The City of Palm Desert and their Extraordinary $10 Million Gift

By: by Michael Landes, President Eisenhower Medical Center Foundation

City of Palm Desert City Council (left to right): Jean Benson, Mayor; Jim Ferguson, Council member; Bob Spiegel, Mayor Pro-Tempore; Cindy Finerty, Council Member; and Dick Kelly, Council Member.

In 2007, Eisenhower Medical Center Foundation approached the City of Palm Desert, requesting support for one of the hospital's greatest needs and Eisenhower's most expansive project to date – the construction and completion of the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Pavilion. The City of Palm Desert's five-member City Council — a generous benefactor of Eisenhower Medical Center in the past — voted unanimously to make an extraordinary gift of $10 million in support of Eisenhower's efforts to better serve our rapidly growing communities.

"Eisenhower is a major facility serving Palm Desert and to have such a great campus with so many Palm Desert residents using the hospital, and the type of services and the facilities they have and all the specialties they offer, it behooved us to support this effort because it was taking care of our constituents," declares Palm Desert's Mayor Jean Benson. "It just made sense. It was out of compassion, because we realized how important it is to have an institution of this caliber sitting right in our midst. The majority of our residents take advantage of their services over other choices in the valley and we wanted to see to it that Eisenhower succeeded in every way possible."

The cities of Indian Wells and Rancho Mirage have both made previous donations of $5 million each, but Palm Desert's gift marked the largest donation from any desert city Eisenhower has received thus far.

This $10 million gift will help Eisenhower complete the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Pavilion, a 250,000-square-foot inpatient facility slated to open in late 2009 or early 2010. The five-story building will include the following:

- **Lower level:** The lower level will hold Eisenhower's ancillary services and functions including the Nutritional Services department, a cafeteria for staff and visitors, and the Phil and Lee Hixon Physician Dining Room. It will also house the receiving dock and the Housekeeping and Telecommunications departments. Eisenhower's Information Systems (IS) will be the most expensive component of the lower level. All IS equipment will serve the entire campus from this location.
- **First floor:** The Intensive Care Unit, Coronary Care Unit and Cardiac Surgical Unit, made up of 34 private beds, will be located on the first floor of the Annenberg Pavilion.
- **Second floor:** The second floor will provide another critical care area with a 12-bed Intensive Care Unit dedicated to neurosurgerical patients. Additional beds will bring the total to 42 private or 72 semi-private beds on the second floor.
- **Third floor:** The third floor will contain 42 private or 72 semi-private beds.
- **Fourth floor:** The fourth floor will contain 42 private or 72 semi-private beds.
- **Fifth floor:** The fifth floor of the Annenberg Pavilion will house building systems and equipment.

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A count of all hospital beds, including the Annenberg Pavilion, Ike Wing, Emergency Department and Special Procedures Units will bring Eisenhower's bed count to a total of nearly 400 private or 533 semi-private beds.

Benson, a five-time mayor of Palm Desert and a council member for 26 years, has had several personal experiences with Eisenhower Medical Center and speaks highly of its services. "Everyone looks after you so well. There is a real concern when you are in there that you are going to get well and get out, and they do everything possible to help you. It is just an overall feeling that they really care."

Thanking Palm Desert

Over the years, thousands of Palm Desert residents have relied on the services of Eisenhower Medical Center, both as inpatients and through our many outpatient services. Our goal is to continue to offer excellence on all levels of patient care. This gift from the City of Palm Desert will help complete the Annenberg Pavilion and the expansion of Eisenhower's emergency services — and for that, we are truly grateful.

To thank the citizens of Palm Desert for their extraordinary gift and empower the residents to make the best decisions for their health care needs, Eisenhower provided them with a series of health and wellness events called Palm Desert Days. Offered free of charge to the residents of Palm Desert, Palm Desert Days have included screenings for blood pressure and carotid artery, pulse oximeter screenings, lab vouchers, joint/posture balance screenings, diabetes information, grip testing, and body fat testing. Eisenhower has also offered seminars on nutrition, exercise and heart health, stroke prevention. Palm Desert Days gave Eisenhower the opportunity to share valuable health care information in addition to teaching residents the best way to access Eisenhower Medical Center services.

Naming Ceremony

In addition to thanking the residents of Palm Desert with health screenings and seminars, a formal presentation will be made in the naming of a floor of the Annenberg Pavilion to honor the city and the citizens of Palm Desert.

A Natural Fit: Palm Desert and Eisenhower Medical Center

One of the largest and fastest growing of the desert cities and the largest in the Eisenhower Medical Center service area with 45,000 residents, Palm Desert is a dynamic city with a bright future.

- Nearly 30 percent of all Emergency Department admissions are Palm Desert residents.
- Palm Desert residents make up more than 30 percent of all outpatient visits.
- Palm Desert residents occupy nearly 30 percent of all Eisenhower Medical Center inpatient rooms.
- More than half of Eisenhower Medical Center's 800 active volunteers are Palm Desert residents.
- Fifteen percent of all Eisenhower Medical Center employees are Palm Desert residents.

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