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SAINT JOSEPH BALLET CHANGES NAME TO “THE WOODEN FLOOR”

SANTA ANA, Calif., Oct. 22, 2009 - On October 22, 2009, Saint Joseph Ballet officially changed its name to The Wooden Floor, with tagline, “From here you can step anywhere.” The mission of the 26-year-old organization remains the same.

The formal name change process began in 2005 when the organization’s long-range strategic plan called for an in-depth assessment of the way it was perceived by its constituents and the public. With the help of capacity building grants from The James Irvine Foundation and the Weingart Foundation, extensive market research was conducted involving a broad range of stakeholders including board members, long-time donors, families, alumni and community leaders. As a result, a strong recommendation emerged for a name change to:

- support the effective communication about the scope and successful outcomes of the organization which furthers organization’s strategic goals to increase support and reach new audiences, as well as advocate for its youth development model;
- allow the organization to broaden and deepen the public’s understanding of how it impacts the lives of the students served;
- better position the organization to broaden its strong base of supporters by developing a greater awareness of all services and programs offered to our students: dance, academics, college preparatory, and family services.

‘The Wooden Floor’ is a metaphor for the strong foundation thousands of very low-income youth receive through our programs. It honors their connection to the dance floor where, through daily practice, they become more self-aware, confident and disciplined. Each day, the wooden floor beneath their feet supports them as they journey toward brighter futures.

About The Wooden Floor

The Wooden Floor in Santa Ana, previously known as Saint Joseph Ballet, is an after-school organization that for 26 years has promised hope and opportunity to nearly 400 low-income youth annually. Dance education and performance are the core transformational elements through which youth change the way they think about themselves and develop the ability to reach their full potential. In the dance studio, rigorous training, creativity and self-knowledge lead to confidence, leadership, teamwork, well-being and joy. Academic programs, pre-collegiate mentoring and college scholarships ensure that our students succeed in school and are college ready. Since 2005, 100% of graduates from The Wooden Floor have enrolled in college, exceeding the national average for their peers threefold. Family Services at The Wooden Floor—counseling, crisis intervention and social service referrals—help families overcome hardships and navigate challenges. Community support enables these year-round programs to be offered free of charge. Bringing about generational change to break the cycle of poverty in our community is the long-term goal of The Wooden Floor.

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