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## PRESS RELEASE

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*FLOWS program participants at Andreas Canyon and the Salton Sea on January 14-15, 2026.*

### **FLOWS program and CSUSB Palm Desert Campus launch new partnership advancing desert-based environmental learning**

PALM DESERT, Calif. – The FLOWS (Field-based Learning, Outreach and Workforce Scholarship) Program, housed within California State University, San Bernardino's Institute for Watershed Resiliency, has announced a new collaboration with the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus to expand community-driven environmental workforce training across Southern California.

FLows connects CSU students with hands-on geospatial research, field-based learning and service opportunities alongside Tribal nations, community organizations and water resource professionals. The partnership with the Palm Desert Campus strengthens the program's presence in desert regions, supporting learning experiences focused on water management, land stewardship and climate resilience.

The 2025-26 FLOWS cohort includes eight students from CSUSB and CSU Northridge and is supported by a network of campus and community partners.

In January, fellows participated in a field immersion in the Coachella Valley, working with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Native American Land Conservancy and the Audubon Society to study regional water systems, restoration efforts and Indigenous governance.

Led by Jennifer Alford, director, and Danielle Bram, associate director, FLOWS bridges higher education, applied research and community priorities to prepare the next generation of environmental professionals. The program is donation-based, allowing local partners to directly invest in student training and long-term stewardship outcomes.

“It was a very educational and eye-opening experience,” said Monique Vargas, an environmental studies major at CSUSB and 2025-26 FLOWS Fellow. “FLOWS was able to provide very valuable information from fellow cohorts and educators alike that gave us the opportunity to see how water conservation impacts all people and animals in the long run through different perspectives. I was able to see the bigger picture and realize just how important it is to advocate for clean water and protect it for all those who need it.”

“The FLOWS program that took place in the Coachella Valley was a wonderful experience for students that gave us practical knowledge and skills essential for careers in the environmental field,” said Matthew Scully, an environmental studies major at CSUSB and 2025-26 FLOWS Fellow. “By connecting with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, as well as the Native American Land Conservancy, we learned about the history of the Cahuilla people, the intricacies of tribes being sovereign nations and how those tribes work to protect their sacred lands and tribal members. We also learned the value of traditional ecological knowledge, which is something that will play a vital role in future environmental efforts and management.”

By expanding collaboration with the Palm Desert Campus, FLOWS continues to demonstrate how universities can address real-world environmental challenges while strengthening regional partnerships and workforce pathways.

Visit the [FLOWS program website](#) for more information.

**About the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus:** The [CSUSB Palm Desert Campus](#) is dedicated to providing a transformative educational experience in the Coachella Valley. With a focus on academic excellence and community engagement, the campus offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs designed to meet the diverse needs of its students and the region.

For more information about the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, contact Mike Singer in the Office of Marketing and Communications 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).