

**March 8, 2022**

**For More Information:**

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## **Philanthropist of the Year Award Goes to Donor of California Community College System's Largest Gift Ever**

College of the Desert will join the Network of California Community College Foundations on Wednesday, March 9, 2022, recognizing the winner of the Bernard Osher Philanthropist of the Year Award, the Jay Pritzker Foundation, for a historic \$100 million award to community colleges statewide.

The Jay Pritzker Foundation donation, in the form of a 20-year pledge, provides vitally needed scholarships and emergency financial aid to students at specified colleges in California, including College of the Desert. In 2021, its first year, the gift impacted more than 8,000 students at 34 California Community Colleges.

"This donation directly benefits College of the Desert's award-winning pLEDGE program which provides two years of free tuition for Coachella Valley high-school graduates," said College Superintendent/President Martha Garcia, Ed.D.

The pLEDGE program offers scholarships to Coachella Valley high-school graduates who participate in the EDGE summer bridge program and who are enrolled in subsequent Fall and Spring semesters. Since the EGDE program started in 2012, it has been scaled to serve over 1,200 students as a first and second year student support program with a free tuition component called pLEDGE.

"College of the Desert is grateful for the opportunity to see more students in the classroom as a result of this remarkable donation," Garcia said.

Students, faculty, staff, and community members are invited to join the presentation. The award presentation to foundation trustees Dan and Karen Pritzker, will take place virtually on March 9 at 10 a.m., via Zoom. To register, go to [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_wm3vpx0XTC-cG\\_nLGUmYnQ](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wm3vpx0XTC-cG_nLGUmYnQ).

The Bernard Osher Philanthropist of the Year Award is presented annually by the Network of California Community College Foundations to an individual, corporation, or nonprofit organization that demonstrates a commitment to philanthropy and serves as a role model to encourage giving to California community colleges.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.ncccfweb.org/PhilanthropistoftheYear/2021PhilanthropistoftheYear.aspx>.

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