

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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WHO East Bay Community Law Center & East Bay College Fund

WHAT Community Justice & Education Concert featuring
R&B artist Goapele www.goapele.com & *Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir* www.oigc.org

WHERE Historic Sweets Ballroom
1933 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94612
www.historicsweetsballroom.com

WHEN Thursday, September 18, 2008, 8:00 P.M.

WHY East Bay Community Law Center celebrates its 20th Anniversary
East Bay College Fund celebrates its 5th Anniversary

TICKETS May be purchased at www.ebclc.org or www.eastbaycollegefund.org

SPONSORSHIP May be secured at www.ebclc.org or www.eastbaycollegefund.org

Berkeley, CA, August 28, 2008 — East Bay Community Law Center and East Bay College Fund announced that renowned R&B recording artist **Goapele** and the Emmy and Gospel Academy Award-winning **Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir** will help celebrate their respective anniversaries with a **COMMUNITY JUSTICE & EDUCATION CONCERT** at Historic Sweet's Ballroom in Oakland on Thursday, September 18, 2008.

"The inspiring music of Goapele and the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir are a perfect way for our supporters, partners and alumni to celebrate the work we do every day to build a community that is more healthy, secure, productive and hopeful," says Tirien Steinbach, Executive Director of East Bay Community Law Center (**the Law Center**). Part of Alumni Weekend at **University of California, Berkeley, School of Law**, the benefit concert celebrates the Law Center's twenty years of providing quality, free legal services and law student training and East Bay College Fund's five years of providing four-year **Great Expectations Scholarships** and mentoring to low income, public high school students. "This benefit concert will help us make a substantial difference in the lives of numerous young people and their families by helping them obtain a college degree," says Andy Fremder, President, East Bay College Fund.

The largest provider of free legal services in the East Bay and nationally recognized as one of the nation's premier poverty law clinics, the Law Center has provided training for more than one thousand law students and served more than 60,000 clients since its founding twenty years ago. The Law Center has achieved this by partnering with UC Berkeley School of Law in an arrangement that is analogous to the relationship between a teaching hospital and a medical school. "The Law Center exists to provide legal services for those most in need and to train law students to become skilled and compassionate advocates," says

Steinbach. Distinguished from traditional legal services by its dual teaching and service mission, the Law Center's emphasis is on cutting-edge, multidisciplinary practices and developing replicable models of effective anti-poverty lawyering.

The law students who started the Law Center in Berkeley in 1988 were deeply moved by the impact of the federal government's retreat from the anti-poverty agenda of the 1960s and 1970s. The decimation of affordable housing programs, the deinstitutionalization of people with mental disabilities created an unprecedented growth in homelessness. At the same time, severe Reagan Administration cuts to legal services resulted in the closure of neighborhood offices throughout Alameda County, including in Berkeley. Law students – stepping over homeless people on the way to classes – wanted to help. Founding Executive Director Bernida Reagan says, "With a three-person office in 1988, we began to create a web of support for our clients and reached out to many other legal and social service providers to address the problems that our clients faced." Twenty years later, the 30-person Law Center provides free legal services to 5,000 people and clinical education to 100 law students each year. Says Steinbach, "There will be challenges ahead. But the Law Center is ready to work together to overcome the roadblocks facing low-income communities and forge a new path."

East Bay College Fund believes that access to higher education and earning a college degree has enormous positive impacts for individuals as well as the community as a whole. "It is in all of our best interests to actively promote college attendance," says Fremder. Formed in 2002, the College Fund awarded seven \$16,000 four-year "Great Expectations" scholarships with mentoring support to Oakland public high school students who began college in 2003. Since then, grass roots efforts and contributions from a wide variety of individuals and foundations has enabled the College Fund to support more than 80 continuing scholars, including 20 Great Expectations scholarships awarded in 2008.

Coincidentally, a Great Expectations Scholarship recipient interned at the Law Center this past summer between her junior and senior years at California State University, East Bay. "I am living my dream and making my family proud" says Concepcion Solis, who concluded, "someday I want to be a public interest lawyer and help my community."

ABOUT EAST BAY COLLEGE FUND

East Bay College Fund is a community-based non-profit organization that provides substantial scholarships, mentoring, on-going college counseling and life skills training to East Bay (primarily Oakland) public high school students from low income families and communities with historically low college attendance rates. Since inception in 2003, the College Fund has provided more than \$1.3 million in four-year college scholarships to more than eighty East Bay youth. These young scholars are on track to achieve the College Fund's target 75% graduation rate, and several from its first class are already "giving back" to the community. From relying solely on friends and colleagues in the beginning, the College Fund has built a strong constituency of donors, mentors, and other volunteers who are passionate about the organization's mission. www.eastbaycollegefund.org

ABOUT EAST BAY COMMUNITY LAW CENTER

East Bay Community Law Center was founded in 1988 by students at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law. Today, the Law Center is the East Bay's largest provider of free legal services and a nationally-recognized teaching clinic. With its motto "Justice through Education and Advocacy," each year more than 5,000 community members receive free legal advocacy from more than 100 students under the supervision of fifteen full-time staff attorneys. Law students come from Berkeley Law and from law schools around the country to train at the Law Center and provide assistance to clients in the areas of housing, health care, immigration, income, community reentry, and economic justice. www.ebclc.org