



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Date: August 20, 2008

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The Plantscape Industry Alliance Wins PLANET Community Service Award

Ukiah, CA - The Plantscape Industry Alliance (PIA) and their community service program, PIA Cares, has been awarded a Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) Community Service Award for the PIA Cares installation at the Cathedral City Senior Center in Palm Springs, CA.

Two thousand outreach clients and 17,000 people pass through the doors of the Cathedral City Senior Center in California each year. Thanks to the efforts of the Plantscape Industry Alliance (PIA) and its PIA Cares Program, and a group of dedicated volunteers, they now enjoy the many benefits of a professional interior plant installation.

The installation took place in 2006, a day after the close of PIA-hosted CalScape Expo in Palm Springs, PIA Cares team members specified plants and containers to be used procured materials from very generous vendors exhibit at CalScape Expo, and installed the plants in the facility. PIA Cares Chairperson Debra Ringler, a designer, a procurement coordinator, seven industry vendors, 12 volunteer installers, and a horticulture therapy trainer were involved in the project. In total they spent more than 60 hours enhancing the Center's environment.

To facilitate maintenance, the entire project was installed with controlled watering sub-irrigation, and the Center's staff was trained in its use and general plant care. The staff members then enlisted seniors from the community to provide the ongoing care. Two PIA Cares members now monitor the installation every few months, providing training and advice.

"This is one of six or seven community service projects that PIA Cares has implemented in recent years," explains PIA Executive Director Mary Golden. "Part of the PIA Cares mission statement is to improve the environment of disadvantaged communities by contributing professionally designed interior plant installations. The volunteers who worked on the project enhanced the Center and created an environment where seniors can enjoy the many benefits that plants provide."

She continues, "The plants not only bestow their long-recognized healing and health benefits to the Center's seniors, they offer an opportunity to participate in their care and maintenance – a passion for many residents."

The Cathedral City Community Center has been addressing the needs of seniors from the Palm Springs area for more than 24 years. In the heat of the summer, it becomes a cooling center. Seniors are free to find relief from the heat, listen to music on rehearsal day, and enjoy a snack while sipping iced tea. Thanks to the time, effort, and donations of PIA Cares and its volunteers, they can do all of the above and more, while also enjoying a lush and beautiful interior garden environment.

This project was awarded the Professional Landcare Network' (PLANET) Community Service Recognition Award, which recognizes PLANET members that have demonstrated leadership through their dedication and contribution to the good of the community.

PIA is comprised of interiorscapers, educators, vendors, and allied industry members from around the country. Its mission is to advance the interior plantscape industry and its professionals.

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