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TURNAROUND OF SOUTH LA PARK LEADS TO HEALTHCARE VICTORY

FORMER SITE FOR SEX, DRUGS, AND CRIME NOW CRITICAL TO BUILDING A SAFER AND HEALTHIER COMMUNITY

WHAT: A revitalized South LA park is the site for the Spring Into Health “EGGstravaganza” on Saturday, April 4th, 2015 from 10AM to 2PM at Martin Luther King Jr. Park

“We worked so hard to clean up King Park, I can’t believe this is a place where I can bring my family...that wouldn’t have been the case just a few years ago”, says resident Karla Acosta. “This is major for our neighborhood. Now that people feel safe at our own park we can start having programs like the Spring Into Health event to make sure our community is healthy”.

Six years ago community residents, Community Coalition and other groups came together with the goal of transforming the King Estates neighborhood by revitalizing Martin Luther King Jr. Park and cleaning up nearby nuisance businesses that endangered the safety of residents. Their grassroots success has ensured that the park is now a site for reducing health disparities through a \$3 million Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) Initiative grant awarded to Community Coalition by the Center for Disease Control. The grant aims to support public health efforts to reduce chronic disease, promote healthier lifestyles, reduce health disparities and control health care spending.

“We know that transforming King Park was the first step in building a healthy community”, says Aurea Montes-Rodriguez, Interim President and CEO of Community Coalition. “We’re excited to be working with the REACH Initiative to comprehensively address community health. A major part of that is our partnership with the T.H.E. Clinic; they are a critical component of the Spring Into Health “EGGstravaganza” and will be working with Community Coalition to implement our ‘park prescription’ program”.

Rodriguez is alluding to the innovative park prescription program, which aims to tackle health issues associated with living in a food desert. Local clinics can assign members of the community specific exercises to combat diabetes, obesity and other negative health factors. Due to the turnaround of the King Park, it is slated to be one of two sites to host the program.

The Spring Into Health “EGGstravaganza” is a free event open to the public. Families will enjoy a healthy and active day at the park, with an Easter egg hunt for the kids, music, health enrollment workshops, and fun activities for the entire family. Families also have the opportunity to enroll with the Affordable Care Act and receive free check-ups.

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