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NEWS RELEASE

Coronado Resident Honored with Prestigious United Way Award

Carol A. Fitzgibbons, Executive Director for Home of Guiding Hands Corporation for the past 13 years and longtime Coronado resident, received a surprise honor on Wednesday, June 27. Fitzgibbons attended the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the United Way of San Diego County under the guise of providing community input regarding their programs for the upcoming year. The real purpose of the meeting, however, was revealed when Fitzgibbons was announced as the winner of the 2007 Ben Polak Award of Excellence. Kathryn Lembo, Executive Director of South Bay Community Services and the 2006 Ben Polak Award recipient, made the award presentation.

“I am so deeply honored to receive this award,” Fitzgibbons said. “I left the education field years ago to work in health and human services and stayed, because I saw a need for improved services, and because of the personal rewards I received from seeing first-hand the lives of people with developmental disabilities changed for the better.

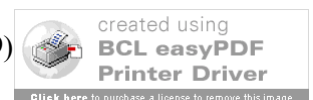
“The United Way of San Diego County has been a stalwart supporter of Home of Guiding Hands and so many other human service providers across the county. Their support and efforts to improve this community are what should be commended.”

The Ben Polak Award of Excellence is awarded annually to a chief administrative officer of a certified United Way agency who has made an exemplary contribution and/or provided exceptional and creative leadership in the human care field in San Diego County. The award is named and was established in 1987 for the late-Ben Polak, a former East County resident and developer, United Way Board Chair (1984 and 1985), and retired Army colonel, who believed

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strongly in improving services and service delivery by community providers. Fitzgibbons is the 21st recipient of this prestigious award, which honors the innovation, flexibility, compassion and dedication to the United Way exemplified by Polak.

According to Carol Williams, United Way Community Impact Director, Fitzgibbons' nomination stood out among the 20-plus others received from community agencies across the county. Fitzgibbons' innovative leadership at Home of Guiding Hands, including the oversight and implementation of a new business model, as well as the initiation of new programs that meet the needs of people with developmental disabilities, were noted by the selection committee. "She (Fitzgibbons) is so well-respected as a leader in her field of expertise," Williams said. "(And) her dedication as a volunteer at United Way, from serving as a speaker to participating in impact meetings She has just been an incredible representative for the agency community."

Home of Guiding Hands (HGH) is celebrating 40 years in your community (1967-2007). The 501(c)(3) nonprofit public benefit corporation is located in San Diego's East County. It provides services and support to children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families through 27 homes, In-Home Respite, Community Living and Life Planning assistance programs. For more information about HGH, please contact Jane Moore at (619) 938-2856; or Jane@guidinghands.org.

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