

WE DEFINE THE *Future*



## PRESS RELEASE

11-12-21

Contact: Mike Singer

(760) 341-2883, ext. 78107

[msinger@csusb.edu](mailto:msinger@csusb.edu)



### **Grand Opening to be held Nov. 17 for digital iHub**

PALM DESERT, Calif. – A digital iHub, created to bring an economic boost to the Coachella Valley will have its grand opening on Nov. 17 across from the Cal State San Bernardino (CSUSB) Palm Desert Campus.

The Palm Desert iHub, which is a collaboration of the City of Palm Desert, the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership and CSUSB, will feature university programs in cybersecurity, hospitality management and entrepreneurship as part of expanded educational offerings to the Coachella Valley to increase the level of diversity among enrolled students and allow more members of underrepresented communities to engage in the various fields.

“The addition of these three state-of-the-art programs will greatly enhance our Palm Desert Campus and give our students much needed experience and opportunities that will help them after graduation as they start their careers,” said CSUSB President Tomás D. Morales. “This is part of our partnership with the City of Palm Desert and the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership that we believe will serve as an economic boost to the region.”

“Our expansion to the Palm Desert Campus is another part of our efforts to tap hidden talents and help solve the national cybersecurity workforce crisis. This program will help improve the pipeline of critically needed cyber skills coming from the Coachella Valley,” said Tony Coulson, a professor of information and decision sciences and executive director of CSUSB’s Cybersecurity Center. “CSUSB is helping provide national leadership in these initiatives.”

The Cybersecurity Center will be mentoring students, specifically veterans and adults who need “retooling” to meet the needs of cybersecurity and government service, Coulson said.

To help in the recently expanded cybersecurity program, information decision sciences assistant professor Denise Kinsey is teaching cybersecurity full-time at the Palm Desert Campus, said Coulson. The center is planning to hold on campus expos and high-tech research projects at the PDC.

The cybersecurity program along with hospitality management and entrepreneurship will be operated out of the Digital iHub, which is located across the street from the Palm Desert campus.

The Digital iHub is expected to bring an economic boost to the valley. The Palm Desert City Council voted unanimously to establish the Digital iHub after going through an extensive long-term planning process that identified highly impactful actions that will diversify and elevate the economy of Palm Desert and the entire Coachella Valley.

“The Palm Desert Digital iHub will attract high-paying, environmentally friendly jobs and provide internship opportunities for students, equipping them for similar work,” said Palm Desert Mayor Kathleen Kelly. “These gains are huge strides toward the city’s goal of creating a more diverse and durable economy with opportunities for all.”

The Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP) was selected by the City of Palm Desert to enter into a five-year agreement to manage the Palm Desert Digital iHub. CVEP has managed the Palm Springs iHub and Accelerator Campus for the entire nine years of their existence and has attracted or inspired nearly 90 technology-based companies to enter the program.

“This partnership will immeasurably strengthen the Palm Desert iHub along with the region’s educational skill set,” said CVEP chairperson and former Palm Desert Mayor Jan Harnik. “We are focused on broadening our economic base and providing opportunities to our region and are thrilled to be bringing much needed high-tech expertise and the high quality, well-paid jobs through this iHub to our community and the entire Coachella Valley.”

CVEP CEO and veteran technology entrepreneur, Joe Wallace, who studied cybersecurity at the Harvard University extension school in preparation to mentor a new group of startups, said, “The addition of cybersecurity to the offerings at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus is the first STEM-based high technology program for a four-year public university in the Coachella Valley. The potential for transforming our economy in a way that prepares students and adults

alike for high paying jobs may be its highest in the history of greater Palm Springs. This will empower us to break the cycle of dependence on lower paying business sectors that have seasonally fluctuating demand for workers.”

“The Palm Desert Digital iHub will have access to the CENIC optical fiber network that can be configured to operate at bandwidths up to 100 mbps, which is on the order of 1,000 times the speed of the currently offered options in the Coachella Valley,” Wallace added.

**About PDC:** 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](mailto:msinger@csusb.edu) or (760) 341-2883, ext. 78107, or visit the PDC website at [www.csusb.edu/pdc](http://www.csusb.edu/pdc).