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100+ WOMEN WHO CARE VALLEY OF THE SUN SUPPORTS ICAN: POSITIVE PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

BY ANGIE RAMIREZ

Families living on incomes below the federal poverty level are often subject to negative influences that can have immediate and life-long effects for children. These influences include gang activity, substance abuse, food insecurity, and inadequate access to health care. Youth in these families often struggle in school and lack opportunities to develop life skills to overcome these challenges. For these families, community programs offering free support can be life-changing.

ICAN: Positive Programs for Youth serves these low-income families, offering a youth development program that provides a powerful combination of life skills training, literacy and homework support, STEAM education, recreation, social-emotional learning, and workforce development opportunities. ICAN provides free programming for youth ages 5 through 18 after school during the school year and full days during summer and breaks. For parents struggling to make ends meet and to afford basic needs such as food, housing, and health care, having access to free after-school and summer programming for their children can be a dream come true.

By the numbers: ICAN serves over 560 East Valley youth at its three Chandler sites and two Mesa sites. Over 85% of the youth are minority populations, primarily Hispanic. Over

85% of enrolled families report incomes below the federal poverty level. 82% of parents say access to ICAN's program had a positive impact on family finances. 85% of parents report they have seen a positive impact on their child's social-emotional development over the past quarter.

In August, ICAN was chosen to receive a quarterly donation from the East Valley members of 100+ Women Who Care Valley of the Sun. 100+ WWC is a group of women who meet quarterly to learn about local nonprofit organizations and then vote on which organization will receive their quarterly donation. Each member donates \$100 to the chosen charity. 100+ WWC has donated over 1 million dollars to charities since their inception. They donated \$11,250 to ICAN this quarter. Upon receipt of this donation, CEO Shelby Pederson stated, "We are so thrilled to be the recipients of the 100+ Women Who Care giving circle! Our out-of-school programs are growing quickly and these donations will help allow us to engage more youth!"

100+ WWC East Valley meets in Chandler at the Forum Event Complex at 2301 S. Stearman Drive each quarter. Visit 100wcvallyofthesun.org for more information and to register for an upcoming event. Learn more about this quarter's beneficiary at icanaz.org.