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## **Tools for Tomorrow Continues to Reach More Students**

### **H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation Awards \$25,000 Coachella Valley Spotlight Grant**

**Palm Desert, Calif., (May 18, 2022)** – A \$25,000 Coachella Valley Spotlight grant from the H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation will help Tools for Tomorrow (TFT) continue to grow its integrated arts literacy programs and theatre programs for elementary school children in the area. The program currently serves 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders in 24 schools.

In 2020, the pandemic forced all TFT programs to a halt. By fall 2021, the program relaunched online, and was able to serve more schools than ever before with virtual learning technology. As schools and afterschool programs allowed in-person instruction again, TFT also re-entered several valley locations. Teachers, many of them current or former professionals in the arts, present hands-on lessons that inspire responsive sharing with classes of 25-30 students.

“The gift from the Berger Foundation is definitely coming at an important time in our nonprofit’s history, when we are working to rebuild these essential programs,” said Andrea Hecht, TFT Operations Manager. “We plan to start the 2022-2023 school year offering more in-person programming while continuing the online option, and we could have as many as 1000 participants.”

TFT plans to provide classes primarily in-person, however, the virtual option became a welcome alternative to help the program reach its ultimate goal of serving all Coachella Valley elementary schools. Whether in-person or online, the program’s goals are the same – to improve a child’s literacy and academic performance, unlock the power of imagination in a child, develop a child’s appreciation for the arts, and broaden a child’s vision for the future.

TFT was founded in 1999 and since has been praised by school principals and teachers that say TFT programs help boost academic performance, increase attendance, reduce risky behaviors, promote physical and mental health, and provide a safe, structured environment for the children of working parents.

“It’s great to hear endorsements from educators and also to see first-hand the joy that Tools for Tomorrow brings kids through art, music and theatre classes,” said Catharine Reed, Vice President of Charitable Programs for the H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation.

“Wonderful TFT teachers and mentors show students various ways to express themselves and are ensuring that kids are being seen and acknowledged,” said Jerry Upham, General Manager of Gulf California Broadcast Company, which owns and operates KESQ News Channel 3 and KPSP CBS Local 2.

Through the Coachella Valley Spotlight partnership with the H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation and News Channel 3, Tools for Tomorrow was featured on News Channel 3 programming, in public service announcements and on kesq.com throughout May. For more information, visit [www.toolsfortomorrow.org](http://www.toolsfortomorrow.org) or call 760-601-3954.

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**About Gulf California Broadcast Company**

Gulf California Broadcast Company owns and operates five TV stations in the Palm Springs market including the local ABC affiliate (KESQ) and CBS affiliate (KPSP). GCBC is committed to providing the community with local news and information along with the connectivity that brings people and organizations together. As part of this ongoing commitment to the community, GCBC is proud to partner with the Berger Foundation to present the Coachella Valley Spotlight, which supports local charities.

**About the H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation**

*The H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation is a private foundation that generously supports educational and other charitable projects.*