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THE WOODEN FLOOR PROMOTES NEW DIRECTOR OF STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Santa Ana, Calif. (September 30, 2013) – In a continuing effort to improve **The Wooden Floor’s** impact on its 375 under-served youth, the successful arts-based youth development non-profit has promoted **Wendy Mendoza** to its newly created position of **Director of Student Development**. She will oversee the administration, management and operational success of Student Support Services, which are fully-integrated with the dance education program including: academic tutoring, college preparatory services, family services, as well as parent engagement. Mendoza will directly report to **Executive Director and Co-CEO Dawn S. Reese** and work closely with **Artistic Director and Co-CEO Melanie Rios Glaser**.



The newly created position comes on the heels of an already productive year at The Wooden Floor, which is celebrating its 30th year of changing lives through dance and its 9th consecutive year in which **100 percent of its low-income graduates enrolled in college**—outperforming their socioeconomic peers threefold. The Director of Student Development will continue to fine-tune the organization’s highly-efficient model, which has been receiving national attention as one to disseminate.

“Wendy in her new role as Director of Student Development will work with us to ensure The Wooden Floor’s theory of change and its corresponding programmatic elements are fully aligned and measureable in order to further our long-term goal to break the cycle of poverty through generational change,” states Executive Director and Co-CEO Dawn S. Reese. “The title reflects our holistic, student development approach to help our young people become successful both in school and in life. Wendy’s promotion is a direct result of The Wooden Floor’s talent management goals, as well as our professional and leadership development programs.”

Mendoza’s background in research analysis, systems and curriculum development, and her work in public advocacy for education policy with the Education Department at California State Long Beach will benefit The Wooden Floor. She is currently pursuing her Master’s degree in Education Leadership at University of Southern California. She has held research internships with Mexico’s Secretary of Education, at Palomar Community College and International University of Cuernavaca. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from UC San Diego.

About The Wooden Floor

The Wooden Floor, founded in 1983, is a Santa Ana arts-based organization that delivers hope and opportunity to 375 low-income youth annually. Dance education and performance are the core transformational elements through which youth change the way they think about themselves and aspire beyond the grip of the poverty cycle. 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 students succeed in school and are college-ready. **Since 2005, 100 percent of graduates from The Wooden Floor have enrolled in college**, exceeding the national average for their peers threefold. Family Services at The Wooden Floor, including 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