



**COLLEGE**  
*of*  
**the DESERT**

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## College of the Desert Places Bond Proposition on Ballot

PALM DESERT, CA—After two years of collaborative planning with local businesses, faculty, professional planners, architects, employees, alumni and financial experts, on July 20, 2016, the Desert Community College District Board of Trustees unanimously voted to place a \$577,860,000 local education bond measure on the November 2016 ballot. The bond measure will provide critical capital funding which will allow the College to expand, modernize and meet the increasing demands for higher education and career training throughout the Coachella Valley.

COD is the second-fastest growing community college in California, and graduated its largest class in its history this past spring. The bond measure is part of an overall plan to strengthen the main missions of the college: give students the skills they need to be prepared for a successful career or transfer to four-year universities. It is designed to ensure COD facilities can meet growing student demand as well as modernize and renovate aging facilities.

If approved by voters, this measure will:

- Allow essential upgrades and improvements for college facilities.
- Expand and create facilities to better prepare students for their careers or transfer to a four-year university.
- Upgrade and add science, engineering, and technology classrooms and labs.
- Create community-centered education sites throughout the Coachella Valley.
- Improve and expand career and support facilities for veterans and military families.
- Provide for the acquisition, construction and repair of facilities, sites and equipment.

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College of the Desert serves a vital role in our community by providing high quality, affordable college education and job training to local residents. More students and families are choosing COD because it offers an affordable alternative to the skyrocketing cost of four-year universities. However, even with improvements in recent years, the College cannot provide enough classroom space to serve the growing student body and meet the needs of local business and industry for a skilled workforce.

Several people spoke during public comments in support of placing the bond measure on the ballot.

**Mr. Geoffrey Kiehl said, "From what I've experienced during my six years on the Measure B Bond Oversight Committee, everything will be done above-board and with transparency and all of the assurances and promises of the ballot language will be adhered to. College of the Desert is the most important educational institution in our region. As such, it is the key to the upward mobility of our residents and the economic vitality of our whole region."**

Shawn Nicholson recalled when he was a student at College of the Desert **and the Veterans Center was just a small office and although it's grown since then additional infrastructure is needed to allow more access to education for our veterans and their families. "The Coachella Valley accounts for 135,000 of the approximately 2 million veterans in the state of California. As these veterans become more educated, the more revenues are returned back to our community in the form of taxes, reduced homelessness, and reduced crime."**

Mr. Vern Kozlen, a member of the COD Foundation Board, told his story as a graduate of Palm Springs High School in 1961 and when he had to return to the desert to help with the family business he was so grateful that College of the Desert was newly opened and he could continue his education. **"We must not only maintain, but enhance, our facilities – some of which were built when I started here 55 years ago."**

**"We appreciate that the community has supported College of the Desert over the years, starting in 1962 when a bond measure was passed to build the original Palm Desert Campus and in 2004 when Measure B was passed,"** said Board Chair Mary Jane Sanchez-Fulton. **"We look forward to their continued support as we look to the next investment in our students, our college, and our community."**

COD serves our community with locations in Palm Desert, the West Valley, Indio, the East Valley and Desert Hot Springs. For additional information on the bond measure, including a link to the full text of the measure and the accompanying project list, please visit [www.collegeofthedesert.edu/bond2016](http://www.collegeofthedesert.edu/bond2016).

About College of the Desert:

Established in 1958, College of the Desert (COD), located in Palm Desert, is an accredited community college serving eastern Riverside County, California. The College leads the region in providing quality, higher education, technical training and lifelong learning opportunities, in response to the dynamic needs of our diverse community. The College serves more than 14,000 credit students and 1,000 non-credit students each year and is the number one source of transfer students to California State University, San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus. For more information, visit [www.collegeofthedesert.edu](http://www.collegeofthedesert.edu).

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