



## **Paying It Forward Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow**

*The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians donates \$50,000 to Family Service Association of Redlands to provide assistance to families, individuals in need*

**February 4, 2013 (REDLANDS, CA)** — Nearly two years ago, Deborah Hodges was an ordinary college student – juggling classes, studying for finals and working to make ends meet— when she discovered that she had breast cancer. Not knowing how she would afford her medical bills, rent and gas to travel to her treatments, the then 58-year-old looked to Family Service Association of Redlands (FSA) for help.

FSA provided Deborah with gas vouchers and rental and food assistance, making it possible for her to begin treatment of her aggressive cancer within weeks.

“This was a life or death situation and I don’t know what I would have done without FSA,” Deborah said.

Today, Deborah is going on two years of being cancer-free, working on her Master’s degree at Cal State, San Bernardino and volunteering at FSA and her cancer support group. And now thanks to a \$50,000 grant provided to FSA by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, even more families and individuals facing similar crises will get the help they need.

“We cannot thank San Manuel enough,” said Sylvia Garcia, case worker at FSA. “This grant comes at a time when we are experiencing an upswing in requests and a 57 percent decrease in federal grants to assist our community.”

San Manuel’s donation will support FSA’s mission to promote self-sufficiency in San Bernardino County where the unemployment rate has been higher than the United States as a whole for the last 10 years and the total number of homeless people has increased by 66 percent in just two years. This grant will provide not only the immediate necessities of food, clothing and shelter but support the FSA’s 89 percent success rate of moving families to permanent housing in San Bernardino County.

“Without a place to call home, a family’s outlook for the future is clouded by the uncertainties of making it from one day to the next,” said San Manuel Chairperson Carla Rodriguez. “San Manuel seeks to contribute to a healthy social and economic outlook for this region by focusing on families who need a helping-hand so they can continue to be a significant part of the workplace and schools.”

While this contribution will help the FSA with its current mission, the tribe and organization’s roots go much deeper, Rodriguez said. San Manuel and FSA’s relationship dates back to 1891 when FSA founder Albert Smiley and members of the Board of Indian Commissioners met with tribal leader Santos Manuel and aided in the establishment of the Santos Manuel Indian Reservation<sup>1</sup>. In the decades that followed, the FSA helped the tribe through its century of struggles with poverty by providing the tribe with food and clothing.

“This gift is our way of continuing this positive relationship with FSA,” Rodriguez said.

#### **About the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians**

The San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians is a federally recognized American Indian tribe located near the city of Highland, Calif. The Serrano Indians are the indigenous people of the San Bernardino highlands, passes, valleys and mountains who share a common language and culture. The San Manuel reservation was established in 1891 and recognized as a sovereign nation with the right of self-government. As an indigenous community the origins and history of the San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians stem from our relationship with the land and to all who share it. Since ancient times we have expressed ourselves through a culture of giving. Today, San Manuel is able to answer the call of Yawa’ (Serrano word meaning “to act on one’s beliefs”) through partnerships with charitable organizations. We have drawn upon our history, knowledge, expertise and cultural values to direct our philanthropic giving in our local region, as well as to Native American causes nationwide. For more information, visit <http://www.sanmanuel-nsn.gov>.

#### **San Manuel’s Charitable Giving Program**

San Manuel’s charitable giving program supports organizations that provide services in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Applications are also accepted from Tribal Governments and Tribal nonprofit organizations throughout the United States. Resources are directed within four areas of program focus to benefit these communities and improve quality of life for adults, children and families. Giving priorities include Education, Health, Economic Development and Special Projects. Applications in each area are considered through the lens of demonstrated community need, and an organization’s capacity to meet that need.

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<sup>1</sup> Albert K. Smiley, Charles C. Painter and Joseph B. Moore to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 12, 1891, A.K. Smiley Library.