



## *The Isabel Allende Foundation*

### **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Two Bay Area Nonprofits Receive \$20,000 Each**

*Isabel Allende Foundation Announces 2006 Espiritu Awards*

**2006 Winners:** [www.isabelallendefoundation.org/english/espirtu\\_awards.html](http://www.isabelallendefoundation.org/english/espirtu_awards.html)

SAUSALITO, CA, July 24 — Today internationally acclaimed author Isabel Allende announced the recipients of the 2006 Espiritu Awards:

- **Huckleberry Youth Programs** ([www.huckleberryyouth.org](http://www.huckleberryyouth.org))
- **Mujeres Unidas y Activas** ([www.mujeresunidas.net](http://www.mujeresunidas.net))

In celebration of the Isabel Allende's Foundation's tenth anniversary, this year's awards are \$20,000 each, the largest the foundation has given.

"I have a vision of a world in which women have social and economic justice," says Allende. "Women must receive education, be in charge of their bodies and their fertility, have the means to be economically independent and be protected from abuse.

"The nonprofits my foundation honors today are empowering women. They refuse to be hindered by tradition, discrimination and the usual economic obstacles that nonprofits face. They deserve all the help they can get. "

Isabel Allende established her foundation in December 1996 to pay tribute to her deceased daughter, Paula. During her short life Paula worked as a volunteer in poor communities in Venezuela and Spain offering her time, her total dedication, and her skills as an educator and psychologist. She cared deeply for others. When in doubt, her motto was: What is the most generous thing to do? The Isabel Allende Foundation was created to continue Paula's life work.

More information about Isabel Allende and the foundation can be found at **[www.isabelallende.com](http://www.isabelallende.com)** and **[www.isabelallendefoundation.org](http://www.isabelallendefoundation.org)**.

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**Huckleberry Youth Programs** provides adolescents and their families in San Francisco and Marin County critical education and health services including pregnancy testing and options counseling, HIV and other STI testing, male and female exams, short-term counseling and case management. Hundreds of young people participate in a wide array of programs at the Huckleberry Teen Center and many of them, in turn, become youth counselors, educators and leaders.

SAYS ALLENDE: "A person's entire life can be derailed by an unplanned pregnancy, a sexually transmitted disease or a health problem detected at a late stage. By creating a safe and truthful environment in which at-risk teens can learn about their bodies and choices Huckleberry is saving teens, their families and their futures."

Established in 1988 and now located in San Rafael, California, Huckleberry's Teen Health Program is a comprehensive health promotion and youth development program serving at-risk Marin County youth ages 12-21. Huckleberry's staff and peer counselors reach out to young people at locations where they "hang out", provide workshops in community-based settings frequented by high-risk youth and offer teen health clinics. In addition to working with young women, Huckleberry's "Male Involvement Program" strives to prevent and reduce unwanted teen pregnancies by empowering young men through leadership development, health education, cultural awareness and promotion of higher education.

CONTACT: [www.huckleberryyouth.org](http://www.huckleberryyouth.org)

**Mujeres Unidas Y Activas (MUA)** is a grassroots organization of Latina immigrant women with a dual mission of personal transformation and community empowerment. MUA achieves its mission by educating its members to be in control of their own lives and to become leaders in the community. Working with diverse allies, MUA also promotes unity and civic-political participation to achieve social justice.

SAYS ALLENDE: "As an immigrant myself, I am deeply moved by the courage and resilience of the women of the Mujeres Unidas y Activas community. They have overcome poverty, abuse, isolation and the tyranny of misinformation. As an empowered community, there is no limit to what these women can accomplish."

MUA believes that immigrant women themselves are uniquely equipped to find solutions to the problems that most directly affect their lives. While recognizing the formidable problems faced by Latina immigrant women, MUA draws on their strength as peer mentors, group facilitators, community educators and organizers. Its multi-layered services include support meetings and informational workshops, vocational training and workers' rights campaigns, leadership training and political education, community campaigns to address social justice issues on the local, state and national levels, and technical assistance.

CONTACT: [www.mujeresunidas.net](http://www.mujeresunidas.net)