

2016/2017 Community Outreach and Engagement

Shave the Brave – Valley Children’s Hospital (VCH): During the planning of 2016 Staff Appreciation, ASP staff and CALPIA staff requested that ASP hold a Shave the Brave event to raise money for Childhood Cancer Survivors. True to form ASP and PIA staff raised over \$3000 in donations to have their heads shaved for VCH. PIA staff member Jeanne Tillotson earned recognition for raising the most amount of money for the event. The Childhood Cancer Survivorship Program works with cancer-free patients who are at least three years from completion of treatment. Because of this program, hundreds of childhood cancer survivors now have a greater understanding of the late effects of their treatment and are empowered to reach their full potential as adults. VCH also help families understand that the goal of childhood cancer treatment extends beyond cure to curing children with fewer effects on their growth and development. Families in VCH programs learn that clinical trials help researchers design studies to compare the efficacy of current treatment regimens to treatments with less potential for late medical problems, which will result in a higher quality of life for future childhood cancer survivors. You can read more about this story here - <http://www.insidecdcr.ca.gov/2017/02/avenal-sp-employees-donate-over-3000-to-valley-childrens-hospital/>

West Hills College Culinary Outreach: In 2016, PIA became a proud sponsor to West Hills College Culinary Outreach program. This outreach program utilizes West Hills College professors to teach High School students real world experience in the Culinary field. High School students “get jobs”, create a menu, make the food, and serve at the job. This program helps to show young people every step of the culinary process and provides them with knowledge and experience to help them secure a job in the future. PIA has been a supporter of this program not only by donating goods, but co-hosting an event to help the students to further their experience.

Avenal High School – Positive Impact Scholarship: Each year, the Avenal State Prison EAC provides financial scholarships to students graduating from Avenal High School, to help contribute to their future success. Interested students are required to apply by answering a few questions about how they help their community, i.e., what extracurricular activities they are involved in, and what career path they would like to pursue as adults. Students are also required to submit a personal essay. A special committee on the EAC selects finalists; of these finalists, two of are selected based on the amount of service the applicants offer to the community and are each awarded a \$500 scholarship.

Coalinga Police Department – Community Support: In 2016, PIA was able to make a difference in the Coalinga community by teaming up with the Coalinga Police Department, Fresno County Sheriff Department, Avenal/ Pleasant Valley State Prison CRT Team, and Coalinga State Hospital in donating goods and supplies to help make the community of Coalinga a safe place during the 80th Annual Horned Toad Derby and Memorial Holiday Parade. The Horned Toad Derby was started in 1933, when the Junior Chamber of Commerce hosted an impromptu race involving various wild reptiles later known as the “annual running of the “Horned Toads”; it later became known as the Annual Horned Toad Derby. Learn more here - <http://www.insidecdcr.ca.gov/2016/06/avenal-pleasant-valley-sp-staff-help-coalinga-police/>