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Saint Joseph Ballet now the Wooden Floor

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Santa Ana's [Saint Joseph Ballet](#) announced a name change tonight in a ceremony attended by Santa Ana Mayor [Miguel Pulido](#) and other officials. It will now be known as **The Wooden Floor**.

An excerpt from the official announcement follows.

At an event attended by community supporters and sponsored by The Boeing Company, Saint Joseph Ballet announced today that the organization has officially changed its name to The Wooden Floor, with the tagline, "From here you can step anywhere." The mission of the 26-year-old organization remains: To empower low-income youth from diverse backgrounds to strengthen self-esteem, self-discipline and a sense of accomplishment through dance, academic and family programs.

The Board of Directors and Founder Beth Burns have considered renaming the organization for many years since its evolution from a ballet pilot project for underserved youth at its founding to a multi-faceted dance-based organization with a comprehensive focus on youth development through intensive academic, pre-collegiate and family service programs.

The formal 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. This furthers the organization's strategic goals to increase support and reach new audiences, as well as advocate for its youth development model.

Responding to how the new name was chosen, Executive and Artistic Director Melanie Ríos Glaser said, "'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.”

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