2018 OC Philanthropy
As we celebrate The Wooden Floor’s 35th Anniversary year, we continue to ask ourselves: what is the one word that describes the impact of our mission over the past three and a half decades? Trust. The bonds of trust formed between our students, families, supporters, and our community are what continue to make us effective and deep-rooted.

In 1983, the bond of trust was to provide hope and opportunity for young people to be safe from gangs and risky behaviors during the summer, through an innovative vision our Founder Beth Burns led to change lives through dance.

In 1999, our community of supporters rallied to help significantly expand our mission by raising $6.8 million, enabling us to grow from our 4th Street location to our beautiful, custom-built Main Street campus in Santa Ana that our students call their “second home.” We increased from 150 to 375 children served, and set a larger vision for the organization by providing students and their families with wrap-around services, including family support and academics to help them navigate their socio-economic hardships.

In 2005, we were entrusted to reach new milestones as 100 percent of our senior class went to college for the first time. Again, our community of supporters rallied by our sides to provide resources to help the subsequent classes of students following in their footsteps with scholarships and college and career readiness programs. In 2009, we began the 10-year journey promise to each child: from here, you can step anywhere.

This past spring, we reached another milestone for our community. Through an innovative partnership with C&C Development and Orange County Housing Corporation, a workforce housing developer in Santa Ana, we opened our second location. The Wooden Floor at Depot at Santiago will allow us to deliver our services to 100 additional students, for a total of nearly 500 students served year-round. This new location includes a dance studio with top-of-the-line Harlequin flooring, a digitally equipped education and community center, and a family resource center. By partnering with affordable housing developers, or other organizations, we are looking for ways to scale our impact without increasing the typical brick and mortar expense; thereby enabling us to focus on programmatic growth to serve even more young people.

Today, The Wooden Floor has evolved into one of the nation’s leading social innovators, and is one of the foremost creative youth development nonprofit organizations in the country. We are proud to have served over 90,000 young people through year-round and community engagement programs since 1983. We believe our strategic solution for today’s greatest social challenges is to transform the lives of young people in low-income communities through the power of dance and access to higher education. In Orange County and through our national licensed partner CityDance DREAM in Washington, DC, we use a long-term approach grounded in exploratory dance education strategically integrated with academic tutoring, college and career readiness, and family support services to foster the confidence and gifts within each child to innovate, communicate, and collaborate – 21st Century skills necessary for success in school and in life.

About The Wooden Floor:
Over its 35 years, The Wooden Floor has received numerous awards and recognition, including the 2018 Best Work Places Award by the Orange County Business Journal, the 2018 New York Life Foundation AIM High After School Award for Middle School Programming, the 2015 PMAC Foundation Leadership Circle Award, the 2012 Afterschool Innovator Award from the Afterschool Alliance and The MetLife Foundation, the 2009 Neighborhood Builders Award from Bank of America, and the 2003 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award. The WoodenFloor.org