George L. & Julia Argyros - A $20 Million Gift and a Lifetime of Achievement

George and Julia Argyros' recent gift of $20 million to Eisenhower Medical Center has enabled a vision to become a reality in the form of the Eisenhower George and Julia Argyros Health Center in La Quinta. On January 18, 2008, a groundbreaking ceremony will be held for the threestory, 85,000 square-foot facility. The Eisenhower Argyros Health Center, expected to open in July 2009, will feature an urgent care center, imaging technology, a health and wellness center, physician offices, pharmacy, physical rehabilitation services and radiation oncology services.

"George and Julia's generous gift allows Eisenhower to provide for the health care needs of one of the Valley's fastest growing cities," explains Harry M. Goldstein, Chairman of the Board, Eisenhower Medical Center. Trustee Harry Rinker, who spearheaded the effort to connect George and Julia Argyros with Eisenhower's largest off-campus development prospect, says, "In honor of their dedication to Eisenhower Medical Center's mission, we are naming the health center building and the overall site for George and Julia."

George and Julia Argyros are noted philanthropists, donating time and money to causes that are close to their hearts, including health care, education, neglected children and the arts. George achieved success in real estate in the 1960s and is one of Orange County's most prominent businessmen. Says George Argyros, "The pleasure isn't so much in dwelling on past successes, but in planning new ones…If we can make a positive contribution in whatever way, that's how we derive satisfaction."

For George Argyros, success was earned through hard work. "We were rich in love and support," he says of his family. Growing up of modest means in Detroit, Michigan and later Pasadena, California, this grandson of Greek immigrants began taking on responsibility early in life. He earned his first few dollars as many children do—by cutting lawns and delivering newspapers. By age 14, George was ready for more responsibility. He took on a second job at a grocery store in Pasadena for just 25 cents an hour. As a senior in high school, he worked nearly full time to support himself and help his family, and he went on to work more than 50 hours a week as grocery department manager to help pay his way through Chapman College. "It was difficult, but it gave me a sense of self-worth,"Argyros reflects. "I think if we make life too easy, we don't appreciate it. I believe we appreciate things more when we're on the edge of our seats."

With a degree in business and economics, George became licensed in securities, insurance and real estate. Julia was preparing to work as a speech therapist for children and worked toward her credential in elementary education. Wanting to build a life together, George and Julia made the necessary sacrifices in order for George to get his footing in the business world. He invested in real estate and started selling and leasing land to oil companies for service stations and went on to purchase land for restaurants and retail development.

In 1962, George and Julia were married and began their family. In 1963, Argyros opened his own brokerage office, and by 1968, he had established his own company, later to be known as Arnel Development Company. To date, the company has been involved in the development, construction and management of more than 5,500 apartment units, in addition to several million square feet of commercial, office, and industrial properties. Argyros later became a general partner and principal financial partner in Westar Capital, a private investment company that provides capital for the acquisition of established growth companies.

George's and Julia's diverse interests have made their life together far from ordinary. From 1981 to 1987, George was co-owner of west coast based airline, AirCal, and from 1981 to 1989, he owned the Seattle Mariners baseball club. In the 1990s, Julia, one of the top female fly-fishing guides in the country, established a fly-fishing school for women only in Sun Valley, Idaho, which she still runs each summer.

Parents of three grown children and grandparents of six, George and Julia Argyros have been committed to giving to others as they achieve their own personal successes. Julia is a passionate philanthropist who has been recognized with several awards for her dedication to volunteerism and service from such organizations as the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of America®, Boy Scouts of America, and Philharmonic Society of Orange County. She is the president of the Argyros Foundation and has served as a board member and trustee for a variety of organizations, including the Orange County Performing Arts Center, South Coast Repertory, The Luminaires of the Doheny Eye Institute and Orangewood Children's Foundation. Julia's interests and distinguished record of giving served as an excellent background for an important role she would have as George accepted new challenges in his career. In November 2001, George Argyros was sworn in as the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain and the Principality of Andorra. "We need to inspire people to reach high and dare to dreambig dreams."

In addition to serving his country, George Argyros has also given his time by serving on numerous boards. From 1976 to 2001, Argyros served as chairman of the board of trustees of Chapman University, where he continues to serve as a board member. He is a trustee of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. and a board member of the United States Chamber of Commerce, as well as a member of the Library of Congress OpenWorld Leadership Board. Argyros is former chairman of the Richard Nixon Library & Birthplace Foundation, founding chairman for the Nixon Center in Washington, D.C., and former chairman and board member of the Orange County Council Boy Scouts of America. He is a member of the Board of Directors for First American Corporation (NYSE); DST Systems, Inc. (NYSE); Doskocil Manufacturing Company; and Igloo Products Corp. Prior to his ambassadorship, Argyros was a member of the Board of Directors for Rockwell International Corporation (NYSE) and The Newhall Land and Farming Company (NYSE).

An organization important to both George and Julia is the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans. In 1993, George Argyros was inducted as a lifetime member of the organization, which has honored such prominent members as President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Dr. Maya Angelou, Bob Hope, Gene Autry, OprahWinfrey, and Eisenhower Medical Center Trustees Jack Grundhofer, Richard Knowlton and Harry Rinker. Argyros served as the Association's president and chief executive officer from 1995 to1998 and as chairman from 1998 to 2000, and is currently serving as treasurer and chairman emeritus. Through the Horatio Alger Association, George and Julia Argyros established the first national scholarship program in the country exclusively for veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

"I have been greatly inspired by the Horatio Alger organization and its members," says George Argyros. "It has been an honor and privilege for Julia and me to participate in helping our young scholars pursue their dreams and goals. The American Dream is all about risk, reward, hard work, commitment, and dedication —the ideals the great author, Horatio Alger, repeatedly wrote about. Fight courageously for the principles you believe in. Use every resource at your command to improve and advance yourself. Create better lives for your families and work hard for the sake of your communities and your faith.We need to inspire people to reach high and dare to dream big dreams."

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