

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**WOMEN'S INITIATIVE GALA TO HONOR COMMUNITY LEADER
LISA STEVENS AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS WHO WALK THE WALK OF
COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY**

WHAT: Women's Initiative Gala honoring women who walk the walk of commitment to community. Gala co-chairs DeeDee Towery, Rita Steel and Clothilde Hewlett request the pleasure of your company at the Women's Initiative's Gala. Join influential women and entrepreneurs for this year's best party for women-owned businesses emceed by Mary Huss, publisher of *San Francisco Business Times*. Appetizers, three-course dinner, entertainment, open bar and a marketplace of exquisite gifts offered by Women's Initiative graduates. The marketplace is a terrific opportunity to find items for yourself and the special people around you.

WHEN: Tuesday, June 6, 2006 - 5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Society event and fundraiser. *Marketplace opens at 5:30 pm*

WHERE: Westin St. Francis Hotel (335 Powell Street -- San Francisco's Union Square)

WHO: Hosted by Women's Initiative for Self Employment and sponsored by Wells Fargo, Charles Schwab and Union Bank of California. The event highlights honorees Lisa Stevens, Regional President of Wells Fargo Bank and graduate Eva Saavedra, owner of El Huarache Azteca Restaurant. Lisa is an example that women can live their values; Lisa is a mother, a mentor and a highly successful businesswoman. She has been a tireless advocate for women within her company and in the community. She has opened doors to entrepreneurship, business growth and professional success for many women. Eva Saavedra, owner of El Huarache Azteca, wows people around with her perseverance and delicious cooking. Over the last decade Eva has built her enterprise from a restaurant in her garage into a beautiful destination restaurant on International Boulevard in Oakland. When Eva opened the doors to El Huarache Azteca in 2001 she also found ALAS, the Women's Initiative business training program for Spanish speakers and signed up for classes. Today Eva employs thirteen people, including many family members and bought a house for her family. Like Lisa, Eva also gives back to her community in many ways.

COST: \$250 per person, or \$3,500 for a table of 10. All proceeds benefit Women's Initiative and its business training programs for low-income women who are working to turn their dream into a successful enterprise.

ABOUT WOMEN'S INITIATIVE:

Founded in 1988, Women's Initiative has been providing low-income women with the means to achieve economic empowerment through results oriented programs that address the cultural, social and economic barriers to self-sufficiency. An intensive 20-session course - in English or Spanish - launches women into business with a business plan, resources and most importantly the self-confidence to do it. Additionally, Women's Initiative clients can access much needed capital through the loan fund which administers relationship-based loans up to \$25,000. After graduation, women can access ongoing business support and expansion services through SuccessLink, which connects graduates with influential women in business, provides seminars and coaching sessions.

To schedule an interview before the gala or to learn more about our honorees and graduates, please call Justina at (510) 287-3109.

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