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## **TEEN PHILANTHROPISTS AWARD \$33,900 IN GRANTS TO EIGHT NONPROFITS SECURING THE ESSENTIAL NEEDS FOR AT-RISK YOUTH**

**SAN DIEGO – June 10, 2016** – The board of the Jewish Teen Foundation of San Diego (JTF), following a year-long experiential learning program about philanthropy, granted a total of \$33,900 to eight nonprofits working to address essential needs for at-risk youth. JTF hosted a Community Check Presentation Ceremony celebrating the 2015-16 grantees and the teen participants on May 15.

During the 2015-16 school year, twenty-five San Diego Jewish high schoolers collaborated to assess community needs, learn about nonprofit organizations and identify opportunities to effect change through strategic philanthropy. As a result, they awarded grants to ELEM/Youth in Distress in Israel, Just in Time for Foster Youth, Jewish Federation of San Diego, Monarch School, North County Lifeline, Reality Changers, Voices for Children and Yemin Orde Youth Village. Notable to this year's grantmaking focus, the JTF program officers decided the best way to invest in these organizations was to fund infrastructure to ensure organizational sustainability. "What JTF participants are doing is very smart and forward thinking," said Jeremy Pearl, Acting President and CEO of the Jewish Community Foundation. "They are helping to give voice to the narrative that strong infrastructure means a strong organization."

JTF is a program of the Jewish Community Foundation (JCF) of San Diego, which has a 19-year history of providing philanthropy education programs designed uniquely for teens. In 2014, JCF was given an opportunity to expand this experience as part of an international initiative with the Jewish Teen Funders Network, Laura Lauder and the Maimonides Fund. Teen participants are empowered as program officers to take a deep dive into the philanthropic process, embracing the Jewish value of *tzedakah* – a Hebrew word uniquely defined as both charity and justice. They develop a mission statement, research nonprofit organizations and review grant applications requesting funding. Teens engage in numerous conversations with nonprofit professionals and community philanthropists. They also take part in nonprofit site visits and are then entrusted with making grant allocations drawing from what they learned throughout the program.

Rebecca Leitner, a Scripps Ranch High School student shared, "Throughout this whole process, we have all learned how important it is to speak out about what we believe in... I have learned some very valuable life skills that I most likely would not have encountered until much later in life if it were not for the Jewish Teen Foundation."

Additional support for the program was made available through the Foundation's Endowment for Youth Philanthropy Fund, the Chortek Family Foundation, Larry Pidgeon Endowment Fund for Young Philanthropists and nearly 100 individual contributors in the community, including the teen participants

themselves. This year's total is up from \$25,000 in grants awarded last year to seven nonprofits focused on human rights for women and children.

An added highlight to this year's check presentation ceremony was the awarding of the prestigious 2015 Peter Chortek Leadership Award, honoring teen excellence in community service and leadership, to Noa Eaton. Noa, a senior at Canyon Crest Academy, connected to her philanthropy in the 5th grade after participating in a Girl Scouts house-building project and is now head intern at Casas de Luz, a non-profit that raises funds and builds homes for families in need in Tijuana.

### **About The Jewish Community Foundation**

*The Jewish Community Foundation partners with individuals, families and community organizations to help them achieve their philanthropic goals. During fiscal year 2014-15, the Foundation awarded and facilitated over \$117 million in 6,600 grants to more than 1,400 Jewish and general organizations in San Diego, Israel and around the world. The Foundation manages almost \$300 million in assets and has facilitated over \$1 billion in grants since 1967. The Foundation is a national model for its legacy endowment building and youth philanthropy programs. Visit the Jewish Community Foundation at [www.jcfsandiego.org](http://www.jcfsandiego.org) or call 858-279-2740.*

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