



Perris News

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Lowes "Toolbox for Education" Program Provides Additional Funding for Perris Students

City of Perris representatives and administrators from three City school districts sat down this week with representatives of Lowe's to talk about a matter near and dear to all present —getting more money for deserving students and school campuses.

Lowe's, the nationally known home improvement company, operates a 1.2 million square regional distribution center on Ramona Expressway in the City.

The company employs 587 people, many from Perris, and distributes Lowe's products to retail stores in California, Arizona, Nevada and Hawaii. Through its Lowe's Foundation, the company disburses millions of dollars annually to schools and individual students and for worthwhile community projects.

Grants from Lowe's are awarded in several categories and range from \$2,000 to \$100,000.

The City has already benefitted from a \$50,000 donation that helped build a football complex at Patriot Field in 2006. Mayor Pro-Tem Rita Rogers helped organize Thursday's meeting. Lowe's representatives outlined the process for applying to receive "Toolbox for Education" and "Toolbox for Education Large Grants," "Lowe's Scholarship grants for deserving students and community assistance through the Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation.

"With the state cutting back on its education budget, it is vital for cities and schools to find other sources of funding," Rogers said. "It's great for the City, our schools and for Lowe's it's a chance to become a backbone of our City. I am very excited. It's another chance for our City to improve. As City leaders, we much all pitch in and seek out new sources of revenue."

Rogers was joined by Mayor Daryl Busch, City Manager Richard Belmudez and Deputy City Manager Darren Madkin. Representatives of the Val Verde Unified School District, the Perris Elementary School District and the Perris Union High School District also attended the workshop.

"We want to do anything we can to help our City," Busch said.

Lowe's Foundation grants for education have paid for new libraries, science labs, media centers and outdoor classrooms. One school in New Orleans received money to construct a "rebirth garden" after Hurricane Katrina. In the past five years, Lowe's "Toolbox for Education" grants paid for than \$17 million in improvements to more than 4,000 schools.

Belmudez thanked Lowe's for helping fund Patriot Field, which has become known throughout Riverside County as a premier sports complex. He said he went to speak to parents at the field on a chilly night in October and found more than 400 youngsters at football practice and a large number of parents looking on.

"Your efforts are appreciated," Belmudez said. "It's heartening to see the work come together." After the grant workshop, the City contingent toured the huge distribution center, which is the size of 28 football fields. The Perris location is one of the top-performing distribution centers in the country and at any time houses more than \$90 million worth of merchandise. An on-site medical office is among the amenities. Lowe's employees receive flu inoculations, blood-pressure screenings and can have prescriptions filled.

The distribution center also is hiring additional employees. Interested job seekers can apply at the Regional Distribution Center, 3984 Indian Avenue, or by visiting www.lowes.com/careers.



The Mayor Pro-Tem inspects a forklift used at the Center.



Deputy City Manager Darren Madkin talks about the Lowe's commitment to making Patriot Field a reality as Mayor Pro-Tem Rogers, Mayor Daryl Busch and City Manager Richard Belmudez listen.



Lowe's Luke Fuller takes Rogers, Belmudez and Madkin on a tour of the 1.2 million-square-foot Regional Distribution Center.



Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Rita Rogers addresses the Lowe's grants workshop: "We must all pitch in."