



For Immediate Release

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*\*\*Photos Available\*\**

VIEWPOINT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS HONORED FOR LEADERSHIP  
ON INTERFACE CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICE'S YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD:  
RECEIVE VENTURA COUNTY YOUTH PHILANTHROPIST AWARD ON NATIONAL  
PHILANTHROPY DAY

**CAMARILLO, CA** – November 17, 2016 – Interface Children & Family Services' Youth Advisory Board proudly accepted the honor of 2016 Ventura County Youth Philanthropist Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals Santa Barbara/Ventura County Chapter. Viewpoint School's Katie Gould accepted the award on behalf of founder Rachel Furash at the elite showing of prominent leaders and philanthropists at the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of National Philanthropy Day. The awards luncheon took place at the Ventura Beach Marriott. For a complete listing of awardees, go to: <http://afpsbv.afpnet.org/>.

During the ceremony, Interface's Executive Director, Erik Sternad remarked on the impressive work of Rachel Furash who is currently attending Tufts University and could not be present to receive the award. "Rachel took initiative and led a group of 25 students who helped rally community members to eventually raise \$45,000 in just two years. On the evening of last year's annual gala, she single-handedly secured a van for the transport of homeless youth by 'gently' grabbing the microphone from emcee Andrew Firestone to make an emotional appeal to a captive audience of 250. Next thing we knew, one of the sponsors, Jeff Sukay of Kirby Automotive, offered to donate a van. Today, youth more than ever are faced with competing priorities of AP classes, athletics and more and still find time to give back. We are grateful to have Katie Gould here with us today because she has also played an important role with the group."

Katie said, "It is an honor to accept the award on behalf of the other youth who couldn't be here to demonstrate the importance of youth helping youth in our community." Katie shared

that after she visited Interface with her family and learned that there were youth experiencing homelessness and living on the street and in cars in her community, she eagerly joined the Youth Advisory Board.

Throughout the year, the Youth Advisory Board holds bake sales, secures gift cards during the holidays and leads a Family 5K Run with help from Stevenson Fitness, the cheer team from Oaks Christian and many other local families and organizations. They also volunteer to help at various Interface events and recently hosted a "Paint it Purple" table at Viewpoint School in October to highlight Domestic Violence Prevention Awareness Month.

National Philanthropy Day is a celebration of philanthropy, including giving, volunteering and charitable engagement. Every year, since its inception in 1986 when President Ronald Reagan first proclaimed November 15<sup>th</sup> as National Philanthropy Day, thousands of people and communities around the world come together to celebrate the altruistic spirit of philanthropic efforts.

### **About Interface Children & Family Services**

Interface Children & Family Services is Ventura County and the surrounding community's most comprehensive non-profit social services safety net. Our mission is to strengthen children, families and individuals to be safe, healthy and thriving. Founded in 1973, Interface works to prevent and heal the effects of child abuse, neglect and abandonment; domestic violence; family conflict and mental health issues. We have 22 distinct programs representing five major service areas, including youth and family strengthening services, mental health, family violence intervention, justice services, and 2-1-1 information and referral across all socioeconomic levels. Interface Family Violence Intervention Services include a 24-hour family violence response team, emergency and transitional shelters, counseling and community-based education.

Serving approximately 24,000 local individuals annually, plus assisting 150,000 people across the state in need through the 2-1-1 Helpline, Interface offers effective solutions to the urgent needs of families and individuals in crisis. This important work is sustained through donations and grants from individuals and organizations, as well as by the work of dedicated volunteers and staff. For more information, please contact Interface Children & Family Services at 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd, Suite I, Camarillo, CA 93012 by telephone at [805.485.6114](tel:805.485.6114) or visit [www.icfs.org](http://www.icfs.org).

### **About Interface Children & Family Services Youth Advisory Board**

Interface's Youth Board was created from the vision of 16-year-old Rachel Furash in 2014 and remains an active group of 25 high school students committed to supporting at-risk and underserved youth from Ventura County and adjacent communities. Participating high schools include Viewpoint, Westlake, Oak Park and Oaks Christian.

The Youth Board's objective is "Youth Helping Youth," and exists to increase awareness of the plight of runaway and homeless youth, raising money to support outreach, sheltering and their safe return home. They also educate their peers about how to address the high rates of domestic violence in our community. They accomplish their goals by engaging

peers, siblings, parents, friends and neighbors in school-based outreach, bake sales, annual 5K Run for Families, food and gift card collections, serving as volunteer ambassadors, and making public appeals at Interface's signature event. They are responsible for increased giving and securing a van to transport sheltered youth to and from school. By 2017, they will have exceeded \$50,000 raised. In addition to being selected as the AFP Ventura County Youth in Philanthropy Award winner, Interface's Youth Board was a top five finalist for AFP International's 2016 Carter Award for Outstanding Youth in Philanthropy.

### **About Association of Fundraising (AFP)**

AFP is the professional association of individuals and organizations that generate philanthropic support for a wide variety of charitable institutions. Founded in 1960, AFP advances philanthropy through its more than 30,000 members in over 200 chapters throughout the world. So that it can promote stewardship, donor trust and effective and ethical fundraising, AFP: For 50 years, AFP has been the standard-bearer for professionalism in fundraising. AFP is an association of professionals throughout the world, who advance philanthropy by enabling people and organizations to practice ethical and effective fundraising. The core activities through which AFP fulfills this mission include education, training, mentoring, research, credentialing and advocacy.

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