



April 25, 2024

The California Aquatic Therapy & Wellness Center (DBA) Pools of Hope  
6801 Long Beach Boulevard  
Long Beach, CA 90805

**RE: Letter of Support for the Port of Long Beach Community Grants Program**

To Whom It May Concern:

The California Aquatic Therapy & Wellness Center (DBA) Pools of Hope is pleased to support the Port of Long Beach submission to the 2024 IAPH Sustainability Awards. Founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1963, Pools of Hope is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that provides aquatic therapy services for children, adults, and seniors with and without a disability. Pools of Hope's mission is to provide a warm-water facility promoting whole life wellness in our community.

Pools of Hope takes a holistic approach to improving the quality of life for more than 4000 individuals in a therapeutic environment each year. Eighty percent of Pools of Hope clients are living at or below 133% of the Federal Poverty Level and 55% qualify for free or reduced-price programs. Our clientele is 40% African American, 30% Hispanic, 20% Caucasian, 5% Asian and 5% Pacific Islander. Individuals participating in Pools of Hope's programs experience symptoms from a variety of health conditions including, brain injury, arthritis, heart disease, diabetes, fibromyalgia, stroke, limited mobility, chronic pain, orthopedic conditions, and morbid obesity. Twenty percent of our clients are children and youth ages 0-18, of which 10% have a physical or developmental disability, including but not limited to autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, spina bifida and Down syndrome.

The Community Grants Program, established and administered by the Port of Long Beach, has provided tangible health benefits to low-income communities, and has enabled Pools of Hope to expand its own services and reach within the North Long Beach community. In 2017, Pools of Hope successfully applied for a grant under the Port's Community Health solicitation in the amount of \$150,000 to implement the Respiratory Health Improvement Project (RHIP). RHIP included a partnership with the LAC+USC Breathmobile, which provided asthma care

services to school-aged children from the under-resourced neighborhoods including North Long Beach, Paramount, and Compton. Over the past three years, Pools of Hope has built relationships with numerous schools, community organizations, and city agencies as a result of the RHIP Program. In 2019, Pools of Hope and the LAC+USC Breathmobile screened and treated 234 students for asthma and respiratory issues and provided education and outreach to 5,000 beneficiaries. Benefits noted by participants in the RHIP Program include reductions in pain, difficulty breathing, and anxiety, and improved quality of life, wellness, and mobility. Many youths in the area cannot play outside because of asthma. Just having the ability to socialize, play and be active is a qualitative gain. This also means that children will be less likely to go to the emergency room or urgent care, less in need of emergency medicine, less risk of attacks, which all become costly.

In 2021, Pools of Hope applied for a grant under the Port's Community Grants Program in the amount of \$649,195 to expand on our existing RHIP program in partnership with St. Mary Medical Center. RHIP was awarded the full grant request, and the revised program commenced in January 2022. Since 2022, RHIP has screened and treated 313 students for asthma and respiratory issues and provided education and outreach to 50,540 sensitive beneficiaries.

Without the Port of Long Beach support, we would not have the resources needed to implement a project of this scale. The Port is a demonstrated leader for their innovative, and equity focused program.

We look forward to continuing to partner with the Port on RHIP, and strongly urge IAPH to recommend the Port of Long Beach Community Grants Program for award.

Sincerely,



Patricia Dixon, Executive Director  
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