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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Festival of Children® Kicks Off a September to Remember at South Coast Plaza During National Child Awareness Month

Festival of Children Foundation Opening Night Party Marks the Start of the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Festival  
of Children and Celebrates Local Children's Charities

COSTA MESA, Calif. (September 5, 2019) – 400 non-profit, community and business leaders gathered at South Coast Plaza's Garden Terrace to kick off the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Festival of Children at South Coast Plaza. The evening event was highlighted by three awards presented by Sandy Segerstrom Daniels, founder & executive director, Festival of Children Foundation.

The Carousel Spirit Award was presented to Joe and Pam Balla of the The George and Betty Harbaugh Foundation for their purpose-driven philanthropy and commitment to impactful giving, and thoughtful advancement of human achievement that has directly impacted the lives of many children through support of incredible organizations that fight homelessness, search for cures for pediatric cancer, promote youth character development, support families in need, as well as their incredible work to support our nations veterans and their families.

The Corporate Partner Award was presented to Erik Zommers on behalf of Mitsubishi Electric Elevator & Escalator Division for their commitment to improving the lives of children with the shared core values of Festival of Children Foundation: collaboration, compassion and innovation.

The F.R.E.D. Award "For Really Extraordinary "Do'ers" was presented to 12 year old Sydnie Beidleman. This annual award is presented to a young person in the community that is setting a wonderful example by embodying the principal of service and giving back. Sydnie was nominated by Project Hope Alliance for multiple projects she has led to bring awareness to the needs of homeless youth in her community.

"There are so many incredible charities, individuals and companies on the front lines trying to meet every need and remove every obstacle of our children," stated Sandy Segerstrom Daniels. "It's an honor to celebrate them with this event and I couldn't image kicking off the Festival and National Child Awareness Month any other way."

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#### About National Child Awareness Month

The effort to have September declared as National Child Awareness Month began as a local effort in Orange County, Calif., by Festival of Children Foundation Founder Sandy Segerstrom Daniels to raise awareness and focus America's attention on our greatest asset – our children. The Orange County Board of Supervisors first unanimously designated September as "Child Awareness Month" in September 2002. In September of 2003, the State of California commended Festival of Children Foundation's efforts and designated September as "Children Awareness Month." In 2008, the U.S. Senate passed U.S. Senate Resolution 644 designating September 2008 "National Child Awareness Month." Since then, Ms. Segerstrom Daniels and Festival of Children Foundation have been successful in having every successive September designated as "National Child Awareness Month."

#### About Festival of Children Foundation

Festival of Children Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that serves to bring together and coordinate the efforts of charities, companies and individuals who work to improve the lives of children. 100% of the administrative costs are covered by designated funding, allowing donations to go further in direct support of programs and services that improve the lives of children nationwide. For more information please visit [www.festivalofchildren.org](http://www.festivalofchildren.org).

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