FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coachella Valley Collaborative Lift to Rise Adds Three Mission Critical Hires

Jocelyn Vargas, Christy Gilbert Holstege, and Araceli Palafox

to support ambitious social change partnership

Coachella Valley, CA, April 10, 2019 - Today, Lift to Rise, a community partnership dedicated to improving quality of life for Coachella Valley residents, announced the addition of three new mission-critical hires to the quickly growing organization.

Jocelyn Vargas is joining the dynamic team as Director of Resource and Communications, and will lead Lift to Rise's resource development, communications, and resident engagement work. A community advocate with deep expertise in grassroots community organizing and engagement, she also serves as Board Chair for Raices Cultura and works as an advocate for funding and programs that promote gender equality and social equity for residents in the Coachella Valley.

Christy Gilbert Holstege will bring nearly a decade of experience as a social justice attorney to her role as Lift to Rise's new Director of Collective Impact. Christy will lead Lift To Rise’s working groups advancing housing, health, and social connection for the residents of the Coachella Valley.

Araceli Palafox will serve as a new Implementation Manager at Lift to Rise. In this new role, Araceli will leverage her experience at the USC Price Center for Social Innovation where she’s been engaged with Lift To Rise for nearly a year.

“Araceli, Jocelyn, and Christy are fierce community advocates that collectively bring over two decades of grassroots organizing, policy advocacy, and research experience to Lift to Rise,” said Lift to Rise President and CEO Heather Vaikona. “We are incredibly proud that these three extraordinary and deeply passionate women chose to join our team. They will be indispensable to achieving our mission of radically improving opportunity in the Coachella Valley.”

While primarily known nationally for resort towns and its namesake music festival, the Coachella Valley is a rural region that faces high poverty rates and soaring housing costs. Nearly half of Coachella Valley residents live at or below 200% of the poverty line and Latino residents who make up more than 50% of the population are three times more likely to face poverty. Lift To Rise is dedicated to pursuing a more equitable future for all Coachella Valley residents.

Lift to Rise is a dynamic cross sector collaboration focused on improving housing stability, health, and social connection outcomes in an effort to address the factors driving regional inequality.

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About Lift to Rise

Lift To Rise is a cross-sector, community-driven movement to improve life in Southern California’s Coachella Valley for the majority of residents that consistently struggle to make ends meet. The web of disadvantages that people face include a lack of affordable housing, transportation infrastructure,
health resources, and jobs that pay enough to maintain a reasonable standard of living. Lift To Rise seeks to build upon community strengths and collective vision to realize a future where “All Coachella Valley families are healthy, stable, and thriving.”

Learn more at www.lifttorise.org and by following the organization on Twitter (@Lift_Rise) or Facebook (@LiftToRise).

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