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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**New Avenues for Youth Selected in National Competition to Receive Grant
In Support of Job Opportunities for At-Risk and Homeless Youth**

PORTLAND, OREGON: 02.09.2016 – New Avenues for Youth, a Portland non-profit serving foster, at-risk and homeless youth, has been selected for the new portfolio of the venture philanthropy organization REDF, joining a national initiative to scale up the social enterprise field across the U.S. supported by the federal Social Innovation Fund.

The multi-year grant will provide funding and business advisory services that will allow New Avenues to increase work experiences for the youth they serve by 50% over the next five years and scale their existing social purpose enterprises, including two Ben & Jerry's PartnerShops, the screen-printing business, New Avenues INK, and the recently launched soup cart, New Avenues thru Soup.

To select the grantees, REDF held a rigorous national competition for social enterprises to receive grants of at least \$100,000 annually for up to five years. More than 200 social enterprises from across 36 states submitted proposals; New Avenues for Youth was one of only 22 selected. "The Social Innovation Fund provides new pathways for people who have faced significant barriers to employment," said Damian Thorman, Director of the Social Innovation Fund. "We are excited this award to New Avenues for Youth, a subgrantee of REDF, will transform people's lives by creating jobs using social enterprise solutions with funding from us."

As the economy continues its recovery from the Great Recession, national youth labor-force participation rates remain low, with Oregon holding one of the lowest nationwide. Social enterprise has long been a critical and innovative component to New Avenues' efforts toward helping youth with significant barriers to employment receive the support they need to avoid or exit homelessness, succeed in the workforce, and acquire the skills to move toward self-sufficiency. "No home is affordable without a job," said Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury. "This grant will enable New Avenues for Youth to expand on their mission, helping even more young people find work and permanent housing."

"For more than a decade, we have used social enterprise as a key strategy for helping youth exit and avoid homelessness," said Sean Suib, Executive Director of New Avenues for Youth. "While we have laid a strong foundation on which to build our enterprise portfolio, REDF's investment will help us get to a new level of impact in creating more employment opportunities and stronger outcomes for youth."

For more information on New Avenues for Youth's social purpose enterprises, contact Enterprise Director, Sara Weihmann at sweihmann@newavenues.org.

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About New Avenues for Youth

Since 1997, New Avenues for Youth has impacted the lives of 20,000 foster, at-risk, and homeless youth through a range of services that address basic needs and safety, provide opportunities for education and career, and help youth achieve self-sufficiency. New Avenues for Youth takes a complete approach to addressing youth homelessness and its root causes, delivering support and resources that enable foster, at-risk, and homeless youth aged 14-24 to overcome their barriers and realize their potential. For more information about New Avenues for Youth, visit www.newavenues.org.