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Riverside, Perris and Jurupa Valley slated to receive funding to support health

Thousands of residents in three Riverside County cities could see their health improve because of a new grant that focuses on healthy eating and the promotion of physical activity.

The funding proposal was approved by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors Tuesday, Dec. 17. Riverside, Perris and Jurupa Valley will receive a combined \$3.8 million over three years through the *Network for a Healthy California* grant administered by the Riverside County Department of Public Health. Riverside will receive a total of \$2.15 million; Perris \$934,229; and Jurupa Valley \$725,000.

The money will be used to enhance nutrition education, including classes encouraging the consumption of healthier beverages, training of youth to become involved in local health projects, and fund neighborhood food access research. Allocations were made based on the city's number of CalFresh-eligible residents, and readiness of city leadership to pursue healthy cities designations.

Riverside Mayor Rusty Bailey welcomed the funding and said it would be put to good use.

"Network for Healthy California programs will improve access to and knowledge of healthy foods that are available to Riverside residents and also improve access in key Riverside neighborhoods where it is most needed."

The cities will designate a portion of the funds for their respective school districts and are also encouraged to partner with community-based organizations. The cities are currently in planning phases and will begin programs and outreach in 2014.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch welcomed the funding and said it will be used to support the community's health.

"As we move forward, we will continue to stress the importance of eating nutritious food, getting out to exercise and taking control of your overall health," said Busch. "A healthy community is a happy community."

Other cities within Riverside County, such as Hemet and those within the Coachella Valley will continue to receive nutrition and health promotion services from the Department of Public Health. Community representatives are encouraged to join our Riverside County Health Coalition at www.healthyriversidecounty.org to get connected to the countywide movement. For more information about the *Network for a Healthy California*, please visit www.cachampionsforchange.net