

New Delancey Street building is dedicated

Rehab program will be able to double its capacity with bigger facility

By Bill Boldenweck
OF THE EXAMINER STAFF

A triumph of the will and the heart, and even a little desperation, has opened on the Embarcadero.

San Franciscans of all shapes, sizes, colors and backgrounds gathered Thursday in the courtyard of the Delancey Street Foundation's new block-long building at First and Brannan streets to celebrate its opening.

The variety of backgrounds was particularly notable because standing among the rich and famous were all sorts of former derelicts, druggies, drunks and jailbirds, and it was impossible to tell the difference except perhaps the latter were a little better and more carefully dressed.

Delancey Street is a sort of human recycling center, and in its nearly 20 years of existence in The City has graduated thousands of good and productive citizens from people who probably wouldn't have made it otherwise.

There are other thousands who have had to be turned away over the years because there just wasn't space for them in Delancey's five "campuses" here and in New York state, New Mexico, North Carolina and Los Angeles.

The new building on the waterfront will allow Delancey Street to double its population here to about 600, boosting the national total to about 1,000.

Many of the 177 dwelling units have views of the Bay that go for \$300,000 in the new condo structures on either side. New residents live in dorms but, as they progress, can move into two-bedroom suites.

The building also has spaces for encounter sessions that are part of

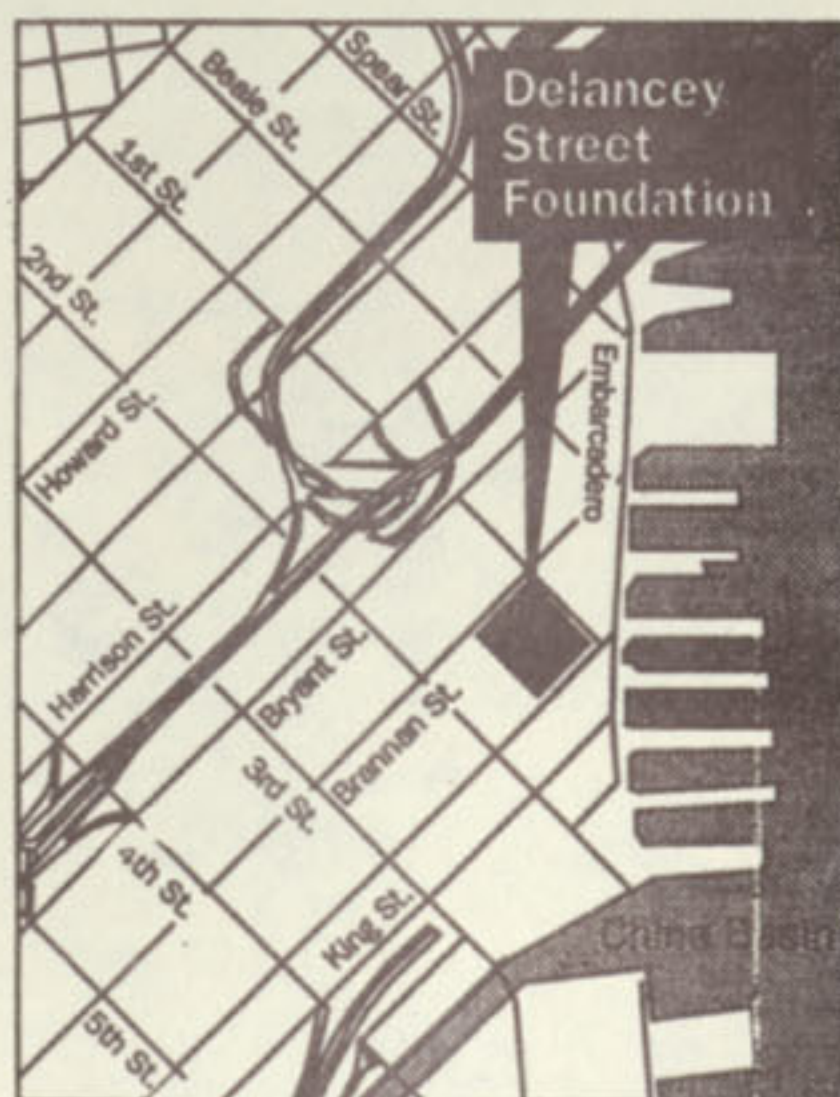


Mimi Silbert, president of Delancey Street Foundation, speaks at the dedication of the group's new building.

the program, a dining room, a library, recreation room and offices. Its four stories surround a Mediterranean-style courtyard containing sunny terraces and a small swimming pool and spa.

The unfinished street level floors will contain a restaurant and outdoor espresso cafe open to the public and retail shops that will help support the Delancey Street operation.

All the construction was done by members of the Delancey Street "family," most of them people who had never held a hammer, who learned the necessary trades, under supervision, as they went along.





EXAMINER PHOTOS BY CRAIG LEE

Building has *dormitory and sleeping rooms plus encounter, kitchen, dining, library, recreation and office space.*