



YOUTH SERVICES

For Immediate Release

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Larkin Street's Paving the Way Gala Raises Over \$500,000 for At Risk Youth

Organization Honors Senator Dianne Feinstein and Celebrates 25 Years Helping Over 70,000 Homeless and At-Risk Youth in San Francisco

San Francisco—March 5, 2009—Paving the Way 2009, Larkin Street Youth Services' annual benefit and fund-raising event, kicked off the organization's 25th anniversary year at the St. Regis Hotel on Saturday, February 21, 2009, raising over \$500,000 to support its 25 different programs serving runaway and at risk youth in San Francisco. Since its inauguration in 2003, the Paving the Way Gala has raised over \$3.0mm in support of Larkin Street's programs.

Senator Dianne Feinstein was the honored guest at the Gala and was presented with the *Anne B. Stanton Award for Extraordinary Leadership and Dedication to Bay Area Youth*. As Mayor of San Francisco, Sen. Feinstein secured critically important city funding and a federal demonstration grant to enable the organization to begin and continue offering services to youth living on the streets of San Francisco.

"Larkin Street has truly set the standard for youth services. For the past 25 years, the organization has provided vulnerable young people in San Francisco with a safe harbor when they have nowhere else to turn – and have helped more than 70,000 runaway and at-risk young men and women get back on their feet," Senator Feinstein said. "During my tenure as Mayor of San Francisco, I was able to secure funds to help launch this innovative nonprofit organization – and have been proud to see how the organization has grown into an integral part of the Bay Area community."

"25 Years: [25 Reasons to Celebrate](#)" was the theme of this year's Paving the Way Gala. The annual benefit for Larkin Street, now in its seventh year, was attended by over 400 Larkin Street donors, volunteers, past leaders (Board and staff) and high-profile community leaders in San Francisco who have "paved the way" for Larkin Street since the organization's founding in 1984. The event celebrated Larkin Street's achievements over the last 25 years in helping thousands of San Francisco's most vulnerable youth ages 12-24 exit street life—while also celebrating the next 25 years of the organization's future plans.

Larkin Street also released the first copies of the agency's rich history in a 74 page book entitled, *Larkin Street Youth Services: The First 25 Years* which was a gift for Gala attendees. The book authored by Bill Campbell, one of the agency's founders and first board members, recalls the agency's colorful history from its beginning as a grassroots effort with the opening of a storefront drop-in center in San Francisco's Polk Gulch neighborhood to its current safety net of 25 programs and 13 sites across the city.

About Larkin Street Youth Services

Founded in 1984, Larkin Street Youth Services is a globally recognized nonprofit leader providing innovative and effective housing, medical, social and educational services for at-risk homeless and runaway youth ages 12-24 across 25 programs and 13 sites in San Francisco. Seventy-four percent of youth who participate in the full continuum of services at Larkin Street exit street life. For more information, please visit www.larkinstreetyouth.org.

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