

Legislators Pick Their Women of the Year

Winners share spirit of community service



Mimi Silbert

A criminal justice specialist, Silbert helped establish the Delancey Street Foundation, a residential treatment program for former felons and substance abusers.

During the two decades she's worked in the field, Silbert has directed the evaluation of more than 100 criminal justice projects and trained numerous law enforcement and corrections departments in alternatives to jailing convicts.

"The work I do is so basic to life," said Silbert, who as president of the foundation, lives in Delancey Street's Pacific Heights headquarters. The digs soon are moving to San

Francisco's newest neighborhood, South Beach.

I grew up in a poor area of Boston and I saw how some people could break out of (their living situation) and those who couldn't. The most exciting thing in the world to me is to see people taking old of their lives."

It is on that philosophy that Delancey Street, which serves 700 adults and juveniles in four states, was founded.

Chosen by Assembly Speaker Willie Brown as his Woman of the Year, Silbert said she will be accepting the honor on behalf of all the women who have participated in the Delancey Street program.