



Dance Arts Now!

The NHSDA Newsletter for Middle and High School Students
Spring 2015, Vol. 2

~ Leaping into Spring ~

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As we read through these pages, we will find many inspiring, original writings and illustrations.

In our feature story, we learn the importance of community service in the public school system and how this impacts a former high school student

now in college. In another article, a young dancer discusses the benefits of a home-based education. A poet reflects on the beauty of Ballet, a scholar examines how the powerful technique of José Limón inspires us today, and a young lady honors her multicultural heritage.

We invite all NHSDA members to contribute to future issues of our newsletter. For more details, visit the official NDEO website, www.ndeo.org. ...And, of course, enjoy Spring Break!

The Dance Arts Now! Editorial Staff



Photo of Lauren Brown by Steve Clarke.

NEWS

SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS - U.S. Dept. of Education

In January 2015, Secretary Arne Duncan, U.S. Dept. of Education, presented a vision for the nation's landmark Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). On the 50th anniversary of the introduction of this bill, he called for a new law to ensure strong opportunities for all students and protect the most vulnerable. In his speech he expounded upon his support of the arts in education:

... I believe the arts and history, foreign languages, financial literacy, physical education, and after school enrichment are as important as advanced math and science classes. Those are essentials, not luxuries.
(<http://www.ed.gov/>)

RUTH PAGE AWARD Presented to Diane Rawlinson, Wheeling High School

“Kudos!” goes to NHSDA advisor Diane Rawlinson for earning the Ruth Page Award for over 30 years of tireless dedication to teaching young dancers both the arts discipline and the importance of community service. Ms. Rawlinson is the Orchesis Director and Dance Teacher at Wheeling High School in Illinois and Founder of Dance for Life's Next Generation, a student produced concert benefiting Dance for Life and The Children's Place Association.

Learn more: read our feature article *Dance for Life's Next Generation* by NHSDA alumna Tegan Reschke, whose mentor was Ms. Rawlinson.



Ms. Diane Rawlinson guiding Tegan Reschke in a technique class at Wheeling High School.

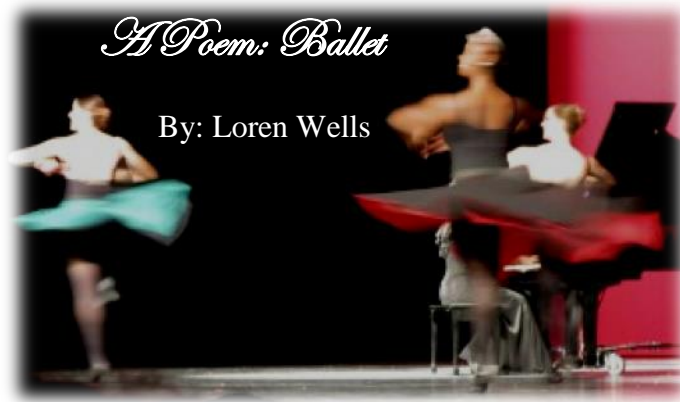


Photo courtesy of SOA.

Sponsor/Advisor: Ashlee Ratigan
Charleston County School of the Arts

Loren loves the worlds that dance offers –Ballet and Modern are her favorites. At school, she choreographs and performs her own dances onstage, and participates in Charleston All-County and Senior Thesis shows.

*A*dream that not many have,
Something so beautiful and graceful,
The expression brings out so many emotions that were untouched for years,
The soul of it,
The heartache,
The beauty that goes beyond your physical body,
Hundreds of hours go into practicing for one night on a stage;
Labor,
Pain,
And Stamina
All go into this,
But it is not just a sport,
It is something that you cannot enjoy without putting your soul into the effort,
If your soul is in the dance then you yourself feel the emotion of every step,
Your heart blends and reaches out to the onlookers.
You feel a wrenching heartbreak with a simple turn,
You feel a joy in the silent movements of this passion.

Ballet,
So unlike the usual talking of the entertainment world,
Is a silent fluid motion of beautiful things,
Instead of listening to words,
You enjoy just watching a quiet soul on stage,
Doing what they love,
And you remember your past and think of the future,
The good times of laughter,
That time of tears,
That boiling intense love;
The joy that burst through you,
A passion that flames up anew
The art of this dance and its beautiful soul is something to always continue.



Anizia (2nd from L) with her family.

Anizia has a great respect for multicultural understanding, and demonstrates leadership skills in school and the community. Among her goals is to become a professional book editor as well continue a lifetime of dancing.

A cultural background defines who I am, which encompasses the beliefs and customs of my personal heritage, where I live now, and most of all, the love of my family. It has a major influence on why I dance. My father is African-American, my mother is Dominican, and so their heritages continue to have a strong influence on why I dance. As a child, I would bounce along trying to imitate both of my parents' moves. These were my first interactions with dance, which encouraged me to continue my exploration of all art forms.

My father introduced me to many unique dance forms and music genres, such as African, Hip-Hop, and Japanese Relaxation music. Learning these styles helped to deepen our personal bond and it is what connects us as father and daughter. When a song plays, we both get up and dance because we are passionate about music and dancing.

Multicultural Influences ~ Why I Dance

By: Anizia Fulmore

Advisor/Sponsor: Ashlee Ratigan

Charleston County School of the Arts

Happy social gatherings with my mother's family always mean dance! When we visit my mother's family, there are always parties and everyone dances the prominent dances of the Dominican Republic, including bachata and merengue, with partnering and an 8-count step. These rhythms and tempos bring out the natural dancer in me. I have a connection to the music and my body flows.



ClipArt

The awareness of these dances expands my knowledge of other dance forms. Knowing these dances helps me teach others who may have limited or no knowledge of them. In dance class, where we learn about other cultural dance forms, I assist my teacher by helping provide my classmates with a better understanding about the identity of the dances.

My major influences about why I dance mainly involve my parents. Their two backgrounds infused together helped pave the way for my knowledge of multicultural dance, beyond Ballet and Modern. I have grown to appreciate all music and dance because I have been exposed to these diverse styles of music at an early age.

***My family is the reason why I love to dance ~
Mi familia es la razon porque me encanta bailar!***



Merengue Photo by Garry Knight (Flickr) Creative Commons.



Artwork by Rachel Keough.

Masterful Pavane: José Limón's Life and Impact on Modern Dance

By: Emma Havighorst

Sponsor/Advisor: Rachel Miranda
Ridge High School in Basking Ridge

Writer Emma Havighorst participates in the Ridge Dance Team and Collective. She has done many types of dance, currently Modern and Hip-Hop.

Artist Rachel Keough is a member of the Ridge Dance Collective choreography group and performs in the Ridge Drama Club musicals. She is inspired by the passion of dancers.

***Dance is a moment...then it is finished.
In the dance I feel I am living completely.***

~ José Arcadio Limón

These words by José Limón couldn't be truer. Hours and hours are put into each dance, perfecting each position and movement until the dancer's limbs ache, yet on stage it all comes together in a perfectly effortless moment. This drive to perfection is the reason that dancers study new techniques and go to class. As a result, one technique they should study is Limon technique.

Born in Mexico in 1908, José Arcadia Limón and his family moved to the USA when he was still very young; later he attended college as an art major. He headed for New York City to study design, but was inspired to dance after watching a Modern performance,

of which he noted:

What I saw simply and irrevocably changed my life. I saw the dance as a vision of ineffable power. A man could, with dignity and towering majesty, dance... dance as Michelangelo's visions dance and as the music of Bach dances. (José Limón Dance Foundation)

He began technique classes at the age of 20 at the Humphrey-Weidman school, and performed on Broadway as a featured dancer in *Keep Off the Grass*, choreographed by George Balanchine.

At this time, Limón experimented diligently with his own choreographic style. He then worked with May O'Donnell and others, but returned to collaborate with Humphrey-Weidman, which in turn led to the founding of his José Limón Dance Company in 1946.

His accomplishments were extensive: faculty at The Juilliard School, director of Lincoln Center's American Dance Theatre, artist-in-residence at the American Dance Festival. He performed with his company across the continents and at the White House. Mexico welcomed him to choreograph several dances for the *Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes*... with accolades immense. Although he died of cancer at the age of 64, he lives on in his artistry.

Limón's signature masterpiece was *The Moor's Pavane*. Based on the story of Othello, he created this in a way that mirrored the complex emotions explored in the Shakespearean play. He used the pavane, a Renaissance-era processional

dance, as a basis for the choreography, which he interpreted with either sharper or more fluid movements, depending on how the altering character of Othello was to be portrayed. At one moment the "Moor" might express being gentle, at another, being so enraged that he would resort to murder. Limón's other famous dramatic dances include *Missa Brevis*, *La Malinche*, and *Danzas Mexicanas*.

Limón continues to have a large effect on Modern dance, especially with the widespread use of "Limón technique," known to emphasize the use of breath with natural falls and recovery. His focus on musicality and dramatic expression exude depth of feeling and a maturity within movement.

Students learning Modern dance will absolutely be using Limón's technique - whether they know it or not. Therefore, they should learn about José Arcadia Limón, his creative passion, and the importance behind each of his movements they perform. Each movement has a history, a meaning, and students should learn his technique in class so that they will understand how crucial even the seemingly simplest of breaths can be represented in the span of our artistry and dance culture.



Photo courtesy of Ridge High School.



**Why I Chose a
Home-Based Education Program ~
To Benefit my Dance Education**

By: Ashley Peitz

Advisor/Sponsor: Dori Matkowski

Dance Dynamics Performing Arts Center

Ashley is a member of the Dance Dynamics Performing Company and is an advocate for community service. She has performed across the country, including Disney World, Disney Land and Las Vegas. Ashley is also training in acting, vocal, and aerial arts.

In my seventh grade year of public school, I decided I needed more than just a few hours of technique classes after school in order to get the most out of my dance education. In the next year, I joined Clonlara. Now I realize, through this experience, being a performer is much more than just learning technical dance moves and routines.

Clonlara is a home-based education program that I discovered through my studio. My decision gave me time during the day to train more intensely in my craft. At my studio there are several students who dedicate their days to not only train in dance, but to study life skills and the entertainment business.

What I now understand since I chose this home based education program is that everything can be a learning experience. I used to live my everyday life as merely a routine - wake up, get ready, attend school, and then dance - but throughout this time I could have accomplished so much more.

A major learning event for me this year was when I had a grade-3 sprain in my ankle,

which resulted from a fall in Ballet class. Of course I was upset, but I was also happy that I was able to figure out why it happened. I took the time during classes that I had to sit out to find which parts of my ankle I needed to strengthen and how to make the quickest recovery possible.

I also thought about how much effort I should put into my classes and how every time I should be at the top of my game because we never know when an accident will happen. I applied my school subjects into my life. Example: How is a dancer's anatomy different from that of a non-dancer? That type of learning I find more beneficial than any other because I can relate to it to me personally and apply it for the rest of my life.

Another way my present dance education benefits me is that I can focus purely on my choices at the studio. Often when I did public education I arrived at dance distracted on an incident that had happened earlier in

the day whether it was bullying, a test result or just homework. These distractions

affected my performance in class and prevented me from not working to my fullest potential. Being out of public school I am always surrounded in a positive environment and can take my schoolwork at my own pace so I never have to worry about cramming for the next day.

Of course distractions do come along no matter where I go to school, that is why I am lucky I can spend all day with amazing mentors who teach me how to overcome them in a professional and positive way. Clonlara helps me stay positive and focused on becoming the best performer I can be.

Lastly, being a home-based education student in the dance world teaches me how to be independent. Being in this type of program I don't have someone spoon-feeding me information every minute, I must be on top of my work and self-motivated to complete assignments. I know that once I graduate there will be no one there to make sure I am going to auditions or making sure my bills get paid. *I will be self-sufficient.*

This independence also applies to my life right now. I am at an age when my parents shouldn't have to worry about finding out dates and times of dance rehearsals and events - being in the Clonlara program I am prepared to track everything and on time. I alert my parents about specific dates, including payments and meetings. I would only accomplish this with the knowledge I have gained from being in Clonlara.

Programs such as Clonlara are not for everyone but it has worked out perfectly for me. I wouldn't have learned how to focus on my dance education without distractions or be the independent person I am now. Without this home based education I wouldn't be the student, performer or person I am now. Choosing a home based education program was right for me and it continues to benefit my life in so many ways. I am proud to call myself a Clonlara student because I know it has changed me for the better.



Photo of Dance Dynamics Performing Company and Ashley preparing for The America's Thanksgiving Day Parade in Detroit.

FEATURE ARTICLE



Photos courtesy of Dance for Life's Next Generation, Wheeling High School.

Dance for Life's Next Generation

By: Tegan Reschke

Student, Kent State University

Former NHSDA Member, Wheeling High School

Advisor/Sponsor: Diane Rawlinson

Tegan Reschke is a freshman at Kent State University and was a member of Wheeling High School's Orchesis dance program for three years. Opportunities to choreograph, work with guest artists, and volunteer have all been a blessing in her journey as a dancer and as a leader. Tegan has been involved with Dance for Life for four years now and is passionate about people using their gifts to make an impact.

Curtain call isn't usually the image that defines a dance concert. The bright colored lights, story-like movement, and emotional music mark most of my memories of performing - none of which is missing in Wheeling High School's benefit concert each year. But the curtain call is special. At the conclusion of a concert that contains pieces from youth companies across the Chicagoland area, that one final bow captures the image of a community's determination to make an impact.

Dance for Life's Next Generation was inspired by and acts as a pre-benefit for Chicago's Dance for Life concert that is now held at the Auditorium Theater each August. As HIV/AIDS began to tear at the arts community, dancers recognized that their passion for dance could act as definitive tools on behalf of their friends. Keith Elliot started Dance for Life as a way to use the medium he knew best to create a support system for fellow dancers in need.

Having just celebrated its 23rd year, Dance for Life continues to support the AIDS Foundation of Chicago as well as the Children's Place Organization and the Dancers Fund. Since its founding, Dance for Life has flourished as the community continues to embrace the power in uniting together. Diane Rawlinson, dance director at Wheeling High School, has helped integrate student involvement into the benefit concert, giving young adults the opportunity to make an impact within the greater community.

When I first volunteered as a sophomore it was the 20th anniversary of Dance for Life, and the celebration is something I'll never forget: it was breathtaking. Earlier in the summer there were volunteer opportunities to hang posters in downtown Evanston and Chicago as well as to organize ticket distribution at the Dance for Life office downtown.

Stuffing tickets into envelopes and taping posters to restaurant windows didn't seem like an extraordinary role. But after the first piece was performed at the concert that August, I immediately recognized I was a part of something much greater than myself. The lights, performers, and music all inspired me; but the most amazing part was realizing that I served the same goal as the professionals on stage.

People who regularly support and attend Dance for Life now associate it with the volunteers. Specifically, they ask about the students they see each year holding doors open and lining the street from the reception hall to the theater with signs to direct the way. Each year the students change, but their presence remains, and I feel blessed to have had even a small part to play in the magic of that event.

What left me awestruck about Dance for Life's community impact became even more real once I became immersed in our school's pre-benefit production as one of two student directors. Being appointed to such a great responsibility opened my eyes to the work ethic that leadership requires. The most humbling, beautiful part of directing the benefit for two years was realizing all of the opportunities for ownership and the number of people ready and willing to care. I've learned that if you give people the opportunity to show compassion, that they will rise to the occasion...and lead others with the same desire.

There is never a dull moment once the benefit comes around. Designing posters, charts for lighting, program order, T-shirt order forms, ticket forms, and collecting raffle prizes are all pieces of the bigger picture as well as the behind-the-scenes work that allow students to leave their mark.



This past year our benefit celebrated 20 years, and like always, it was a day filled with unexplainable, joyful chaos. As companies arrived for their scheduled rehearsal time on stage and the halls filled with a rainbow of costumed dancers stretching, I could feel a common smile on everyone I met that day. For so many new faces all meeting for such a short amount of time, there was an instant connection with

everyone involved that kept us all far from being strangers.

Backstage, dancers who never met before watched each other perform through the curtain wings, offered last-minute smiles, and clapped for one another. There was professionalism about these young dancers (my peers) that made me realize how much they all understood their powerful contribution. Through the blur of dancers entering and exiting the stage, each dance resembled a gift given back to the community.

Whether a professional event in the city or a student-directed concert in a high school theater, the heart put into these Dance for Life events are equal. What continues to inspire me is how they capture the quality of selflessness to connect dance to the community and to connect dancers to one another. And what inspires me about Dance for Life's Next Generation is that this younger generation embraces their

capability to serve and refuses to wait their turn to make a difference.

When given the opportunity to serve - to unite - as a community, dancers, no matter the age, recognize how art and community are meant to strengthen one another. As dancers, our art is not meant solely for ourselves. When connected with a responsibility to our community, our art gains a greater purpose. That's why, amidst the applause that fills our high school auditorium at the end of the benefit each year, the curtain call holds special warmth as we all stand, and dance, as one.



Photos courtesy of Dance for Life's Next Generation, Wheeling High School.



Master Dance Classes!

Special Invitation!



Student Dance Day
Kemps Landing/Old Donation School
Virginia Beach

Saturday, March 28, 2015

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Doors open for Registration 8:00 AM

Student Registration: \$20.00

Join us for an exciting day of Dance!

- Special classes designed for elementary, middle, and high school students
- Unique classes for dancers of all levels
- Plus an afternoon of student showings of dance compositions created during the day or previously choreographed

***We hope that you and your school will attend this NDEO Honor Society event
& participate in the student performance!***

For more information, contact

Dr. Mary Ann Laverty
Virginia Beach Gifted Dance Education Specialist
malavert@vbschools.com

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Student Performances!



Photos courtesy of Wheeling High School.

Dance Arts Now!

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