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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**SUBJECT: Task Force Raises Over \$100,000 to Help Homeless Neighbors**

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**DATE: May 2, 2016**

**Malibu, CA** – The Malibu Task Force on Homelessness (MTFH), a group of local volunteers committed to compassionately and effectively addressing the serious issues associated with homelessness in Malibu, just announced that its major gifts campaign has raised over \$100,000 since February, when the Task Force was formed.

Headed by former Malibu Mayor and Councilmember Pamela Conley Ulich and 2016 Dolphin Award winner Jay Scott, the Malibu Task Force on Homelessness is focused on one task: engaging a professional organization, Ocean Park Community Center (OPCC), to address the many, complex needs of homeless individuals in Malibu. The Task Force is already more than halfway toward its goal of \$200,000 – the amount needed to fund OPCC's work in Malibu for one year.

Now in its 53<sup>rd</sup> year, OPCC is the only West L.A.-based agency that offers a comprehensive system of care to solve the complex, multi-faceted problems of a homeless population that includes the most vulnerable, traumatized, and needy among us.

OPCC provides seven core integrated services: housing (interim and permanent), mental health care (including psychiatry), medical care, domestic violence services, substance addiction treatment, income services, and wellness and life skills programs.

MTFH anticipates that OPCC's efforts in Malibu will help safeguard not only the homeless individuals served, but also the community as a whole. Examples of potential benefits to all who live or work in Malibu include reduced risk of fires from hillside encampments, and of aggressive behavior by individuals in need of mental health care or addiction treatment.

(more)

Once OPCC begins its work in Malibu (expected to start this summer), a two-person, full-time, professional outreach team will engage homeless individuals on the streets, hillsides, and beaches of town, building trusting relationships with the goal of linking them to comprehensive OPCC services. An emphasis will be placed on finding permanent housing, especially for the most vulnerable.

OPCC, based in Santa Monica, was an early adopter of the Housing First model, and the agency moves over 750 people off the streets and into interim or permanent housing each year. Ninety-five percent of those housed by OPCC stay housed.

“Long-term, sustainable solutions are critical” to effectively addressing the complex problem of homelessness, said Ms. Ulich, MTFH Co-Chair.

Ms. Ulich, like her Co-Chair Mr. Scott, has a history of providing help to homeless individuals in Malibu. One woman Ms. Ulich and a friend attempted to help responded well to the support at first, but later lapsed into a startlingly unhealthy, agitated state, Ms. Ulich explained recently.

“I realized then that money for gas or some food wouldn’t help her, and nothing I could say or do would help her,” said Ms. Ulich. “I believed that what she really needed was professionals who could work with her to effectively treat her illness, and give her a safe place to heal and find her purpose.”

“Due to the extraordinary generosity of donors who live and work in Malibu,” said Mr. Scott, “Such professional services can now become a reality” for Malibu’s homeless population.

In addition to Mr. Scott and Ms. Ulich, members of the Malibu Task Force on Homelessness include Matt deNicola, Rev. Paul Elder, Dr. Renee Kaswan, Burt Ross, Joan Ross, and “junior member” Cooper deNicola.

The Malibu Task Force on Homelessness is currently in Phase 1 of its fundraising campaign – focusing for now on gifts of at least \$1,000. Anyone interested in supporting this “major gifts” portion of the campaign is encouraged to call Pamela Ulich, at 310-699-0424, or Jay Scott, at 310-266-5516.

Phase 2 of the campaign, which will broaden the Task Force’s fundraising efforts to all of Malibu, is expected to follow shortly.

Anyone who would like to learn more about the Task Force, or help in any way, is kindly asked to email Ms. Ulich at [Pamela@MalibuLocalBroker.com](mailto:Pamela@MalibuLocalBroker.com), or Mr. Scott at [scottjc42@verizon.net](mailto:scottjc42@verizon.net).

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