at the iHub Accelerator Campus.

goals of employment and sustainability. Services on a sliding fee scale include business training, technical assistance, and financing advice for onsite and virtual clients. CVEP partners its iHub support network and Workforce Excellence pipeline programs to train workers through local sector-specific programs that begin in secondary school.

### BY THE NUMBERS

CVEP Return on Investment, July 2011 to June 2013

Company client cases opened	425
Companies adding/retaining jobs	126
Total new direct jobs	2,191
Total retained direct jobs	756
Total indirect jobs	1,936
Total direct, indirect, and retained jobs	5,260
Regional economic impact	\$1,308,622,000
Total client funding	\$13,927,000

## Linking the Nation's Supply Chain

PROJECTED IMPORTS POSITION THE COACHELLA VALLEY AS A DISTRIBUTION CENTER

The Coachella Valley is poised to become an important distribution center for the more than 40 percent of imports that enter through the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. With available land along the Union Pacific Railroad and Interstate 10, a dedicated foreign trade zone, and a forward-looking interchange construction program, the region can handle traffic and distribution from the ports to the west and Mexico to the south — and that traffic is set to increase tremendously in the next few years.

The Port of Los Angeles is the busiest in the nation, followed closely by Long Beach and San Diego. All three are making improvements to handle



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Palm Springs International Airport is the nucleus of the foreign trade zone.



UCR Palm Desert Campus

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The University of California Riverside campus in Palm Desert has created a new program that offers a professional certificate in purchasing, logistics, and supply chain management, aimed at professionals and those new to management or supervisory jobs in the field.

highway corridors. The Union Pacific tracks are an important link in that chain, running more than 400 freight trains through the Coachella Valley each week. Local governments continue to work with the state and county to add regular passenger service to the mix.

Nearby Ontario International Airport is ideally positioned between three major freeways, and has recently expanded its air cargo facilities. ✨

— Carolyn Patten

### OPPORTUNITY IN THE FOREIGN TRADE ZONE

The Coachella Valley's foreign trade zone covers more than 900 acres surrounding Palm Springs International Airport and the county is working to establish a second zone that would include the other valley cities. Zone benefits include allowing manufacturers to defer, reduce, or eliminate customs duties, committed public-private partnerships, access to world markets, and an unbeatable lifestyle. Named one of the "Top 10 Stress-Free Airports" by SmarterTravel.com, Palm Springs International has become known for its elegant indoor-outdoor design and attention to passenger comfort.

more container traffic and New Panamax ships when deeper Panama Canal locks open in 2015. The ships hold more than twice as much as current ships, and will add to a projected tripling of cargo going through the ports and out to the rest of the country.

Highway 86 (dubbed the NAFTA Farm-to-Market Highway), the main entry for commercial trucks moving goods between the United States and Mexico, runs from Calexico through the east end of the Coachella Valley and connects with Interstate 10 in Indio. The I-10 trade corridor through the valley and out to the coast is already one of the nation's busiest — and projected to grow 110 percent by 2030.

It all adds up to more trucks on the road, boxcars on the rails, air cargo in the skies — and big opportunities for handling goods in the Coachella Valley.

To help streamline commercial traffic through the San Geronio Pass, the Coachella Valley has invested more than \$138 million to improve major interchanges. Another \$64 million has been allocated for interchange projects in Palm Desert and Indio.

The fact that Southern California is a major rail hub offers another opportunity, connecting the Coachella Valley with the national rail network, six rail-truck intermodal facilities, and three major interstate

# THE FIRST FIVE'S FIVE-YEAR PROJECTIONS

**\$1.3 billion** in revenue • **\$350 million** in EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization) • **2,600** employed  
Visit [cvihub.com](http://cvihub.com) to read about other up and coming businesses.



Sactec Solar develops mobile arrays to supply energy in remote, off-the-grid, life-critical, and emergency applications.

“[The Coachella Valley has] talent, access to capital, and huge market opportunities. There are 24 million consumers within a two-hour drive of the [iHub] facility.”

— Tom Flavin, president and CEO, Coachella Valley Economic Partnership

“Six of the [current] 17 iHub companies come from other states or regions, so we’re attracting interest from outside,” Flavin explains. “California is a good place to start and grow a business. We have talent, access to capital, and huge market opportunities. There are 24 million consumers within a two-hour drive of the facility.”

CVEP projects that by 2016,

the iHub will graduate 50 companies with \$1.1 billion in valuation. The companies will have created 2,600 jobs and generated \$200 million in annual revenues since their birth. Beginning in 2016, CVEP hopes to add iHub Accelerator Campuses throughout Greater Palm Springs.

When choosing which companies qualify for the

iHub, Managing Director Joe Wallace says the decision is based on various factors. “A good idea isn’t enough; we’re looking for the entrepreneur who not only has an idea, but also a background to attract talent to help with that idea once it’s proven, and who is going to be able to be funded by angels or venture capitalists or banks,” he explains.

## HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES FIND LENDERS

The Coachella Valley Economic Partnership’s new Small Business Lending Center focuses on helping innovators, entrepreneurs, and small business owners gain “a focused access to capital strategy,” says CEO Wesley Ahlgren.

The lending center works in tandem with the Economic Partnership’s Small Business Development Center, which helps more than 300 clients across the valley, ranging from startups to mid-size companies (30 employees or more), to expand the network of local, Los Angeles, and San Diego lenders who will underwrite and place small business loans for local businesses.

For more information, please visit [cvsbdc.com](http://cvsbdc.com).

— J.P.M.

CHRIS MILLER/MAGINE IMAGERY



management, building things, pricing, and making a profit," he continues. "When [companies] are big enough that they need to exit the Accelerator Campus, they should have those skills mastered, so that when they go out into the commercial world, they have the tools to make that business

everything it can be, whether it's 50 people or 50,000 people."

Much of the iHub's success, Flavin says, is rooted in deep support from partner cities and private enterprise. Rabobank was early on board, supporting the original iHub building. Wells Fargo recently awarded

a \$100,000 clean technology grant, and another \$10,000 came from Walmart.

The Accelerator Campus's Phase 2 received a huge boost with a three-year, \$500,000 grant from Desert Healthcare District for a Health & Medical Innovation Center, with another \$1 million from the City of

Palm Springs' Measure J to help further attract medical technology firms.

The Greater Palm Springs area, Flavin says, "still has a sense of community and purpose, which means big things can get done. You don't find that in the metro areas." ✨

— Joan Page McKenna

## MEET THE FIRST IHUB GRADUATES

- **Sactec Solar Inc.:** Designs mobile, containerized, transportable alternative energy solutions, such as solar array, wind turbine, inverters, converters, battery power, and backup generators. [sactecsolar.com](http://sactecsolar.com)
- **Solaris** (formerly NRG Power Cells): Manufactures renewable energy storage solutions.

- **Attune RTD's Briowave:** Briowave is used by Attune to manage energy consumption with its first commercial application in pool filtration. [attunertd.com](http://attunertd.com)
- **EV Enterprises:** Manufactures the Canary 100 Radiation Detector and automotive battery charging stations; converts internal combustion vehicles to electric cars.

[electricvehicleenterprises.com](http://electricvehicleenterprises.com)

- **PSTalent.com:** Virtual production and animation company that operates inside the Sony PlayStation home network, with license agreements to develop entertainment platforms. [pstalent.com](http://pstalent.com)

## Coachella Valley Enterprise Zone

California's Enterprise Zone Program was set up in 1984 to give businesses incentives to locate and hire in depressed areas. Since then, 40 zones, including the Coachella Valley Enterprise Zone, have helped hundreds of businesses expand, hire, and thrive.

The 56-square-mile Coachella Valley Enterprise Zone includes Thousand Palms, Indio, Coachella, Thermal, and Mecca.

In July, Gov. Jerry Brown signed a law that, as of Dec. 31, 2013, replaces the 40 zones with a variety of different economic incentives.

Until then, businesses in the enterprise zone will enjoy

## Playing Zone Defense

A STATE INITIATIVE PROMISES NEW INCENTIVES FOR DISAPPEARING ENTERPRISE ZONES

a sales and use tax credit, hiring credit, and net interest deduction for qualifying purchases, new hires, and interest received through Dec. 31, 2013. Wages paid to employees certified under the existing hiring credit program and hired before Jan. 1, 2014 may continue to generate tax credit for up to five years if they remain employed in

the (now former) enterprise zone. Taxpayers who have generated excess tax credit would be able to carry over and continue using the hiring credit and sales tax credit for up to 10 years.

"The future remains uncertain regarding the details of the dissolution or the direct and indirect impacts to the participating local employers,"

says Wesley Ahlgren, CEO of the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership. "We anticipate it will be several months before we have specific information regarding the proposed replacement incentives and how, or if, they will benefit our local community."

The new law redirects \$750 million in business tax credits to a state sales tax exemption on manufacturing or research-and-development equipment, a credit for hiring veterans and those who are among the long-term unemployed, and a credit to encourage businesses to expand and retain jobs in the state. ✨

— Carolyn Patten

**Coachella Valley Economic Partnership's Workforce Excellence** programs start at the end goal — filling the labor market with skilled employees in high-wage growth sectors — and working backward by paving educational pathways as early as kindergarten.

The Workforce Excellence model builds partnerships between the private, civic, and education sectors. “With an educated workforce, we will attract 21st century jobs to the region,” says CVEP President and CEO Tom Flavin. “To assure success, the business and education communities must execute programs simultaneously and in concert.”

This “collective impact” brings all the concerned parties to the table, says Sheila Thornton, vice president of Workforce Excellence.

Launched by CVEP in 2005, in partnership with the James Irvine Foundation and Riverside County Economic Development Agency Workforce Investment Board, the initiative creates career pathways in three high-growth industries: healthcare and life sciences, clean technology and energy, and creative arts and design. CVEP’s growth-industry councils provide employers with direct access to educators, work-based learning, and participation in workforce pipeline strategies.

“Higher levels of education are absolutely correlated with high levels of economic well-being for a region,” Thornton says.

With 71,000 students in Coachella Valley public schools, the three school districts (Palm Springs

# Pathways for the Next Generation

INDUSTRY AND EDUCATION COLLABORATE TO TRAIN THE FUTURE WORKFORCE



ETHAN KAMINSKY

*Eisenhower Medical Center welcomed its first class of medical residents in 2013.*

Unified, Desert Sands Unified, and Coachella Valley Unified), Riverside County Office of Education, College of the Desert, California State University San Bernardino, and University of California Riverside at Palm Desert work together to align curriculum to growth sectors. The school districts and College of the Desert have adopted CVEP’s new **Regional Plan for College and Career Readiness**.

“That is a guiding force for the next five years,” Thornton says. “Virtually everybody who impacts a student’s life in the education system, from kindergarten into the

workforce, can work on this common effort to align our resources to gain the maximum impact on students’ individual achievement and the economy’s overall well-being.”

Five-year goals include:

- enrolling 30 percent of students in a career-themed academy
- personalizing a graduation plan for 80 percent of students
- increasing the high school graduation rate by 10 percent
- achieving a 85 percent completion rate for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- raising the college-going rate by 10 percent

## BY THE NUMBERS

**\$6.4 million** in workforce development grant revenue since 2005 | **6,500** career-themed program participants | **1,575** college scholarship recipients | **11,000** hours volunteered by industry partners | **\$7.8 million** college scholarship dollars | **22** matching partners investing \$700,000 in scholarships annually | **\$12 million** in new revenue from outside funders | **60** new industry sites for workplace-based learning secured in 2012

Source: Coachella Valley Economic Partnership

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## WORKFORCE AT A GLANCE

**ALIGNMENT:** Based on the Alignment USA model, the program encourages community involvement ranging from parental engagement to business partnerships. Strategies focus on the end goal — jobs — and work backwards, beginning in K-12, to build a support model for success.

**WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE INDUSTRY COUNCILS:** These meld 400-plus partners from education and industry. The councils focus on scholarships, work-based learning, labor market projections, and pipeline development in healthcare and life sciences, clean technology and energy, and creative arts and design.

**PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS:** This program offers scholarships, college-readiness workshops, study skills, guidance, and one-on-one counseling.

- generating \$1 million annually through an endowed scholarship structure

In addition, CVEP has joined six other areas across the U.S. in implementing the **Alignment USA** model, which encourages community involvement ranging from parental engagement to business partnerships. Strategies focus on real-world skills and readiness, such as communication, critical thinking, and résumé writing.

“Alignment created a business structure for how communities collaborate,” Thornton says.

**Pathways to Success**, another component of Workforce Excellence, offers scholarships, college-readiness workshops, study skills, guidance, and one-on-one counseling.

CVEP’s Workforce Excellence also seeks to expand high school career academies — currently



ETHAN KAMINSKY

*Internal medicine residents at Eisenhower Medical Center will also train at community clinics during a three-year rotation.*

at 16 “schools within a school,” Thornton explains. Areas of hands-on study include culinary arts, healthcare, renewable energy, data and technology, and the creative and performing arts.

“You want the students to experience what it’s like to be part of the economy, to have a sense of who they are in the work world, and to have a sense of connection to their power and capability,” Thornton says. “In high school, they’re learning how to build a wind turbine or how to take blood pressure and how that relates to their math class. If you really want to engage somebody, you teach them with tangible learning.”

Key partners in Workforce Excellence include **Desert Healthcare District**, which invested \$2 million; **College Access Foundation**, which contributed \$7.2 million and committed to \$1 million a year through 2019; **James Irvine Foundation**, which invested \$1.675 million to support Linked Learning, high school academies, and college and career readiness programs; and **Ford Motor Company Fund**, which helped CVEP develop its regional plan for the next generation of learning. ✨

— Joan Page McKenna

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## TEACHING FUTURE CARETAKERS

Eisenhower Medical Center became the area’s first teaching hospital this year when it welcomed its inaugural class of medical residents to the School of Graduate Medical Education and Research. Twenty-two new physicians — eight each in family and internal medicine — are training at Eisenhower for three years, with six preliminary medicine physicians enrolled for one year.

With the shortage of doctors in Palm Springs — especially in primary care — the region has stepped up efforts to fill the void.

University of California opened a medical school at UC Riverside with 50 students; it will expand in 2015 to include graduate family medicine programs through Desert Regional Medical Center.

The UCR medical school engages in local Workforce Excellence initiatives, including the Future Physician Leaders program, a mentorship program for pre-med students.

College of the Desert opened a 14,280-square-foot nursing center in 2009; CSUSB opened a Palm Desert Health Sciences Building in 2008 and now offers a four-year bachelor of science degree in nursing and an RN-to-BSN program at the Palm Desert Campus.

In addition, the Coachella Valley Innovation Hub Accelerator Campus was awarded a three-year, \$500,000 grant from Desert Healthcare District for a Health and Medical Innovation Center, with another \$1 million from the city of Palm Springs to attract medical-related employees and companies.

Training and exposure to medical careers starts in elementary school, explains Sheila Thornton, vice president of CVEP’s Workforce Excellence. For example, “JFK Memorial Hospital does a pediatric disaster drill once a year for two days, and they bring the fifth-graders from Dr. Carreon Academy in Indio. The kids play the role of pediatric disaster victims, and they learn all about careers. They interface with 46 professionals in that day. They learn about emergency Life Flight helicopters, triage in an emergency room, what a respiratory therapist does, and what the nurse director would be do during a disaster.”

Thornton adds, “Desert Regional and Eisenhower host groups of 30 eighth-graders every month in tours through the hospital. They get hands-on, practical experience that really triggers a new imagination about who they can be and how they fit into the future workforce.”

**The Coachella Valley was a clean energy leader before the green movement made it cool.** From the iconic windmills to the growing tapestry of solar arrays, the region continues to lead with prodigious innovation and an expanding marketplace for high-tech jobs.

Opportunities in clean energy will blossom with a requirement that California generate 33 percent of its power from renewable sources by 2020. The Coachella Valley will be ready with its abundance of natural assets, including 350 sunny days, geothermal potential in the San Andreas Fault, and the windy San Geronio Pass.

Here are a few active solar and geothermal projects in the Southern California desert:

- **Desert Sunlight Solar Farm** — a 550-megawatt photovoltaic plant near Desert Center, co-owned by NextEra Energy Resources, GE Energy Financial Services, and Sumitomo Corporation of America — is slated to be fully operational by 2015. It is expected to serve about 160,000 California homes and displace about 300,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year.
- **NextEra's Genesis Solar Energy Project**, west of Blythe, will be one of the largest in the nation, generating enough electricity annually to power nearly 88,000 homes.
- **Ten geothermal plants** near the Salton Sea power generators with hot water from deep in the earth, producing enough electricity to power 10,000 homes.

## Power for the People

SOLAR, GEOTHERMAL, AND WIND TECHNOLOGIES PUT THE COACHELLA VALLEY AT THE FOREFRONT OF CLEAN ENERGY



THINKSTOCK.COM

*Thousands of windmills near Interstate 10 can power almost 200,000 homes.*

**DID YOU KNOW?** SunLine Transit Agency — the first in the United States to convert its full fleet to compressed natural gas — is building a 25,000-square-foot administration building and transit hub in Thousand Palms. The project is set for completion in mid-2014 and will result in more \$6.7 million in work for local firms.



## IMAGINING SILICON SPRINGS

The upstart Silicon Springs Ventures, based in the Coachella Valley iHub, aims to create a Silicon Valley-type ecosystem in the Coachella Valley, and “grow a robust workforce, increase economic impact, and create wealth.”

The firm — the brainchild of five tech-savvy executives with a combined 20 start-ups — develops, markets, and supports interactive digital products for mobile and OS platforms.

Silicon Springs Ventures works in an advisory capacity, offering business strategies, idea incubation, marketing finesse, and capital attraction, says Chairman and CEO Len Kapner.

“We’re focused on a couple of key areas,” adds President and COO Joel Fashingbauer, the former vice president of product development at Atari. “Mobile, social, big data, cloud computing, and wireless transport — it’s a convergence of five big tech pieces. More big companies are focused on back-end data, because it’s all your marketing and information that makes you valuable.”

Silicon Springs plans to expand into R&D, product testing, marketing and advertising, and workforce development in digital design, programming, and client support to attract younger workers.

Silicon Springs “the movement” — as opposed to Silicon Springs Ventures — is a collaborative initiative between the firm, Coachella Valley Economic Partnership, and Graphtek Interactive.



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COURTESY OF FIRST SOLAR

Geothermal plants (left) like this one are situated on the southern edge of the Salton Sea. Desert Sunlight Solar Farm (right) is expected to be fully operational by 2015.

• **Three companies** in the same area are testing techniques for algae production.

Meanwhile, the Obama administration has established a solar and geothermal power development area on 64,000 public and private acres in Southern California that could produce enough electricity to power more than 1 million houses, and the Bureau of Land Management has established the West Chocolate Mountains Renewable Energy Evaluation Area that will include a 10,759-acre solar energy zone and about 19,000 acres for geothermal exploration and development. Solar and geothermal power plants in the area could produce more than 3,000 megawatts of electricity, or enough to power about 1.2 million homes. ✨

— Joan Page McKenna

## WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE

The Coachella Valley Economic Partnership is growing the region's clean energy and technology sectors, from incubating businesses at its Coachella Valley Innovation Hub to nurturing the next generation of experts through Workforce Excellence programs.

The heart of CVEP's Workforce Excellence is the Advanced Technology Council's collaboration with College of the Desert's Advanced Transportation and Renewables program, as well as more than 40 representatives from local development agencies, utilities, schools, and private business.

Sheila Thornton, vice president of Workforce Excellence, says this partnership enables students to

enter the workforce pipeline as early as elementary school, with career explorations and career-based, hands-on programs that include competitions to create more efficient wind turbines and scientific studies of the Salton Sea at the high school level. The three school districts run 16 high school career academies, including two focused on energy: Desert Hot Springs High School's Renewable Energy Academy of Learning and Desert Mirage High School's Green Energy Technology Academy.

College of the Desert's Desert Energy Enterprise Center in Palm Springs offers energy technology demonstration projects, professional development, and training in wind turbine and solar power technology. Its new West Valley campus, expected to open in 2015,

will incorporate the Desert Energy Enterprise Center, skills labs, and a 60-acre "GreenPark" solar farm. In addition, Time Warner sponsors robotic camps sponsored by SMaRT (Science, Math, and Robotic Technology) education through the "Connect A Million Minds" project to boost interest in science, technology, engineering, and math for young learners. For more information, visit [www.desertrobotics.com](http://www.desertrobotics.com).

For advanced students, University of California Riverside in Palm Desert hosts the Center for Conservation Biology, which focuses on sustainable environment research and biodiversity. The Riverside campus houses the Southern California Research Initiative for Solar Energy and the Center for Environmental Research and Technology.

— J.P.M

## LEADING BY EXAMPLE

• Palm Springs Convention Center hosts the 2013 **Southern California Energy Summit** (Oct. 3-4) featuring U.S. Rep. Raul Ruiz, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Chairman Jon Wellinghoff, and actor and

sustainability advocate Daryl Hannah, among other energy leaders. Visit [www.socalenergysummit.org](http://www.socalenergysummit.org)

- Top investors, Fortune 500 executives, service providers, and emerging clean-tech firms converge on Indian Wells Feb. 6-7, 2014, for the ninth annual **Clean Tech Investor Summit**. Visit [cleantechsummit.com](http://cleantechsummit.com)
- **Clean Cities Coachella Valley**

**Region**, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Energy, leads a local coalition of fleets, fuel providers, and policymakers that focuses on reducing petroleum use and greenhouse gases.

- Coachella Valley Association of Governments' **Ygrene Energy Fund** administers a program to provide clean energy financing for commercial and residential property owners.

- **Palm Springs Office of Sustainability** opened 10 electric-vehicle charging stations this year; 10 more are in the works. Palm Springs also is eyeing an \$18 million project that will install LED bulbs and a new irrigation system, and replace its existing energy plant.
- **Old Town La Quinta** switched from incandescent to LED bulbs, cutting electricity use from 28,345 to 5,343 watts per month.



**EV Enterprises President Bill Schlanger** chose to move his electric car conversion firm to Palm Springs from Arizona 18 months ago, and hasn't looked back.

Schlanger credits his success to the strong support he received as one of the first Coachella Valley iHub clients. "The iHub has been with us every step of the way," he says. "They have really helped us in starting up and growing our business."

Schlanger also cites easy access to major markets — Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego — as key to EV Enterprises' expansion.

"The people at iHub are advising us how to put together appropriate deals with investors, and helping us refine our business plan," he says. "When we were ready to begin manufacturing one of our products, we were given the opportunity to move into the iHub Accelerator Campus and set up in a 6,000-square-foot building so that we could house our machines and start manufacturing. It was a huge help."

Schlanger will also take advantage of CVEP's workforce pipeline. "One of the attractions of the Coachella Valley for us was the programs in the high schools to teach kids about technology. It's our intention to start bringing in students from College of the Desert and from the high schools," he says.

Most of all, Schlanger enjoys the area's quality of life. "Palm Springs is laid back, very relaxed," he says. "The people have a wonderful disposition. We have plans to relocate the family and settle down here." ✨

ETHAN KAMINSKY



