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#### CONGRESSWOMAN LORETTA SANCHEZ TO HONOR SAINT JOSEPH BALLET

SANTA ANA, California (February 14, 2008) – On February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008, Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez will provide a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition to non-profit after school program, Saint Joseph Ballet. The certificate recognizes the organization's forthcoming 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and its exemplary service to youth for the past quarter century. The award will be presented at a special private performance for Saint Joseph Ballet students and families of *New Dance*, the organization's latest production.

Saint Joseph Ballet in Santa Ana is a free non-profit after school program that uses dance, academic and family programs to provide hope and the opportunity for young people to learn what it takes to succeed in life - self-esteem, confidence, leadership, cooperative learning and discipline. Through cutting edge programs, professionals ignite creativity and awaken the spirits in nearly 400 low-income youth each year. Academic, family and college scholarship programs build on the skills students learn in the dance studio and collaboratively provide a foundation for a successful future. Since 1998, over 90 percent of Saint Joseph Ballet's graduates have enrolled in college, far exceeding the national average for their peers. Youth who enter Saint Joseph Ballet with few resources leave with the tools and skills to build healthy futures for themselves, their families and our community.

*New Dance* at Saint Joseph Ballet aims to support and produce new work by local artists in Southern California. An open call for submissions resulted in a tremendous response from the dance community, highlighting the importance of this project. The event breaks new ground, as professional modern dance performances are a rarity in Orange County, and all works presented by the hosted companies will be world premieres. Saint Joseph Ballet's 400 students will be exposed to the various creative processes of the participating groups through master classes and other art-making opportunities. Public performances of *New Dance* at Saint Joseph Ballet take place at the Saint Joseph Ballet Studio Theatre on February, 22 & 23 at 8pm. Tickets are \$10 and available online at [www.SaintJosephBallet.org](http://www.SaintJosephBallet.org) or by calling 714-541-8314 x35.

Saint Joseph Ballet has pioneered the practice of involving youth in a high quality and professional process of creating new, contemporary dance with renowned choreographers and other collaborating artists. New work is regularly commissioned from artists, such as Sean Curran, Mark Haim, Melanie Ríos Glaser, Donald McKayle, Nami Yamamoto, Sally Silvers, Beth Burns and composer Alan Terricciano. Works are created with, and then performed by students at an Annual Concert, this year taking place May 29-June 1 at the Irvine Barclay Theatre, as well as performances in Saint Joseph Ballet's Studio Theatre. Dance companies in residence have included the prestigious Limón Dance Company, Eliot Feld Ballet Tech, and Elizabeth Streb's STREB, who have worked with the students on repertory and master classes.

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Members of the Media may request to attend the Certificate Presentation, visit *New Dance* Master Classes, attend *New Dance* performances and schedule interviews with Saint Joseph Ballet Artistic Director Melanie Ríos Glaser, Managing Director Josie Turner, or Saint Joseph Ballet students by calling Payal Kumar at 714-541-8314 x19 or e-mail [Payal@saintjosephballet.org](mailto:Payal@saintjosephballet.org).