

Benefit: Wine Tasting Benefit at Big Canyon for The Wooden Floor



Wooden Floor Board Chairman Jim Driscoll of Corona del Mar, student Olivia Aviles, Executive Director and Co-CEO Dawn S. Reese, students Matteo Zarate and Elizabeth Alvarez, Artistic Director and Co-CEO Melanie Rios Glaser.

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By Newport Beach Independent Staff

More than 300 wine lovers gathered at Big Canyon Country Club in Newport Beach last month for the 8th Annual Keep the Promise Wine Tasting Benefit.

The evening, which has become one of Orange County's premier wine tasting benefits, netted a record \$300,000 for The Wooden Floor, a Santa Ana arts-based youth development nonprofit with a track record of sending 100 percent of its low-income graduates to college for the past 10 years.

A dozen exquisite wines from the finest vineyards around the globe, representing Italy, France, Argentina, and the United States, were uncorked throughout the evening.

The bottles are hand-selected over the period of several years and are generously donated by Newport Beach residents Janice and John Markley, long-time supporters of The Wooden Floor who founded the wine tasting event in 2007 as a way to use their love for wine to raise funds for the organization.

Private community support accounts for 90 percent of The Wooden Floor's funding and enables its year-round programs to be

offered free of charge to the majority of its 375 low-income students.

Silent and live auctions highlighted the evening, including a \$13,000 winning bid for an exclusive signed and etched Magnum bottle of 2006 DuMOL 'Finn' Pinot Noir complete with a wine tasting vacation, donated by Kerry and Margie Murphy, proprietors of DuMOL Wines.

Since 1983, more than 75,000 young lives have been touched by The Wooden Floor. At its Santa Ana campus, The Wooden Floor gives under-served local youth the tools to live fuller, healthier lives through a unique approach grounded in dance. The youth engage in intensive dance education supported by academic and family services that change the way they make decisions, helping them to discover and pursue their full potential. Since 2005, 100 percent of the seniors have graduated from high school on time and gone on to pursue higher education—a rate about three times the national average for their socioeconomic peers.

For more information, visit TheWoodenFloor.org.



Honorary Event Co-Chairs Janice and John Markley of Newport Beach.