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ALLIANCE HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION REIMAGINES PHILANTHROPIC GIVING WITH  
UNPRECEDENTED TRANSFER OF WEALTH TO IMPERIAL VALLEY WELLNESS  
FOUNDATION

*\$7.5 million contribution will support a historically disinvested rural community in  
Southern California in perpetuity.*

**[EL CENTRO, CA]**—[The Imperial Valley Wellness Foundation](#) (IVWF), announced today that Alliance Healthcare Foundation (AHF) has transferred 10% of its endowment to IVWF. These funds will be locally held and managed in perpetuity in rural Imperial Valley. IVWF focuses on the health and wellness of vulnerable populations with a long-term vision of making the Imperial Valley a better place to live for all.

While AHF has invested more than one million dollars in capacity building support, technical assistance, and pass-through grant funding to IVWF since 2017, this contribution—representing 10 percent of AHF’s corpus—allows greater autonomy for the rural community, which faces extreme inequities when compared to the rest of California. Research shows that more than 30 percent of Imperial Valley’s children face food insecurity, despite the region ranking in the top 10 percent for all agricultural sales in the United States. Farms in the region produce two-thirds of the vegetables on dinner tables and in grocery stores in the US in the winter months.

“IVWF has become a valued partner of AHF over the years, and we feel that the time has come to take meaningful action in support of our shared goals,” said Sarah Lyman, Executive Director of AHF. “Our board of directors felt very strongly that the best way to support the region was to

cede control of AHF’s contributions, and instead allow those who stand to benefit from the endowment decide where and how resources should be allocated.”

Encompassing 4,400 square miles between San Diego and County and the state of Arizona, Imperial County is the least populous—and most underfunded—county in the state and suffers from a significant lack of resources for its 180,000 residents. Per capita income is only \$17,590, fifty percent less than the per capita income for all of California, with a poverty rate of 25 percent, and unemployment at 20% percent. Additionally, the air quality is very poor and has caused Imperial Valley to have the highest rates of childhood asthma in the US.

As a Rural Development Hub, IVWF serves as a connector, convener, and change-maker in Imperial County. The organization, serving as both a grantmaker and a trusted intermediary for other funders, bestows grants in the areas of health and wellness, community/civic engagement, and nonprofit capacity building, and also facilitates Learning Exchanges, where individuals and organizations gather to learn, share, and discover ways to work together. AHF’s generous contribution represents an evolution in the partnership between IVWF and AHF, moving from a grantor-grantee relationship to a partnership based on peer-to-peer learning.

“The most impactful community work is accomplished when community stakeholders experience self-determination, strength, and sustainability, and IVWF strives to achieve all three,” said Roque Barros, Executive Director of IVWF. “AHF has been instrumental in helping us lay a solid foundation for growth and prosperity in our community, and we look forward to continuing to work alongside them in this new era for Imperial County.”

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### **About Imperial Valley Wellness Foundation and its partner Alliance Healthcare Foundation**

Alliance Healthcare Foundation (AHF), based in San Diego County and Imperial Valley Wellness Foundation (IVWF), based in neighboring Imperial County, are forming an equitable partnership as a new community strategy to increase the quality of life for vulnerable populations and disinvested communities in Imperial County. An equitable partnership signals a transition away from the traditional grantor-grantee relationship to a true partnership based on trust, transparency and accountability that includes sharing information, talent, capital and other resources, in pursuit of common goals.

**About Imperial Valley Wellness Foundation.** Recognizing a need for more local funding to support promising health initiatives, a group of Imperial Valley civic leaders joined forces to create the [Imperial Valley Wellness Foundation \(IVWF\)](https://www.ivwf.org) in 2018. IVWF is a tax-exempt public charity under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code formed to advance the health and wellness of vulnerable populations in Imperial County. IVWF aims to make Imperial Valley *A Better Place to Live for All*. Visit [www.ivwf.org](https://www.ivwf.org).

**About Alliance Healthcare Foundation.** Working to advance health and wellness for the most vulnerable in San Diego and Imperial counties through collaborative funding, convening and advocacy. Alliance Healthcare Foundation (AHF) envisions a San Diego and Imperial County region where equitable health resources lead to universal health and well-being. AHF believes

wellness is a state of complete physical, mental, spiritual, economic, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. To learn more about Alliance Healthcare Foundation, please visit our website at: [www.alliancehf.org](http://www.alliancehf.org)