



Arts Now!

The official NHSDA Newsletter for Junior and Secondary Students
Summer Issue 2020



Summertime!

Dance shines throughout summer with warm, creative ideas that reflect our learning within the past school year and which we will carry into our future. In this issue, we read articles about ways dance inspires us to support our communities and how choreography makes a powerful statement for the benefit of all, near or from afar, with a sense of hope.

Contents:
Black Lives Matter
Editorials
Display
News
Choreography

PC Yoshi Sanders, 2019 NHSDA Award Winner



"Not all the works are political, but they certainly reflect my feelings about what goes on in this country. I mean I can't get over that. I'm a black man living in this." ~ Alvin Ailey

PC: Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Alvin Ailey's Revelations with cast of 50. Photo by Christopher Duggan

NDEO Black Lives Matter Statement

NDEO sees, hears, and stands with the Black community. The indefensible deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many others before them, have sparked protests and calls for justice and reform throughout the country. We recognize the importance of protest as a catalyst for change in bringing an end to systematic racism. We support all those working for justice and an end to racism and violence against the Black community in the United States and around the world, yet that connection is often overlooked or outright erased in the practice of teaching dance in studios, schools, and universities. We recognize the vast contributions of Black dancers, educators, and choreographers, yet we know

that they are often marginalized in dance degree curricula, neglected in funding, left out of the textbooks, the course syllabus, the canon, and representation in leadership.

Together with our Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Committee, we will continue to seek ways to fight for justice within the dance community. We know that there is still much to do within our organization and within dance education. We will continue to seek new ways to ensure that Black voices are heard and recognized within our membership and throughout the field. We know that dance has the power to affect change in our communities and the world, and we seek to be part of that change.

Black Lives Matter.





PC Kali Hightower

*I dance to express my emotions.
I dance to express my voice.*

Before I could walk, run, or speak, I could dance. My movements translated my thoughts, which became my first language, submerging me into a world of free expression. Dance is unique from any other art form, and that is why its presence in schools is crucial.

Growing up as a dancer, I have gained two important qualities as my foundation: 1) Discipline and 2) Communication. Great discipline is required to increase my extensions and reach higher heights through patience and constant refining. To increase by barely a centimeter takes time and commitment. My total devotion to giving all my energy while maintaining stamina emotionally and physically demonstrates my discipline. Most of all, I have unveiled my greatest passion and revealed to the world my second voice.

I am grateful for my gifts and the qualities that dance inspires me to develop as a person. Still,



Editorial

"My Emotions...My Voice"

By: Kali Hightower

2019 NHSDA Award, Honorable Mention

Cranbrook Kingswood Upper School

Advisor/Sponsor: Kay Reiders

in retrospect, I am aware that in many areas, dance education is not readily available, or even allowed, for children. Sadly, there is little consideration for the quality impact the discipline brings to the world:

*Cooperation, Collectiveness, Self-Confidence,
Interdisciplinary Learning, and Healthy
Exercise.*

A vital aspect of life is the education we receive in early childhood, and I deem it fundamental to provide dance education to as many youths as possible. With this positive learning, they will then realize their potential, and their gifts will present a significant impact on their communities and the world.

More and more students show signs of psychological distress due to pressure in school or family issues. We must not ignore these problems. Dance provides an outlet addressing this concern to support positive mental awareness and act as a vehicle for those struggling to find a space for self-expression. The human body is a powerful instrument that continually changes, allowing new, positive outcomes primarily through dance.

I must raise my voice through dance to evoke an outcry, denounce injustice, and celebrate empathy. From math to history, the foundation for an interdisciplinary education can only be complete with the arts. When we dance, we are storytelling, which is therapeutic for everyone. If we communicate that all people must have exposure to dance, this discipline will thrive in supporting humanity.





Editorial

Passion for Dance Leads to Compassion for All

By: Julia Boberg

2019 NHSDA Award, Honorable Mention

San Marino Dance Academy

Advisor/Sponsor: Majahlet Siba



PC Julia Boberg

A few years ago, I made an important discovery ~ ***dance is my passion!*** Like many girls, I began dancing at three years old to become a part of its beauty. In fourth grade, I decided to take a break and focus on my violin but soon noticed my stress rising with frequent headaches. A year later, when I returned to the dance studio, my pain diminished; I was more patient and happier. Through this, I discovered that passions are realized by what joy they bring and how lost we are in their absence.

Pushing past my limits in technique class has inspired me to take risks outside this safe space. With my dance foundation and related fine-tuned academic and leadership skills, I have created new ideas and disciplines at school. For example, I took part in a Junior/Parent Dinner, and this experience gave me the courage to choreograph multiple numbers for the accompanying Gala. With my hard work ethic ~ learned from my mentors and family ~ I was able to direct my classmates skillfully so they could nail every step, every detail.

Going forward, I want to advance my training to influence my friends, neighbors, and the world. One goal for the upcoming year is to organize an event based on a theme that features artists in my community. I am planning a formal visual arts showcase inspired by Malala Yousafzai, a leader who I genuinely admire. She speaks out in support of a girl's right to receive an education, a right which had been forbidden in her town in Pakistan. Like Malala, I hope to raise awareness around crucial issues and, most importantly, about mental illness. United, the

arts are a powerful force to deal with these concerns.

According to Child Mind Institute, 17.1 million American children have a mental disorder, but a lack of societal understanding often halts them from getting their desperately needed help. I will support awareness through my arts events for the Children's Foundation of Orange County (CHOC), whose mission advances children's health care and well-being. To achieve this objective, the organization merges mental health with advanced physical treatment. Psychologists work with medical teams to heal their patients' emotional needs.

I have watched a close friend struggle with depression, a disorder which many people brush off as just a "teenage phase." Her story demonstrates the stigma that must be addressed and removed. Depression alters neural circuits in the brain...*but there is hope*. Treatments like medications and therapy, especially dance therapy, have proven to help normalize brain alternations As Malala has stressed, to all "who have faced injustice and been silenced, together we will be heard." Therefore,

*I will apply dance to inspire my peers to
engage in understanding pressing issues
that have long been held secret*





Editorial

Dancing Through the Unknown

By: Julia Lawton

2019 NHSDA Award, Honorable Mention

Harrisonburg High School Fine Arts Academy

Advisor/Sponsor: Amber Corriston

Adapted from an article by: Assma Ali, HHS Media

PC Julia Lawton

COVID-19 ~ It is scary, mostly because so much is unknown, and the social isolation thing is so hard. But it has been beautiful to see the world coming together in this. If making these sacrifices can save lives, then, of course, we should temporarily close the schools.

I am heartbroken for sure. Mostly I feel the loss in not having my last dance concerts. We have been working on some of the pieces for a long time, and it is so sad to know that they will not be performed.

Above all else, I will miss the people. I am so grateful for the relationships I have built with my teachers and classmates. I will miss working closely with them every day, especially in my art classes.

I think all we can do right now is find projects we care about to keep us busy. I have been taking online dance classes and continuing to create choreography. Albeit from afar, I find solace in the arts and maintaining connections with friends and loved ones.

To my senior class: Stay strong, lovelies. I know this is not what we expected or hoped our last bit of high school would look like, but we will get through it. Much love to you all.

And a message to our underclassmen: Do not be afraid to ask for help. Take ownership of your learning and enjoy every minute. I know high school may not feel amazing every moment, but trust me, you will miss it.

* * *

"Our Choreography!"

When Harrisonburg City Public School Fine Arts invited students to contribute to their **Virtual Art Festival**, Julia and her NHSDA friends announced: *"We believe, in hard times, the most powerful thing to do is dance! Send us a move, a pose, a short phrase, and we will piece them all together, with music by Azalea Twining, to create OUR choreography. Social distancing does not mean we are alone. Stay strong everyone! Let's dance!"*

MAKE ART. BEAT COVID. SPREAD JOY.

VIRTUAL ART FESTIVAL

"Art is the only way to run away without leaving home."-Twyla Tharp



First Ballet Slippers ~ Love on Display

By: Kelly Cimaglia

Ridge High School

Advisor/Sponsor: Rachel Miranda

***I took a photo of
my first pair of ballet slippers
and my polaroid wall
to display
the memories and opportunities
that have come into my life
because of dance.***

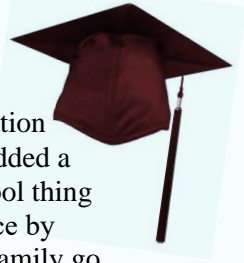
***Starting dance as a 2-year-old has made me into the person I am,
and I could not be more appreciative
of Dance.***

NEWS



Ms. Stannis with her dancers. PC MetroTech HS

Graduation Flash Mob!



Two years ago, Metro Tech High School began a graduation tradition. Notes NHSDA advisor Lauren Stannis: "We added a flash mob celebration after our formal ceremony. The cool thing is it is completely student-led." Everyone learns the dance by watching the online tutorial; as the students and school family go through the instructions, the demonstrating dancers face out like a mirror, so all moves begin on the right side. Our amazing administration team is not afraid to try fun, new exercises, and support our students' dreams!"

Ms. Stannis continues:

"While fighting COVID-19, we will be safe and responsible social distancing, while we post fresh new dances online because ~ we have a great group of seniors!"

Check out this fun dance here:

<https://www.phoenixunion.org/Page/23277>



Student dancers demonstrate the "Flash Mob." PC Metro Tech HS

NEWS (cont.)



All PC Academy of Dance Arts

Ruby Red Slippers Awards **and More ~Oh My!**

In honor of their **Over the Rainbow 20th Anniversary**, the Academy of Dance Arts presents their **Ruby Red Slipper Awards** “to dear dancers who exemplify what it means to uphold the values we all cherish as a studio!” These students positively show ways to:

- + **Overcome challenges through determination and commitment,**
- + **See a need and jump into action,**
- + **Support their fellow classmates in meaningful ways,**
- + **Be shining mentors for young ones,**
- + **Serve others with their dancing gifts,**
...were all recognized.

Many celebratory events are planned, including the Senior Division performance “**Over the Rainbow ~ Where Dreams Really Do Come True**” and the children’s “**Munchkinland**,” plus the street jam/hip hop “**A Brand-New Day!**” finale extravaganza.

No obstacle will stop these young artists from achieving their dreams! And due to concerns about COVID-19, the program will be held later this autumn. Notes Julie McFarland, artistic director: “*Everyone wants to see our students’ shining progress, and they deserve to perform. Just as Glinda told Dorothy, they have the power within themselves!*”





All PC Greater York Dance

NEWS (cont.)

*Dancing from a
Distance ~
Our Hearts Are
With You!*



The National Dance Education Organization is monitoring developments regarding COVID-19 and its impact on our schools, travel, and gatherings. As this situation continues, our priorities include the health and safety of our students, members, and staff.

With schools and studios closing in response to the outbreak, NDEO members are generously sharing teaching strategies now posted on our Online Forums. Next, review the NDEO guest blog ***"Behind the Curtain,"*** which includes dancers' personal experiences:
ndeo.org/behindthecurtain

And be inspired!

Read

Dance Arts Now!

*In this unprecedented time,
we now post online
many excellent
students' stories, poetry, and artwork.
Our latest and past issues:
ndeo.org/danceartsnow*



PC Ailey II in Alvin Ailey's Revelations. Photo by Eduardo Patino

NEWS (cont.)

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Brings Dance to the People

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, recognized by U.S. Congressional resolution as a vital "Cultural Ambassador to the World," celebrates the African American experience within the American modern dance tradition. This inspirational company has performed for over 23 million people in 48 states, and 71 countries on six continents.

If as first planned last spring, the company would have been on its national tour, showcasing the 60th anniversary of its signature work "***Revelations***." Sadly, the tour was postponed due to the pandemic and social unrest, but the masterpiece can be seen on PBS' "Live from Lincoln Center," along with more special gifts for its audiences during this challenging time! ...

The Ailey members have been sharing their free online streaming series

brimming with full-length repertory works, technique classes, and original short films created by the Ailey dancers. Continuing with this project, The Ailey organization presented the first-ever ***Ailey Spirit Gala*** global broadcast, featuring the ***Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater***, the rising stars of ***Ailey II***, gifted young dancers from The Ailey School and talented students from the ***AileyCamp***, plus guest appearances. Connect to www.alvinailey.org for additional information.

Soon, the Ailey organization will return to a full schedule of training and educational programs and performances that will inspire in a universal celebration of the human spirit.

Bravo!

Spotlight: Choreographic Intent

By: Megan Murphy

2019 NHSDA Award, Honorable Mention

Dr. Phillips Dance Magnet High School

Advisor/Sponsor: Kathy Follensbee



PC Megan Murphy

My artistic intention for the piece *"Burdens"* was to represent the challenges that we all carry and hide, and on a personal level, to convey my struggle in finding purpose and direction in life. However, as all choreographers know, the end-product went through transformations, which became an authentic manifestation of my internal reflection.

In the beginning, sharp, forceful gestures represented heaviness and confusion. Contrasts between slow lyrical and staccato movements portrayed conflicting feelings versus performing a different role in the world. About half-way through, the mood shifted to optimism. I found purpose, a path to take, and the music became more literal.

I reached out for a sense of hope...

But then

I fell.

This desperate reaction led to the final chaotic moments. Fast, erratic movement projected a sense of struggle to keep my head above water when I felt utterly overwhelmed.

There is immense pressure on our youth to succeed, to "fit in," and this has conceptualized my piece, resolved by my physically stretching into the entity of perfection or achievement ~ yet, never obtaining this desire, which is ultimately *intangible*.





All PC Claire Shubeck

"Bound"

By: *Claire Shubeck*

2019 NHSDA Award, Honorable Mention

County Academy for the Performing Arts

Advisor/Sponsor: *Kathleen Gavin*

I named my dance *"Bound"* to describe the inspirational feeling for the movement. Applying to college has forced me to delve into my personal story and to decide what is important about *me*. This self-advocacy to promote myself as a qualified candidate made me realize what is unique about the way I respond to both my emotions and to the world. I have had to analyze my past challenges and how I have moved through them.

One obstacle stemmed from middle school when I bottled up frustrations experienced socially. I had every reason to burst into tears then, but never did and saved reacting to these cruelties when safely home. This tension portrayed in my piece revealed how my feelings yearned to escape ~ yet were forced inward. Thankfully, from an early age, dance has been my consolation, my strength.

I took my first class as soon as I turned three years old, and I have not stopped since. Although the decision to start was my mother's, the resolution to pursue dance for the next 15 years has been my dynamic choice. With my mentors' guidance, I have flourished from "kinder-combo" to the professional level. In the process, my dreams have driven me to work hard so to one day belong to a renowned institution such as the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, Paul Taylor Dance Company, or Complexions Contemporary Ballet.

At age eleven, I participated in my first dance intensive and, since then, have studied every summer. Until a one month-long program, I had never been challenged as greatly to be better

than anyone but myself. To trust a stranger to flip me upside down, was an unexpected dare. I left this training both physically and mentally exhausted but fueled with a vast amount of inspiration to propel me through the school year and beyond.

Leading to college, I have seriously trained to perform on many stages around the world. Competitions and recitals are their own forms of touring that investigate a new performance environment at every location. With every event, I have been fortunate to have the unique opportunities to dance, share meals, and live with artists from Singapore, Sweden, Italy, and Japan. This opportunity has prompted me to continue sharing my love for dance with many cultures and to understand their diverse views amid our universal language.

With these relationships, I developed valuable tools that would lead me in assisting and teaching dance classes for children ages 2 to 15 for the past six years. I love teaching because I share my technique and the healing effects this art affords. This practical training has honed my patience and reasoning skills while being especially aware of how to pinpoint what might upset a young dancer to help build his or her confidence.

I also now understand how essential dance is in making audiences contemplate about and then act upon serious issues with positive results. Not only as a creative outlet, the art form can support important causes, such as when I performed to raise funds for cancer research.



Ultimately before stepping on stage, I acknowledge all the training that affords this fleeting moment. I must keep dancing because I can only imagine being sad if I stopped. Each time I feel sorrowful or worried, dance revitalizes me within a safe place...in the studio, at home, on stage, and in my mind.

My favorite dances are those that impel me to cry because I am so happy, and I wish to share this joy with my audience. We will then carry our uplifting feeling in our hearts, long after we have exited the theater.

"Bound" shows how I grew out of the immature bottling of my feelings.

I learned from this hardship, and now...embrace who I am.

"A Nod to Robbins"

By: Julie Lawton

2019 NHSDA Award, Honorable Mention

Harrisonburg High School

Fine Arts Academy

Advisor/Sponsor:

Amber Corriston

***"Give me something
to dance about and
I'll dance it."***

~ Jerome Robbins



PC Julie Lawton

As a dancer in the Fine Arts Academy, I mount works based on specific themes. For the showcase *"Decades,"* I created ***"A Nod to Robbins,"*** a piece in the style of ballet choreographer Jerome Robbins. As I spent much time researching his style, his approach struck me. Besides the typical ethereal ballet aesthetic, Robbins often had his dancers move in a more human or even pedestrian way. His choreography then could be playful and understandable for audiences.

Robbins also focused on establishing connections particularly between the music and the dance. He did not want to create movement that was just

accompanied but rather have the two parts as equals. *PC Julie Lawton*

I hoped to emulate Robbins's carefree style by creating a piece that was genuinely centered with the music and so I chose to have a live pianist on stage with me. As she played, it seemed the movement happened spontaneously, transported in unison with the music.

Creating in the style of an established choreographer was a new experience for me. I grew in my ability to analyze composition, expanding my movement vocabulary that would include elements reflecting the aesthetic genius of Jerome Robbins.



Dance Lifts Our Lives

~ In and Out of the Studio

By: Ethan Myers

2019 NHSDA Award, Honorable Mention

Arts and Communication Magnet Academy

Advisor/Sponsor: Jason Davis

By pure serendipity, I discovered the magical world of dance when I tagged along to my older sister's ballet classes. I was instantly mesmerized by the studio atmosphere, the swirl of pink tutus, and the dancers' graceful elegance and perfect timing. I immediately thought ballet was cool, but it wasn't until I saw a male dancer deftly lift his ballerina, twirl her around, and then leap across the stage with his perfect splits ~ I found my passion in life.

That was thirteen years ago, and since then, I've danced with the Oregon Ballet Theater in numerous roles in their annual *Nutcracker* production. I've made Pinocchio come alive for the Portland Ballet's production *The Enchanted Toyshop*, and I've *salsaed* and *tangoed* to upbeat numbers with DanceWest, my school's pre-professional dance company. Being a dancer has afforded the ability to share my creative fervor, my joy in movement, and my excitement for the rich variety of dance.

Ballet training requires not only agility and strength but grace and fluidity. All who are devoted to an athletic ambition must train their bodies to peak condition and maintain stamina to perform their best. Ballet requires staying in shape by eating healthily and keeping a strict technique regimen even outside class. By taking care of my body, I have learned discipline. The balance between teamwork and leadership is crucial to attaining success but being able to communicate with others is key to success. Dancing taught me the paramount lessons of poise, creativity, and collaboration.

In addition to my dedication to the arts, I find inspiration in civic activism. Imagine a child



PC Blaine Covert. Dancers: Ethan Myers, Azella Chang

No access to drums, pianos, or guitars that might inspire the next Jimi Hendrix. No choir groups or glee clubs to discover the next Adele. No knowledge of the rich variety of dance forms: classical ballet, ballroom, hip hop, or tap. Not watching live theater where classmates magically transform into all the zany characters from Dr. Seuss's book *"Go Dog Go!"* No hope for a budding van Gogh to discover the wonder of mixing oils to create a field of sunflowers.

Such a bleak picture is the tragic reality for many kids who live in areas where arts programs have been slashed or never were offered in their schools. This deprivation not only stunts a child's creative potential but sabotages a community's well-being. Unfortunately, our society too often dismisses the importance of the arts when these disciplines contribute to creative, healthy lifestyles.

A well-rounded education consists of a solid integrative foundation in the arts, sciences, English, math, humanities, and physical education. Yet whenever a school struggles to balance its budget, the first to be cut are the arts programs because many people mistakenly think art will not have any long-term benefits for children. Sadly, creative subjects are labeled as frivolous and impractical, with no potential to lead to successful employment. Because of this

limited scope, schools put art classes on the chopping block, “cleaning house” for the tight budget. But that misguidance is wrong.

My zeal as a dancer and youth activist has prompted the impetus to demand quality arts education in public schools across the United States. I was elected to the Beaverton Mayor's Youth Advisory Board, and, as the appointed Civic Affairs Officer, I work with the mayor and fellow high school students to grapple pressing issues such as: teen homelessness, bullying, school safety, and public transportation. In my campaign to raise awareness concerning students deprived of arts education, I've advocated for funding and arts electives in schools in such venues as DanceWest showcases. Drawing from my drive promoting social change and the empowerment of art, I also participate in my school's

performances, collaborate with Beaverton's Arts Foundation, and assist local dance companies by partnering as a guest artist.

Because I believe so deeply that the arts belong to everyone, not just the lucky few, I aspire to create a free website that offers dance lessons, historical information, and other related resources for dancers around the world. Dance motivates me to take on pressing issues as a giant step to move closer to my goal ~ lifting every student with real challenges to access and achieve the creative outcomes they deserve.

I vow to continue my contributions to support dance for all.



PC Ethan Myers

Through

By: Julia Rademacher-Wedd

2019 NHSDA Award, Honorable Mention

Whitney M. Young Magnet High School

Advisor/Sponsor: Jeanette Gordon

I often choreograph to instrumental music because there are no words that might confine the choreography to a specific message. Franz Schubert's "Impromptu No. 3 in G-Flat Major" compels me to dance, so it inspired this work. I chose Franz Vorraber's instrumental performance because he adds a spiritual contemplation through a slow tempo.

As the piece begins, the top note stretches over arpeggios, which creates in my mind the image of a flowing stream with a calm surface but deep within a strong current. As the first section resolves, the music becomes turbulent. The low chords that produce this change make me think of a storm at sea ~ intense and inescapable. Those chords dissipate, and the music seems to lift as I envision the sun emerging behind a menacing cloud.

In addition to drawing inspiration from the mesmerizing water movement, the changes in

the music mirrored the cycles of emotions that I dealt with during the months I spent choreographing this work. I recently confronted trauma stemming from a sexual assault I attempted to ignore for years, and every day I had felt antithetical about it, sometimes calmly, yet sometimes with intense sadness or anger.

Whenever I did not know how to feel, I poured into my choreography the emotional turmoil with which I was learning to live so I could express the upheaval...externally. Thus, I titled my work "***Through***" because as I moved through the music, I moved through my emotional ***Journey***.

PC Julia Rademacher-Wedd





Dance Arts Now!

Editorial Staff

Susan McGreevy-Nichols,
NDEO Executive Director
Colleen Hearn Dean,
Senior Editor

Melissa Greenblatt,
Managing Director
Kari Schrade,
Program Coordinator

Dance Arts Now! is a publication of
National Dance Education Organization
8609 2nd Avenue, Suite 203-B



Silver Spring, MD 20910

301.585.2880

©National Dance Education Organization, 2020, All Rights Reserved

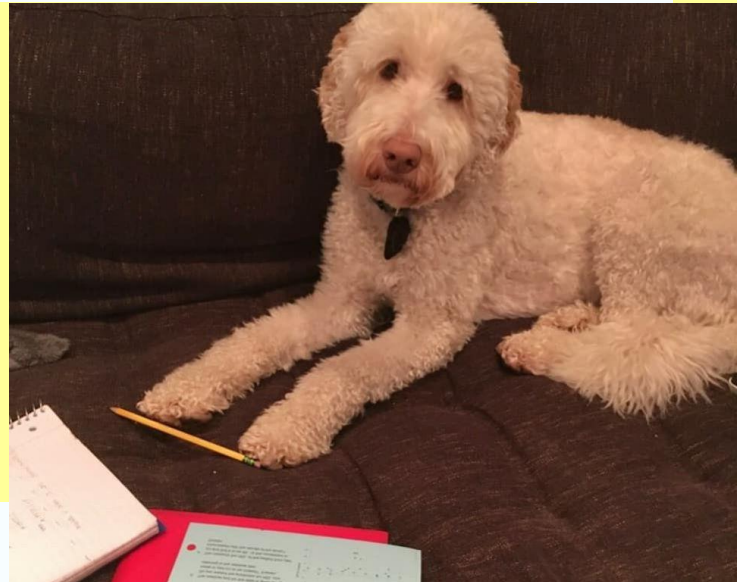
Be Published!

Dance Arts Now!

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

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

Learn more: nhstda-ndeo.org/danceartsnow



PC All That Dance

Disclaimer:

The National Honor Society for Dance Arts (NHSDA) recognizes the outstanding achievements of dance students in both public and private sectors. To foster this true art form, we respect and encourage freedom of expression and speech for philosophical, cultural, and religious beliefs. Reference herein to any specific religious beliefs or practices does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by NHSDA or the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO). The views expressed in this document are those of the article authors and do not necessarily state or reflect those of NHSDA or NDEO



PC Whitney M. Young Magnet HS

***Congratulations to
Our Brave
NHSDA Graduates!
Your Leadership, Personal Growth, and Community Service
Will Forever Make a Positive Impact On
Our World!
Continue Your Dream
Dancing
in Your Next Great Adventure!***

