

## **Guillermo J. Valenzuela Foundation Awards \$180,000 in Grants to Inland Groups Serving Families, Women in Need**

*Grants by Inland-based foundation support its mission to improve the health of underserved communities in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties.*

**(San Bernardino, CA)** -- The Guillermo J. Valenzuela Foundation announced today that it has awarded \$180,000 in grants to several local organizations that work to improve the health and wellbeing of underserved families and women in the Inland Empire.

Founded and funded by longtime Inland physician Dr. Guillermo Valenzuela, the 2017 grant awards were provided to non-profit organizations whose activities align with the Foundation's stated mission of expanding access to healthcare and improving quality care through research, grant-making, programs, partnerships and educational opportunities that will help address the Inland Empire's shortage of physicians and healthcare providers.

"I am humbled that our foundation's grants are being awarded to groups that play such a critical role in improving the health, spirit and future opportunities of women and families in need across the Inland Empire," Valenzuela said. "The support, services and care these organizations provide to the Inland community are absolutely vital and provide life-changing benefits."

The grants ranging from \$15,000 to \$25,000 were awarded to:

- **Catholic Charities San Bernardino and Riverside Counties** for its Family & Community Services Program in San Bernardino, which provides interventions and assistance to help families cope with crises. The grant will help fund a caseworker's salary to provide individualized services for low-income women.
- **Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine** for their Women's Wellness Programs to pay for testing and diagnostics for women receiving gynecological services.
- **CompassPoint** to contribute to the implementation of the Next Generation Leaders of Color – Inland Region program. Mid-level community leaders receive training and build skills to strengthen their capacity to make for more effective organizations and service delivery in the Inland Empire.
- **El Sol Neighborhood Educational Center** of San Bernardino for depression screening, counseling and treatment of almost 175 women, 65 years and older.
- **Inland Behavioral and Health Services, Inc.**, of San Bernardino to purchase an Obstetrics and Gynecology Ultrasound Machine for their low-income prenatal patients to improve healthcare outcomes for new mothers and their babies.
- **Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest** in Coachella for its Youth Promotoras program, which helps educate and support local youths, teaching them to become community leaders and advocates for health, social justice and personal responsibility.
- **Reach Out** of Upland for its LIFE (Learning Inspired Field Experience) project of the Inland Health Professionals Coalition, which provides paid internship opportunities for low-income and underserved students to receive hands-on experience in professional healthcare settings.

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- **Southern California Public Radio** to support its high-quality multimedia coverage of healthcare issues.
- **Time for Change Foundation** of San Bernardino to help provide accessibility to safe, affordable housing for homeless women and children.

“We are truly thankful to the Valenzuela Foundation for supporting our LIFE program which encourages and empowers low-income students to pursue a career in healthcare,” said Diana Fox, executive director of Reach Out. “By nurturing new educational opportunities in healthcare, the Foundation is helping resolve the Inland Empire’s dire shortage of doctors.”

Riverside tops the list for the worst birth-to-doctor ratio of obstetrician-gynecologists among 50 U.S. cities, according to a report released this month by Doximity. Recent studies by the California Health Care Foundation and others show that the Inland Empire has a significant shortage of doctors, with 120 physicians for every 100,000 residents, the lowest ratio of any major region in the state.

Alexander Fajardo, executive director of El Sol Neighborhood Education Center, also expressed his appreciation to the Foundation for its support.

“With this grant, we will be able to help up to 175 senior women in the Inland Empire who are struggling with depression or chronic disease. We are thankful to the Guillermo J. Valenzuela Foundation for its generosity and commitment to helping improve the lives of others,” Fajardo said.

Dr. Valenzuela knows firsthand about overcoming adversity, and is a strong believer in giving back to the community. Born and raised in Chile, he overcame severe economic obstacles to become a successful physician and a leader in the Inland Empire’s medical community.

The Valenzuela Foundation invites proposals requesting general operating or specific project support for work in the Inland Empire - San Bernardino and/or Riverside Counties - that align with the mission and vision described above, and focus on the current priorities, described below. Eligible organizations must be tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Emerging and developing as well as established programs / projects / organizations are eligible for funding.

***About The Guillermo J. Valenzuela Foundation***

The Guillermo J. Valenzuela Foundation is dedicated to improving the health of underserved communities in Southern California’s Inland Empire, San Bernardino and Riverside counties. The Foundation works to expand access to health care and improve quality care through research, education, grant-making, programs, and partnerships. The Foundation’s current priorities are:

1. **Women’s Health:** Because women are the backbone of their families and our communities of the Inland Empire, ensuring they have access to providers and services is a priority of the Foundation.
2. **Increasing the Number of Medical Providers Committed to Practicing in the Inland Empire:** Because the underserved communities in Southern California’s Inland Empire lack adequate networks of primary and specialty providers who live and work in our neighborhoods, increasing the number of Doctors of Medicine, Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine, Nurse Practitioners, and Physician’s Assistants is another priority of the Foundation.