



For Immediate Release

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Hospice of Santa Barbara Mentor Receives Award

Man recognized for dedication to helping child cope with loss

June 9, 2008, Santa Barbara, CA—Ralph Philbrick received an award from the Area Agency on Aging on Wednesday, May 28th, in recognition of his work as a Hospice of Santa Barbara, Inc. mentor. He won in the category of Intergenerational Effort of the Year. A volunteer of the organization's *I Have a Friend*® mentor program, Ralph has shown true dedication and is an inspiration to other mentors in the program.

The *I Have a Friend*® program pairs children who have recently lost a parent or sibling with trained adult mentors who lost parents or siblings as children. This unique program, the concept of Executive Director Gail Rink, is now a model for similar programs across the country.

Ralph, age 74, whose father died when he was just a child, has been a mentor to 15-year-old David Anfenson for five years. Throughout last year, Ralph spent over 150 hours with David, who has grown from a struggling ten-year-old often having in trouble at school to a teenager who is not only doing well in school, but also volunteers at many nonprofits in town and holds a regular job. Together, the two have accomplished visiting every park and bike path, and have been to a number of sports venues, botanical gardens, Museum of Natural History, and Sea Center.

The award was presented to Ralph by the Area Agency on Aging last Wednesday at the Santa Ynez Valley Marriott, as part of Older Americans Month. He was nominated by Hospice of Santa Barbara, Inc. – a volunteer hospice organization.

If you have a child who's recently suffered the loss of a parent or sibling, or if you're interested in becoming a mentor, please contact Hospice of Santa Barbara, Inc. at (805) 563-8820.

The mission of Hospice of Santa Barbara, Inc. is to provide care to anyone experiencing the impact of a life-threatening illness, or grieving the death of a loved one.

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