

Dance Arts **Now!**

The official NHSDA Newsletter for Middle and High School Students
Holiday Issue 2017

The holidays bring moments of reflection and opportunities to share the love of dance with our friends and neighbors, and even a bit of whimsy.

From...

- ✚ a fantasy journey to the Land of Sweets and Dreams,
- ✚ acting as diplomats in far away places and our own communities,
- ✚ choreographing and performing deeply into the soul, and
- ✚ just making someone smile...

we discover how our NHSDA members open their hearts to both young and old.

The National Honor Society of Dance Arts recognizes the achievements of dance students in both the public and private sectors. As reflected in this issue, we encourage freedom of expression and speech, with respect for philosophical, cultural, and religious beliefs.



Photo courtesy of America's Ballet School

A Special Dedication



*This edition of Dance Arts Now! is dedicated
to All Our Dancers, Friends, & Families
in the Wake of Many Tragedies ~
your Strength & Endurance Inspire Us All!*

*To assist with relief efforts,
NDEO has donated to the American Red Cross,
and we encourage our members to contribute to the
charitable organization of their choice.*

*NDEO is a community of professionals and students who share a
passion for dance education and are, in many ways, a family.*



Amy Nguyen and Dancers, Houston Independent School District. Photo courtesy of Sanja Korman



Photo by Scott Shaw

Train in New York City!

Gibney Dance proudly welcomes visiting students to our centers in NYC to study with our renowned faculty, get a glimpse of life as a professional artist, and take advantage of the resources our community has to offer.

Programs are available throughout the year for both Group and Individual study. NHSDA member discounts available on select programs.

Learn more at GibneyDance.org/Explore-Classes



NEWS

A Fantastic Nutcracker Character Experience

By: Holly Springs High School
NHSDA Chapter Members

"Watching our production of 'The Nutcracker' is amazing, but turning that world into something real is such great fun. The kids are beyond excited, and it makes me feel as if I am famous!" - Maegan Wasaff, NHSDA Member

During this celebratory season, the Holly Springs High School chapter invites children throughout the area to participate in the delightful **Nutcracker Character Experience**. "Pajama-wearing little ones travel through our school hallways visiting the representative nations of our 2nd Act, meeting dancers, learning cultural facts and being taught some simple movement motifs." (Laura Stauderman, Advisor)

The wide-eyed girls and boys complete their experience as guests at the wedding



ceremony of Clara and her Nutcracker Prince, followed by a luncheon reception and then the "sweetest cherry on top," namely the matinee performance.

Parents love taking photos of the children, all beaming as they present their "Nutcracker Passports" to be filled with international stamps. It is an extra-special event and one we look forward to each year.

News (cont.)



Photo courtesy of CFAC

Flip-flops ~ A New Kind of Dance Shoe?

Creating Young Diplomats

**Advisor/Sponsor: Jerylann Warner
Callanwolde Fine Arts Center**

“Primary Movers are a really big family that keeps on growing, so we want to lend a hand (and shoes!) to our friends in Cuba.” ~ Norah

“Making these flip-flops was a fun way to connect to dancers who, like us, all love what we do.” ~ Ha



Dance is all about movement, the gift of giving, and more ~ it is reaching out to inspire others! As an Atlanta NHSDA chapter, the dancers of the Callanwolde Fine Arts Center leap to complete humanitarian projects.

This year, these young diplomats decorated flip-flops donated to ***La Colmenita de Cuba***.

La Colmenita, which translates as “Little Beehive,” is a children’s theatre group that enriches the young lives of all abilities... buzzing in the arts.



Photos courtesy of La Colmenita





Photo of Niara

NEWS (cont.)

Niara & Hip Hopera ~ Contemporary Boldness

Advisors/Sponsors: Deborah Ford and Christina Horn
Plainfield Academy for the Arts and Advanced Studies



Kudos to assistant choreographer Aliyah “Niara” Daniel for her *hip hopera* pieces featured in the American premiere *Sympathy*, a Victory Hall Opera production. What is a *Hip Hopera*? ~ a fusion of hip-hop dance performed with opera music.

The young choreographer blended tutting, footwork, and other edgy combinations to compliment the vision of 18th century composer Jean-Phillipe Rameau. The opera dramatizes how a good fairy uses her telepathic powers (Fr., *sympathie*) to rescue two lovers from a villain. “This is an amazing opportunity,” stressed Niara, “I truly enjoy the challenge of choreographing hip-hop to music that is not typical of this genre.”

Niara has a leadership role in the Dance Ambassador training program under María Daniel, iDance Ministry founder and head choreographer for the opera. “Niara is an asset to any production; she brings a

bright perspective to our theatrical team. She is not afraid to create challenging choreography that is unexpected and mind-blowing,” commented Ms. Daniel. “When I collaborate with Niara, I do not see an inexperienced fifteen-year-old, but an incredibly talented choreographer and an amazing dancer. I am excited to see what her future holds.”

“I loved collaborating with such a talented group of choreographers. I was confident that we would exceed expectations when the Hip Hop Opera premiered,” Niara exclaimed of her experience.

Learn more about iDance Ministry:
www.idanceministry.com



A Young Dancer Surprises Guests At a Seniors' Assisted Living Home

**By: Sonya Monts
NHSDA Chapter Advisor/Sponsor
The Dancer's Extension**

J would like to relay this little story...
A while ago, my students visited our local nursing home to spread Holiday Cheer through dance. One little student especially stole the show.

After the performance, each child was encouraged to state his or her name and age. I walked up the line of students, placing my hands on their shoulders for their turn to speak. When I whispered, "Tell them your name and how old you are," one chirped, "I'm Jennifer, and I am one (holding one finger up), two (holding two fingers up), NO... THREE (proudly holding three fingers up!) and then the happy child



jumps seemingly countless times. The crowd of seniors went wild.

Sometimes it is just the sweet faces and actions of our children that warm the hearts of our dear seniors



Mark Your Calendar!

March 4-10:

✓ ***Dance a Difference Week***

...dedicated to dance-based service in our communities

nhsda-ndeo.org/danceadifference

May 3:

✓ ***Thank a Dance Teacher Day***

...the global movement to spotlight our Mentors as Champions of Quality Dance Education

ndeo.org/tadt2018



Dancing with the Faculty FUNdraiser

By: Anika Ames

**Advisor/Sponsor: Kerrie-Jean King
Northern Guilford High School**

The Northern Guilford High School NHSDA Chapter hosted its 3rd annual ***Dancing with the Faculty*** concert on November 16th. Modeled after popular TV show *Dancing with the Stars*, school employees and students partnered up to compete for bragging rights. The students took on the role of “expert dancer” and, the staff were considered the “amateurs.”

Classroom teachers, guidance counselors, custodians and even our school resource officer and principal participated. Partners collaborated to prepare fun choreography, entertaining music, and creative costumes for about a month leading up to the concert. NHSDA dance alumni returned to judge the competition and chose the winning duo, as well as awards like Best Costume and Audience Favorite, which was determined by online votes from the audience. Students, parents, and faculty members not competing came to watch those dancing on stage.

Ticket sales went to the Fine Arts Boosters Club to support the dance department.

I am a senior dance student who has taken part in this concert for two years. Last year, I danced with the school’s newest English teacher. Many of his students attended the concert to cheer him on, and they loved seeing him on stage! He picked the song *Float On* by Modest Mouse. Interpreting the song quite literally, we danced with pool floats and performed dazzling tricks that shocked the audience.

Dancing with the Faculty is a fun event that our school community always looks forward to! The friendly, competitive atmosphere allows students to see teachers and other staff members as equals, trying something outside of their comfort zone. Teachers applaud how their students excel at a skill not typically seen in their classroom.





Rewards of Community Service

By: Arabella Loera
Advisor/Sponsor:
Kristen Herlache-Dimmer
Pius XI Catholic High School

Arabella(l) serves in many leadership roles, including The Student Activities Council.

I find that my passion has one main theme ~ my need to help others. This is one way I share my love of dance and fulfill my goals of community service as an NHSDSA member. Therefore, I am an avid volunteer with organizations that root their mission and vision with sincere caring. Here are just a few stories I would like to share.

The Red Cross, "Cutie Pies," and More

As a volunteer with the Red Cross, I treat people who have insect bites, sun burns, sprains, and fainting, and my favorite experiences are with the "cutie pie" kids who have nothing serious but just think a band-aide is needed. They are curious to see me working because they think I am a big kid, too. One day, we'd only triaged patients with minor issues and along came Ella. She was teary eyed because she'd fallen and hurt her knee. Though there were no visible signs of injury, I knew just what to do. After the *Frozen* themed band-aide was applied (I keep those on hand) she was smiling through her tears, tempting me to change my name from Bella to Ella. That encounter made my day!

Another interesting day with the Red Cross, I'd never seen so many men in skirts ~ kilts, really, but skirts nonetheless. The patients were in a Scottish heritage event when they had minor cuts and bruises, but everyone was in good spirits. The Red Cross led me to the Special Olympics, to mentor and to learn from

Some great kids! This experience then drew me to serve meals with Tablesetters and Repairers of the Breach, for those who may not be able to afford enough healthy food. While these groups are so different with the people they aide, they all fill the role of helping others achieve a better quality of life.

Ambassador ~ Humbling, Amazing

And I love my school! Being an ambassador for my Alma Mater makes me feel like a constructive part of the community. One of my favorite diplomatic roles is traveling to middle schools and talking to kids about the Pius XI Experience! They are deciding on which high school to attend so they are eager to listen. At the end of the presentation they can't wait for in-person tours. I know that I have contributed to the team when the kids say that because of my visit, they enrolled at Pius XI ~ and love it.

Being a volunteer is about helping those in need, enriching us in these interactions and the memories that we form with people from all different walks of life. My involvements, coupled with being an NHSDA member, Pom Captain, and a Milwaukee Reign Athletics Coach, all mold me into the young woman I will become.

Such experiences, especially with my family's support, make me humble and I am excited to see what my future holds.





The Gift of Liturgical Dance ~

A Feeling of Peace & Joy

By: Payton Davis, Kathleen Lopez, and Anastacia Whitaker

Advisor/Sponsor: Mary Anne Herding

Senior Xavier College Preparatory

Dance is an art we have always loved, and now, attending Xavier College Preparatory allows us to share this gift with the community. One opportunity is to perform Liturgical Dance at our all-school masses. This style at first may have been unfamiliar to some of us, but to portray such important stories and people of the Catholic religion inspires us to respect and to more clearly understand the teachings of the faith.

Dancing in general is amazing and our experience when moving to the beat is indescribable. Liturgical Dancing feels the same way but as if we are dancing for a higher purpose. We gain a greater love and thankfulness towards God and for His gifts that are presented to us.

In the Bible, God talks about people dancing, so we believe we should also dance to spread His Light to everyone around us. We can then show how much happiness He brings us. What could be more inspiring than this Biblical phrase ~

You have turned for me my mourning into dancing... (Psalm 30:10)

And so, to us, dancing before the Lord is the same as praising Him.

The movements we create are often graceful and slow, with stylized pedestrian walks and hands folded in prayer or at the sides. Gestures celebrate and praise, reaching

upward or to each other, and symbolize kindness, gentleness, or a theme of the holy season. Curved ballet arms define deep expressions. The dancers sculpt meaningful shapes that travel through various levels that transform with focus and facing variations. We avoid anything too fast or unnecessarily complicated so that the reverence is maintained. We often dance to live choir music, which, intertwined with the movement, compliment the feeling and lyrics expressed in the spiritual song.

We feel a deep connection with God when we dance in mass, which in turn helps others understand the stories and love that He gives us. Our dancing is connected to all the other forms of worship that are happening in that moment and it is breathtaking.



“We are deeply grateful for Liturgical Dance and to perform at our school masses, for it is a feeling of peace and serenity.” ~ Payton Davis

“Liturgical Dancing helps me become closer to God and puts my relationship with Him on a higher level that I never thought was possible.” ~ Kathleen Lopez

“Dance to me is one of the best decisions of my life. Every year brings new lessons about myself. Dance has made me a better person. It makes me happy.” ~ Anastacia Whitaker

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NHSDA Members ~ Celebrate Your Creativity!

What is your passion when you move through space or choreograph an original work? How does dance affect your life and vice versa? The Dance Arts Now! editorial team welcomes your creative inspirations in our online publication!

Learn more: nhsda-ndeo.org/danceartsnow



Choreography Analysis:

"Patiently Waiting"

By: Akylah Cox

Advisor/Sponsor: Kathy Follensbee

Dr. Phillips High School Dance Magnet

Congratulations to Akylah for achieving NDEO's Artistic Merit, Leadership & Academic Achievement Award, 2017!

My solo-entitled *Patiently Waiting* is intended to take the viewer through my continued work to become a true artist. In the beginning, Nina Simone speaks of her compelling self-inflicted duty to reflect the time in which she lives through her art. While choreographing, I challenged myself to give thought to the current socioeconomic state of our country to create movement that generated *Truth*.

With the combination of Yann Tiersen's instrumental music *Comptine d'un Aytre*, the piece affords the observer the experience of both Nina Simone's full enlightenment and my own plight that does not quite meet attainment. Opposed to my typical choreographed works to strictly instrumental

music, I found it difficult to move to words without being literal. My biggest take away within the process was that one can venture into layering both successional and oppositional movement without losing the overall intention.

In closing, I believe the piece is a thorough representation of my message and, in the future, I seek to expand the work into a small group dance to be mounted in a "Choreographers Showcase."

View the dance:

http://www.nhsda-ndeo.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=661544&module_id=255321

Special Announcement!

2018



Award Criteria

Students who have been inducted into the NHSDA Secondary Program and are high school juniors and seniors are eligible for the NDEO Artistic Merit, Leadership, and Academic Achievement Award ~ the highest student dance honor in the nation!

Application Deadline: February 23, 2018

Link to NHSDA award: nhsda-ndeo.org/NHSDAaward

*Wishing All ~
Peace & Joy
Dancing into the New Year!*



Photo courtesy of NHSDA member Elizabeth Parry



Dance Arts Now!

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