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SAINT JOSEPH BALLET CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF PROVIDING HOPE TO LOW-INCOME YOUTH

SANTA ANA, California (September 10, 2008) – During the past quarter-century, approximately 62,000 Orange County youth have been positively impacted by the vision of Saint Joseph Ballet's founder Beth Burns and more recently, the passion of Executive/Artistic Director Melanie Ríos Glaser.

The mission of the organization is to empower low-income youth from diverse neighborhoods to strengthen self-esteem, self-discipline and a sense of accomplishment through dance, academic and family programs. Since its inception in a school auditorium in 1983, Saint Joseph Ballet has seen unparalleled results and monumental growth. In the past decade, nearly 100% of Saint Joseph Ballet's students have gone on to college in a population that averages only 30% nation-wide. According to one Saint Joseph Ballet graduate, "Everyday I was reminded of how much the world had to offer me. As the doors of Saint Joseph Ballet opened to me and every other dancer, I knew that the doors of the world were also approachable." The key to the organization's success is a long-term investment in each child (an average of 8 years for the class of 2008) and a multi-pronged approach which ties dance to free academic support and family services.

On Saturday, October 4, 2008, the organization commemorates its Silver Anniversary with *Now. Then. Anew.* – celebrating the present, honoring the past and launching the future. The evening includes a hosted reception in the Saint Joseph Ballet courtyard. Two hundred guests will then convene in the Dance Studio for an elegant dinner, dance performance and festive program. Plus, two lucky winners will be chosen to receive original artwork created exclusively for Saint Joseph Ballet by artist Raul Colon or a \$1,000 South Coast Plaza shopping spree.

All proceeds from the evening benefit Saint Joseph Ballet. More information on Saint Joseph Ballet and *Now. Then. Anew.* are available online at www.SaintJosephBallet.org.

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Members of the Media may request to cover the event or schedule interviews with any of Saint Joseph Ballet's students, Executive/Artistic Director, Melanie Ríos Glaser or the event Chair, Yvonne Jordan by contacting Payal Kumar at 714-541-8314 Ext. 19 or Payal@SaintJosephBallet.org. High resolution images of students in rehearsal or performance are available by request.