**P R E S S R E L E A S E**

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**Harbor Interfaith Receives Million Dollar Gift**

**From Private Donor**

**Endows the Accelerated Learning & Living (ALL) Program**

*SAN PEDRO, CA,* *Monday, October 1, 2018*: Harbor Interfaith Services (HIS) received a $1,000,000 gift from Mr. Kurt Oetiker, a private donor long-associated with the agency. He gave the gift in honor of his wife, Ilse J. Oetiker, an agency volunteer. She introduced him to the agency 40 years ago when she dedicated herself to serving the homeless and working poor in San Pedro. She passed away in 2008.

 The gift is the largest from a private individual the agency has received since it began operations in 1975.

HIS empowers the homeless and working poor to achieve self-sufficiency by providing support services including shelter, transitional housing, food, job placement, advocacy, childcare,

education, and life-skills training. It is also the county’s official lead service provider for the Coordinated Entry System in the South Bay. HIS is headquartered in San Pedro, but it coordinates homeless services for 50 agencies across the region. Last year, it served 9,600 individuals of all ages.

Mr. Oetiker’s generous gift will endow the newly-renamed Ilse J. Oetiker Accelerated Learning & Living program (ALL), a transitional housing program for homeless families. ALL offers up to 18 months of housing. During that time, parents must attend school to complete a degree or earn a certificate. Harbor Interfaith helps them with subsidized rent and assistance with tuition, transportation, textbooks, case management and childcare. ALL’s purpose is to lift the family income sufficiently to make it self-sufficient, so the family will never be homeless again. The program has an 85 percent success rate. Graduates have become teachers, nurses, mental health counselors, and later home owners.

The transitional housing building, a 24-unit apartment building on a quiet San Pedro street, will be renamed the Ilse J. Oetiker Building. A building rededication will take place later this month.

*End of Release*