Dance Arts Now!

The official NHSDA Newsletter for Middle and High School Students
Summer Issue 2019

PC Claudine Rainieri

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Summertime ~

Warm breezes and gentle waves echo how we flow when we dance. In this issue, follow expressions of dreams, challenges into victories, and leadership with compassion…all of which enhance the wisdom and creative well-being that float throughout our lives.

News

Congratulations to Our 2019 NHSDA Achievement Award Recipients!

Junior and Senior NHSDA members are eligible to apply for this award, one of the highest secondary honors in the US. Candidates excel in three categories: Artistic Merit, Leadership, and Academic Achievement. All National Award Recipients are invited to participate in a choreography and performance project at the NDEO National Conference. Check out future editions of ***Dance Arts Now!*** for their writing contributions. Here are the 2019 exemplary winners:

Yoshi and ensemble perform. PC PVPA Charter Public School

National Award Winner

Yoshi Sanders, Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School (MA)

National Award Finalists

Alizia Matthews, Arendell Parrot Academy (NC)

Ani Rosen, Windward School (CA)

National Award Honorable Mentions

Claire Shubeck, Union County Academy for the Performing Arts (NJ)

Ethan Myers, Arts and Communication Magnet Academy (OR)

Hallie Walters, SC Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities (SC)

Julia Boberg, San Marino Dance Academy (CA)

Julia Lawton, Harrisonburg High School (VA)

Julia Rademacher-Wedd, Whitney M. Young Magnet High School (IL)

Kali Hightower, Cranbrook Kingswood Upper School (MI)

Megan Murphy, Dr. Phillips High School Dance Magnet (FL)

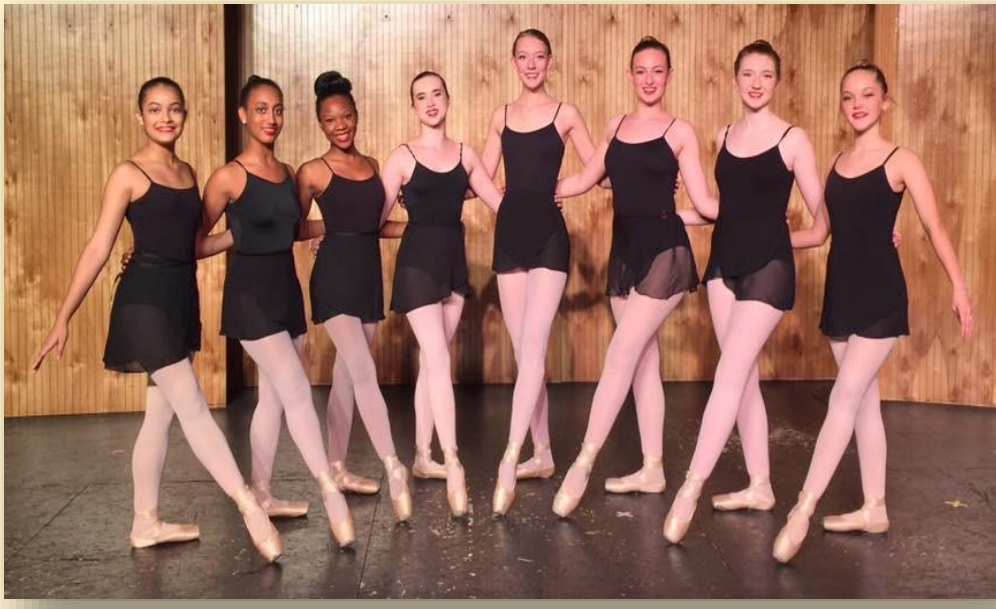
Learn more:

nhsda-ndeo.org/NHSDAAward2019

NHSDA Students Mentor Students!

Southern Indiana School for The Performing Arts ~ Youth Ballet Co.

This year-round program prepares students for dance careers with a strong technique base. Artistic Director Debra Rice Endris stated: "Dancers learn about the 'real world' of a professional company while under the nurturing guidance of a close-knit group." A broad brushstroke of arts disciplines helps dancers discover their unique style. Designated ambassadors called ***Duets,*** partner with their peers and new and younger students, which reinforces a healthy studio atmosphere.



PC Youth Ballet Co.

Tour De Force Enhances Well-Being

Dance Theatre South offers the ***Tour De Force*** ensemble training for students to build strong technique, teaching skills, and leadership within a positive environment. They perform to raise funds for charitable causes and, by means of their "buddy" system they give other students constructive feedback and write good luck notes before programs.

PC Dance Theatre South

A Moving Testimonial: *In reflection, one deeply personal experience was when the students performed a benefit for a friend and teammate diagnosed with lymphoma, who is now "dancing with the angels."*

PC Western Kentucky University

Humane ♥ Dancers

We love this photo above celebrating "**Dance a Difference Week!**" Western Kentucky University NHSDA members serve their community with kindness and heart at the Bowling Green Warren County Humane Society. **Thank you!**

PC Fallbrook HS

Fallbrook Highlights

Fallbrook High School's performance dance team has had a great year. They starred in sports events and sponsored clinics for local youth. They performed with the professional dance company Mojalet Dance Collective and showcased their own student choreography. **Great job!**

After Graduation: Careers in Dance!

As our NHSDA members investigate careers upon graduation, their chapter advisors, as NDEO members, can access "Dancing after High School" on the DELRdi web pages and share the information with these students. This index offers many options for future professional dance-related programs and more relevant topics. DELRdi is a research project initially supported in part by the US Dept. of Education. To locate this valuable resource, go to: ndeo.org/delrdi

Cheers for "Dance A Difference Week!"

NHSDA chapters across our nation celebrated "Dance A Difference Week," **March 3-9,** with dance-based service throughout our communities:

- ***Sharing the joy of dance through performance***
- ***Teaching a dance class for community members***
- ***Completing a chapter service project and philanthropy***

Check out our pp. 11-12 for NHSDA member Carly Weinsier's article on her chapter's (St. Thomas Aquinas HS/Dance Explosion) contribution and, thank you to all our wonderful chapters for your dedication to helping our neighbors, both near and far, through our love of dance!

Pictured R: "We are so proud of our NHSDA student choreographers and dancers for their hard work in the Student Choreography Showcase. We raised $910 for the Humane Society of Harford County! Thank you to everyone who helped make this event a success!" ~ Dance Conservatory of Maryland Teachers & Staff

PC Dance Conservatory of Maryland

PC American Dance Academy

NHSDA Star

Asia Blackwell, who studies at the American Dance Academy and Sanford School, recently received accolades. She attended the Millennium Dance Complex in Los Angeles, which she noted, "I especially liked learning the differences between East and West Coast approaches to many styles." She earned a scholarship to AMDA College and Conservatory of the Performing Arts and was invited to perform a contemporary duet through Artist Simply Human (ASH), which was also livestreamed. Her dream, "I would really enjoy studying in the sunny skies of California!" ***Congratulations!***

Our forever loves

By: Nana Osaki
Advisor / Sponsor Marguerite Luksik
Central Midwest Ballet Academy

The lively melody of the piano echoes through the room
Delicate dancers in satin pointe shoes
Like little porcelain dolls in pretty costumes
Following the subtle musical cues

Minutes and hours and days and weeks
Spent on what we love to do the most
Working diligently and persistently to perfect our technique
With social media, we also need to post!

Curtains go up in a sea of darkness,
The audiences chatter put to an end
Lights shine bright illuminating promise
5, 6, 7, and 8

Dancers' legs and lines begin to extend
Dance is our forever love and forever friend….

PC Nana Osaki

Perpetual Valor

By: Ani Rosen
Advisor/Sponsor: Alesia Young
Windward School

I created the solo, ***"Perpetual Valor"*** to express the battle of having an invisible. chronic disease through something as beautiful as dance. At fifteen, I was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease. Though describing my experience in words can be challenging, dance is the perfect outlet to express not only my times of weakness, but also my times of strength.

As I begin, I "strike" my stomach and crumble to the floor. This gesture repeatedly serves as a motif for the disease bringing me down, taking a toll on my body, and setting me back. Small, crawling movements capture the hardship of my initial time getting sick. With each strike against my body, I surge forward, building on my strength and resolve. I move diagonally across the floor symbolizing my processional movement from my place of struggle toward a brighter and stronger future. I lit my performance space with one special light to not only symbolize the hope I strive towards, but also to create my shadow behind me as a constant reminder of the disease that stays with me and my every movement.

While improvisation is comfortably intuitive and fluid, I found choreographing my first solo challenging to craft my movement without being able to watch and critique objectively. Another challenge was finding a piece of music that captures the whirlwind of emotions that I face with Crohn's, all while working in an eight by sixteen-foot space using my iPad as a mirror and my dog as my audience.

PC Ani Rosen

To Exercise Freedom

By: Jada Clark
2018 NHSDA Award Honorable Mention
Advisor/Sponsor: Maria Royals
George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology

Although I am still trying to figure out exactly who I am, dance has given me the means to explore my individualism and realize that it is okay to feel, it is okay to fail, and it is possible to fly.

I dance to exercise my freedom to create and for the privilege to have control over my mind, body, and soul. Throughout all the struggles that come along with living and growing up, dance has been my constant. Regardless of how I feel, there is always a movement to either communicate or ease the emotional roller coaster I often cannot explain. I am the most free and comfortable in my own skin when dancing. Dance in the studio provides an environment of constantly learning what it means to set and accomplish goals.

Striving for excellence in dance has also translated into my academic philosophies. The same self-evaluation allows me to constantly push myself in school. Regardless of the grade, I know when I am ~ or am not ~ giving assignments my all or am aiming for excellence. Whether it be a pirouette or math test, dance has taught me to always try my best to improve. It has allowed me to discover the necessity of life skills such as organization, time management, and discipline. Through choreographing for fellow students, I have developed a leadership role with an understanding of what it means to respect others and help lift them up. Struggles and successes teach us that there is always a lesson to be learned and to appreciate the process rather than just the finished product. Dance has also impacted my way of thinking. I am grateful for the artistic lens that allows me to analyze the world.

In the future I hope to help bring communities together and inspire others through my choreography. Watching dance should not just be a spectacle. I want my influence to help audiences escape their reality for the few moments that they are viewing my work and hopefully in the end they will take that feeling to help get them positively through their everyday lives. I want people to see the way that God is working through me and I hope my success brings more people to Him. I plan to *give back everything* that I have learned throughout my career to the youth, whether that means opening a studio, teaching master classes, or giving lectures.

Dance has truly been a haven in my life, and I would love to provide others with a healthy, creative outlet for self-expression and, most importantly, self-discovery. Dancing in school, at my studio, and in church has presented this gift that I want to share with as many people as the Lord will allow me t

When Hysteria Turns to Happiness

By: Sophia Bierstein
Advisor/Sponsor: Rachel Miranda
Ridge High School

Sophia has been dancing as part of the Ridge Dance Program for fourteen years, competing for six years, and is now studying at Maximum Performance Dance.

Dance has been a big part of my life for as long as I can remember. From starting ballet class at age 2, to now competing and learning advanced choreography several times a week, it takes up my life in the best way possible. When I started competing in 6th grade at Maximum Performance Dance, my studio was brand new and I was specially selected along with only nine other girls to start a team that would make a name for us.

From our first competition we ever attended, our young, innocent selves were terrified to perform against many amazing, experienced dancers. Our first production number was a mess. We had no idea what to expect, and thought the dance was the hardest choreography we ever encountered. Meanwhile looking back, the choreography was so simple it now shows how much we have improved as dance students. In one duo, an unexpected obstacle had a surprising result.

Summer Sadness

Four years ago, a teammate and I were given a duo, but neither of us had ever done this before, and we were extremely grateful and excited for the opportunity. Our duo, titled "Summertime Sadness" included the songs "Summertime Sadness" by Lana Del Ray and "Summer" by Calvin Harris. We wore red pants and leotard, with a red headpiece. That year we competed at Starpower in New Jersey and it was a difficult one. Teams from all over the tri-state area attended this huge competition, including the renowned team World of Dance with over 500 members. Our number went on in exactly 1 hour, and I went with my hair and makeup done, ready to perform. Although I was extremely nervous, I tried to think positively to focus on executing my duo.

In the dressing room shortly before our turn to dance, I was ready to change into my costume. But where was it? Frantically I dug through my duffle bag, and to my surprise, my costume was nowhere to be found. I tore through the entire dressing room, searching for this essential piece to perform. I remember running and crying to my dance teacher and Mom, not knowing how to react to this awful situation. I called my Dad and asked if there was enough time for him to bring my costume, but he was already well on his way. At this point, I went into panic mode ~ and I did not know what to do.

Suddenly we realized that two of our team members had competed a duo a brief time before, and they happily let us borrow their costumes. I felt extreme guilt and sadness for my dance partner Erin who came fully prepared and, with tears in my eyes, I knew I had just let both her and my dance teacher down. This was my fault and I should have double-checked my bag before leaving my house. Seconds before going on stage, my dance teacher gave us a pep talk, telling me to forget about my mistake and to focus on nailing the dance. She explained that this learning experience twill only make me a better dancer and learner. With that in mind, Erin and I entered the stage.

Summer Happiness

The entire performance was a blur. While dancing, I did not remember anything. After exiting the stage, I assumed I had done a bad job because of what just occurred moments before. I was so afraid to see my dance teacher again, in fear of what she would say. When we reached her, she said that was the best she had ever seen it. I was shocked. She was so proud of us for pushing through, focusing on performing the best we could under these rough circumstances.

At awards that night, I did not know what to expect. Did we look ridiculous or did we survive gracefully? As it turned out, we did perform well! Out of all the duos, we came in 3rd place. I was so overjoyed; I could not believe my ears! 3rd place was the highest we had earned the entire season, and it was the one performance where I was so frazzled.

I learned that my panic, in fact, turned into adrenaline, and all the stress completely paid off.

Sophia (R, 2nd row) with her Ridge Dance Team friend. PC Ridge High School

Dressing Up for "Dance a Difference Week!"

By: Carly Weinsier
St. Thomas Aquinas High School
Advisor/Sponsor: Lori Duffy, Director/Dance Explosion

Carly is a leader in her NHSDA Chapter and plans to study Dance/Dance Medicine at University of South Florida starting this summer. She recently noted: "I am happy to be wearing my NHSDA honor cords when I graduate this May!"

Costumes inspire dancers and their young audiences both on and off stage. PC Dance Explosion

I want to share with you that we had a successful year as an NHSDA chapter and held several community service projects, including a special collaboration with Traveling Tutus, Inc. In cooperation with this organization, we supported our local Jack and Jill Children's Center during Dance a Difference Week. I am also a "Studio Ambassador Team" Leader for this non-profit, whose mission it is to share the gift of dance by donating gently-used costumes for children around the world.

As part of this effort, these young participants are introduced to the performing arts and healthy physical activity, which in turn helps instill confidence, self-expression, and joy. Traveling Tutus, Inc. provided opportunities for our dancers to learn skills in leadership and collaboration, to serve as mentors and opportunities for our dancers to learn skills in leadership and collaboration, to serve as mentors and be mentored, and to develop communication skills with a sense of philanthropic activism and humanity. Led by Seniors Angela Scopa, Alexandra Garner, and myself, our members rallied to raise funds to purchase a dress-up station. Traveling Tutus Studio Ambassadors Isabella Hassett, Emily Caravella, and I coordinated drives throughout the year to collect gently-used dancewear for this project. We also raised funds to cover the cost of shipping items for children in several countries.

Our dress-up station, which was delivered during spring break, contained costumes of various styles and sizes along with featured

Studio Ambassadors donate costume dress-up station to Jack & Jill Education Program Manager Jackie Berlin. PC Stephanie Weinsier

hats, tiaras, leotards, plus ballet, tap, and jazz shoes. We were so pleased to find the "Jack and Jill" Center children and staff both appreciative and excited to dress up and ***"play"*** dance!

The Jack and Jill Children's Center of Ft. Lauderdale aims to break the poverty cycle within high-need working families through quality early childhood education and family strengthening programs. Their vision is for every child to have the necessary tools to be successful in life. Now, they have creative ways to be successful dancers and budding performing artists!

As an Ambassador, I am honored to share my costumes with these deserving children and I really enjoy showing younger dancers how to give to others with special dance projects.

Studio Ambassadors Carly and Isabella visit the Jack & Jill Children's Center. PC Stephanie Weinsier

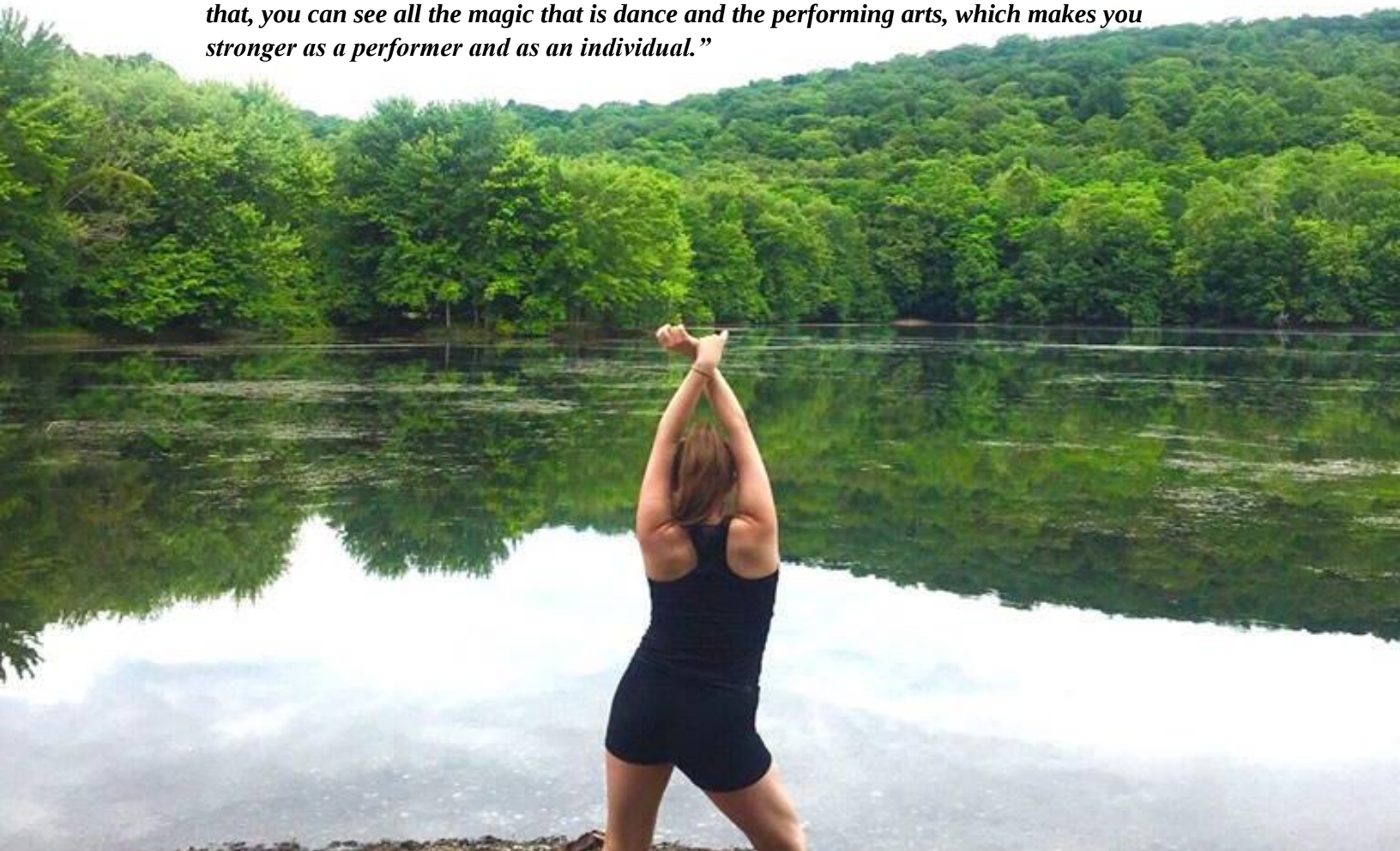
Collegiate Message ~
Propelling Passion
For the Arts

By: Emily Pagano (Graduate)
NHSDA Advisor/Sponsor: Claudine Ranieri
Paramus High School, ***PC Emily Pagano***

"I can honestly say that to have the privilege of dancing in high school is what truly propelled my passion for the arts. Looking back, I'm a completely different person and I'm proud to say that I finally love who I am because of the confidence that dance has given me. Seeing how far I've come and reflecting upon my past, I realize there is so much more to accomplish.

Dance isn't just something I love, it's who I am. It's more than that I have the passion and energetic drive, it's that I must dance. Everything is earned through hard work, commitment and the drive to always do one's best. I finally feel that I have a better understanding of who I am and who I want to be. Through dance, I've tested my limits and challenged myself more than I ever thought I could. This has helped me realize that in dance, it's truly only you versus yourself.

It's up to you to be the one to push yourself beyond your expectations. In the real world, it's up to you to be the one to overcome even your darkest moments and push past the feelings of self-doubt you may have. Everything starts and ends with you. Once you realize that, you can see all the magic that is dance and the performing arts, which makes you stronger as a performer and as an individual."



Dance Arts Now!

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Be Published!

***Dance Arts Now!* is the official newsletter of the National Society for Dance Arts™ (NHSDA) Junior and Secondary Programs**.

Our Editorial Staff invites student inductees and their chapter sponsors to contribute stories, poems, articles, chapter news, photos, and other creative works for our future editions!

Learn more:
https://nhsda-ndeo.org/

Past NHSDA Graduates. PC Paramus High School

Congratulations

To All Our Graduates ~

Past & Present!