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**35th Annual Holiday Tree Fantasy Raises Close to \$150,000 for
Child Guidance Center, Leading Provider of Mental Health
Services for Vulnerable Orange County Youth Since 1967**

Santa Ana, Calif., Dec. 7, 2016 – Child Guidance Center raised close to \$150,000 to help Orange County youth and families at its 35th Annual Holiday Tree Fantasy Event on Dec. 3 at the Balboa Bay Resort in Newport Beach. This wonderful holiday event, famous for its signature designer decorated Christmas tree packages, silent and live auction, drew a crowd of 250 guests, including event sponsors Bolton & Company, The Colton Company, Partners Bank of California, RJE international and Stifel Investment Services/Bob Voorhees Wealth Management Group, among others. All proceeds directly support Child Guidance Center’s mental health services for children and families in need across Orange County.

Child Guidance Center Board Chair H. Kent Falk, president and chief credit officer at Partners Bank of California, kicked off the event.

"Your support makes it possible for Child Guidance Center to provide children and families the emotional health services they need," he said. "Their team of dedicated therapists are experts in helping children and youth heal from abuse, trauma, loss of a parent, and even community violence. Whenever possible, they work with families ending often generations of poor parenting. Supporting this important work means that every child has the opportunity for a healthy future, and, in the end, the entire community benefits."

Child Guidance Center CEO Lori Pack shared her hope for a near future where society views mental illness, whether it's depression, anxiety, trauma, or attention deficits, in the same light as a broken arm, cancer or diabetes – a health concern that requires professional and compassionate treatment where shame or fear of judgement does not keep families from seeking the care they need and deserve.



“As we have addressed our fear and misunderstanding of cancer, we must now do so for mental illness. Whispering about mental illness will not make it go away,” she said. “For close to 50 years, Child Guidance Center has ‘shown up’ and spoken up, and we’ve stayed true to our mission to advocate for and provide children, youth and families with the health services they need.”

“Together,” Pack said, “we can change the perspective on children’s mental health with advocacy, compassion, kindness and understanding. Together, we can support and wrap our arms around our county’s most vulnerable children and families, ensuring a healthier and happier future. This is a responsibility we have to our society, to our community, and to our youth.”

Guest speaker Erin DeFries, a Fullerton Union High School counselor, shared the dramatic increase in students suffering from severe anxiety and depression as a result of unrelenting academic and social pressures, including college entrance exams, family economic challenges, access to alcohol and drugs, and the constant barrage of social media.

“Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth ages 10-19,” she said. “That’s why the school districts’ ability to refer students and families in need to Child Guidance Center is so invaluable to me as a counselor. I know my students will be taken care of at CGC.”

About Child Guidance Center

Founded in 1967, Child Guidance Center (CGC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming lives for Orange County children, teens and their families with innovative, evidence-based mental and behavioral health services, empowering them to reach their potential. With six convenient locations throughout the county, CGC assists more than 4,000 children and their family members annually. Their team of 70+ psychologists, psychologists and licensed therapists have expertise in many areas, including childhood trauma, attention deficit disorder, the autism spectrum, anger management, family struggles and more. For more information, visit <https://childguidancecenter.com>.

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