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PRESS RELEASE

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Lacey Kendall

Faculty member at CSUSB Palm Desert Campus works to save historic black churches by utilizing technology

PALM DESERT, Calif. — This past March, Lacey Kendall, a local broadcaster, media consultant and faculty member at the Cal State San Bernardino, Palm Desert Campus, saw a need to help local churches and called upon friends to help put together a durable, affordable, easy-to-install and easy-to-operate system that would help churches stream to their congregations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Many of their members are sick with the virus, plus the fear of getting sick has also caused others to stop engaging. Seniors in their congregations who have been with the churches for decades, have dropped out due to a lack of technology skills,” said Kendall.

In June, the Church in the Cove Community Presbyterian Church in Cathedral City recommended the technology kit created by Kendall and her three friends, James Trotter, assistant director of Academic Technologies and Innovation at CSUSB; Paul Allen, an engineer with the Sweetwater Corporation; and Craig King, information technologies director at Sunrise Christian Church, for a \$150,000 grant to specifically help Presbyterian churches in need. These funds ultimately helped save more than 30 Southern California churches.

With the media package they put together, Kendall said, “members of any congregation would not have to download, purchase or learn any software. They would just click a link and a viewer would open up with a crisp picture and great audio on their phone or whatever other device they may have. Voila! They’re back in church!”

After helping those congregations with much-needed technology, Kendall says that she now wants to help African-American congregations struggling during the pandemic as well, so she has begun reaching out to community members for help in raising funds.

Kendall is looking to help three historic black churches in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties who have been hit-hard by COVID-19, to continue to serve their communities by utilizing this technology, but only if the funds become available. The cost of equipment for each congregation is \$1,700.

Kendall is not a member of any of the congregations, but says that she and friends in the media technology field are helping “because all of these churches are in such peril.”

One of the churches Kendall would like to help is the First Community Baptist Church of Desert Hot Springs, the oldest Baptist church in the Coachella Valley, which was recently attacked by vandals who broke windows and spray-painted the outside of their chapel.

Other local churches on her list include the First Baptist Church in Palm Springs and the New Life Christian Church of Fontana, which was recently robbed during their absence from the facilities. All three churches provide community-supporting programs for the hungry and homeless.

“These churches offer so much support for our communities when we are suffering, but who helps them?” asked Kendall.

Kendall is a member of the Building Wealth Initiative IE; a 501c3 non-profit that has offered to oversee and distribute donations to sustain the Save the Church Technology Project.

For more information about the Save the Church Technology Project, or to support their work, contact Lacey Kendall via email at its909creative@yahoo.com or call (909) 890-6960.

The CSUSB Palm Desert Campus offers bachelor’s and master’s degrees, a doctorate in educational leadership, and teaching credentials and certificates. With more than 1,600 students, it is the Coachella Valley’s four-year public university and plays a vital role in educating and training the region’s growing population.

For more information about the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, contact Mike Singer in the Office of Strategic Communication at msinger@csusb.edu or (760) 341-2883, ext. 78107, or visit the campus website at www.csusb.edu/pdc.