



*Linking Hands*  
*Helping Our Homeless Youth*

## Leadership Las Cruces to raise awareness and aid to local homeless youth

**LAS CRUCES** – Leadership Las Cruces, a professional development program sponsored by the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce, has graduated hundreds of participants and expanded their leadership pursuits. Each Leadership Las Cruces Class is required to complete a Community Class Project with this year's project being developed and executed for the benefit of Project Link. Project Link serves students within Las Cruces Public Schools, who are homeless. The purpose of the project is to raise awareness and resources for Project Link and the Greater Las Cruces Chamber Heritage Foundation.

The past decade has seen a rise in the homeless population in childhood and teenage residents within Las Cruces and Dona Ana County. This rise is due in part because of a growing number of parents and caretakers being forced out of children's lives due to deportation, incarceration, or lack of adequate living space, and various other reasons. Teenage residents are particularly vulnerable as they are not the priority of federal and state funded programs, are seen as adults without the privileges of legal adulthood and have a social stigma placed on them by peer groups to reject assistance. While the Las Cruces community is always willing to lend a helping hand to the homeless population, teenage residents are often overlooked. This target population faces food security, social, and educational challenges due to their situation on top of the stress of being an adolescent.

**Linking Hands~ Helping Our Homeless Youth** is a fundraising, clothing, and supply drive event created by the 25<sup>th</sup> Leadership Las Cruces Class to aid Project Link. The event will be on Thursday, May 10<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6pm at the Las Cruces Convention Center. This fundraising event will include live entertainment, silent auction, hors d'oeuvres and cash bar. Tickets can be purchased at the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce, or at our community outreach booth on Saturday mornings at the Las Cruces Farmer's Market starting March 10<sup>th</sup> and running through May 5<sup>th</sup>. Donations are also being accepted in the form of clothing and other everyday necessities. Drop-off stations have been set up throughout the Las Cruces community. These locations are:

- American Document Services (300A North 17<sup>th</sup> Street)
- Home Instead Senior Care (880 S. Telshor Blvd. Ste 200)
- Pioneer Bank (3831 E. Lohman, 2900 North Roadrunner Parkway, 705 E. University #A)
- Vescovo Toyota (935 S. Valley)
- Western Heritage Bank (230 S. Alameda Blvd.)
- Farmer's Market (Saturdays' Mar. 10<sup>th</sup> – May 5<sup>th</sup>.)

Needs of the Las Cruces homeless teenage population include but are not limited to:

- Food
- Shelter
- Clothing
- Education and School Supplies
- Hygiene Supplies
- Resources for Preparing and Securing Employment

All donations for Linking Hands~ Helping Our Homeless Youth will need to be received by Thursday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. We are also accepting monetary donations at the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce and at our community outreach booth at the Las Cruces Farmer's Market

For more information, contact Brandi Misquez, Executive Assistant to the President at the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce at (575) 524-1968 or [bmisquez@lascruces.org](mailto:bmisquez@lascruces.org)