



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Payal Kumar

Director of Communications

714-541-8314 Ext. 19

Payal@saintjosephballet.org

SAINT JOSEPH BALLET PARTNERS WITH THE ANAHEIM DUCKS AND WAL-MART
TO PREPARE LOW-INCOME STUDENTS FOR BACK-TO-SCHOOL

SANTA ANA, California (September 17, 2009) – For the second year in a row, Saint Joseph Ballet, one of the nation's most innovative after school programs for at-risk youth, partners with the Anaheim Ducks and Wal-Mart by providing back-to-school shopping sprees for several low-income families on **Friday, September 18, 2009 at 6:30pm at the Wal-Mart in Foothill Ranch**. Anaheim Ducks players guide Saint Joseph Ballet students through Wal-Mart and help them pick out school supplies and other essentials to prepare the youth for the upcoming school year. According to Saint Joseph Ballet's Family Services Manager, Teresa Farias, "Often times, these students don't get to feel special. This event helps them feel like they matter. The confidence, joy and positive role modeling the students receive from this special opportunity helps them make tremendous strides in doing well in school, going to college, and breaking the cycle of poverty permanently." Following last year's event, despite that these youth rarely get to go shopping for something new, Francisco Luna, a participating student said of the interaction with the NHL players, "My favorite thing I got today was what they gave me for free."

In addition to the shopping sprees and the interaction with Anaheim Ducks players, students and their families also receive preseason Anaheim Ducks tickets, as well as Wild Wings Kid Club Kits and other Ducks merchandise. Shopping sprees are furnished by the Anaheim Ducks and Wal-Mart Foothill Ranch. Since 2006, Ducks Care, a fund of the McCormick Foundation, has provided grant support to Saint Joseph Ballet totaling \$50,000.00, in addition to a tremendous amount of in-kind support.

Saint Joseph Ballet in Santa Ana is 26-year-old arts-based after school program which provides hope and opportunity to low-income youth by developing their ability to realize their full potential. With dance education as the core transformational vehicle, the self-knowledge students gain on the dance floor evolves into confidence, leadership, cooperative learning, well-being and joy. Academic programs ensure that students have all the support and tools they need to achieve success in school. Students and their parents are lead through a path that ensures that they will graduate high school and succeed in college. For the hardships imposed by a low income status and other life challenges, Saint Joseph Ballet wraps students and their families with the social services necessary to overcome these obstacles. Since 1983, Saint Joseph Ballet has served over 62,000 at-risk youth, supporting them in their efforts through middle school, high school and college. Saint Joseph Ballet's ultimate goal is to change lives, instill a lifelong love for the arts, break the cycle of poverty, and bring about generational change. Since 2005, 100% of Saint Joseph Ballet's graduates have enrolled in college, far exceeding the national average for their peers, and most being the first in their family to do so. More information on Saint Joseph Ballet is online at www.SaintJosephBallet.org.

###

To cover this event, schedule an interview with Saint Joseph Ballet's Executive and Artistic Director, Melanie Ríos Glaser or to interview one of the participating students, please call Payal Kumar at 714-541-8314 Ext. 19 or e-mail Payal@saintjosephballet.org. High resolution photos and video of students participating in the Shopping Spree or other Saint Joseph Ballet activities are available upon request.