



Dance Arts Now!

*The official Junior/Secondary NHSDA Newsletter
Back-to-School Edition 2020*



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Back-to-School Edition 2020NHSDA Newsletter
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Welcome Back to School in Creative Spaces!

***Enjoy these exceptional writings and
illustrations as we enter a new chapter in
our Lives!***

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PC: Image concept & design by Julia A. McFarland, Academy of Dance Arts. Photography by Russell Jensen, Sage Studios

I Can't Wait to be a Dancer
By: Stephanie Aiello
Ridge High School
Advisor/Sponsor: Rachel Miranda

*I can't wait to be a dancer,
And glide across the stage like a beautiful swan.
I can't wait to jump so high,
that I touch the sky.
I can't wait to be lifted high in the air
and see the amazed audience.
I can't wait to be Clara in the Nutcracker,
and run away from the scary mouse.
I can't wait for my dream to come true.
I can't wait to be a dancer.*

*I can't wait to be a dancer,
and tippity tap throughout the stage.
I can't wait to shuffle ball change and step cramp roll.
I can't wait to dance as light as a feather
and go crazy with my toes.
I can't wait to just dance with my feet
and amaze people as I go.
I can't wait to star in Singing in the Rain,
and become the next Gene Kelly.
I can't wait for my dream to come true
I can't wait to be a dancer.*

*I can't wait to be a dancer,
and be as fierce as a jazz dancer.
I can't wait to be strong and powerful,
and turn for days.
I can't wait to be so sharp,
that my switch leaps can cut through anything
I can't wait to have high energy,
I can't wait to be as sharp as Danny Kaye.
and be funky and free.
I can't wait for my dreams to come true.*



Grace Glides on Blistered Feet
Writing, Photo, Artwork By: Emily Flaherty
Live Love Dance
Advisor/Sponsor: Valerie Gunnels Meredith

I would like to submit the accompanying Artwork as a gift for the NHSDA Newsletter.

While we were all in quarantine last spring, I did not want to just look at screens all day, especially when all my schoolwork and dance classes were virtual.

I decided to create something basic in design, to enjoy myself while doing so. I love dancing and I know there are many others who love dancing as well and would enjoy seeing this. I thought sharing with everyone here would be the best place to do so.

The meaning in this watercolor is mainly that Dancing sometimes leaves blisters emotionally or physically. But that does not stop us in our desire to express ourselves in Art, in Dance.



Grace

Glides

on

Blistered

feet



Emily Blalock



PC Academy of Dance Arts. Photograph by Russell Jensen, Sage Studios

***Viewpoint
Reminisces ~
Wonderful Moments
in A Studio***

By: Chloe Bender

Academy of Dance Arts

Advisor/Sponsor: Julie McFarland

Chloe graduated last spring, but her words will inspire our dancers entering the new school year. Noted her advisor: "As we see from her senior photo, Chloe has studied with the Academy of Dance Arts since a tiny tutu-wearing Strawberry!"

I love dance because it has given me amazing opportunities to do incredible things. The studio has afforded me a safe, creative outlet and a place to have fun and be with friends. I love the encouraging atmosphere and loving second family dance has provided.

Some of my favorite memories have been working with Flutter Productions, an all-ability performance company. To dance for their grand opening, to performing with the Black Hills Symphony for a Halloween show, to the incredible Fashion-Able benefit...

I have loved every second dancing with Flutter.

I would like to pass along the following advice to younger dancers: Listen to your teachers and be alert in class. Do not worry about everyone else and how good they might seem; work hard to reach your personal goals.



Viewpoint

By: Ryan Jaffe




2020 Finalist, NHSDA Award

Dreyfoos School of the Arts

Advisor/Sponsor: Branndi Lewis

I am so appreciative of how dance influences my life. As a male dancer, I am now confident performing before audiences and have developed a thick skin to deal with situations like when people mistreat someone out of ignorance. In fact, I have turned negatives into positives ~ treating people better through the process. I am more observant, kind, empathetic; I seek to be an active listener with a passionate understanding and appreciation for differences. I try not to let things get to me too gravely so I can put maximum effort into every facet of being...in and out of the studio. Through dance, I have discovered how to break past my limits to evolve as a stronger individual, both mentally and physically, much farther than I ever thought possible.

Humbleness is the key to success, which is why I want to show that my most genuine self will allow me to succeed as an artist. Along with my artistic skills, I want to bring so much more to the dance community, including:

-  *my dedication to doing my best,*
-  *my willingness to lend a hand anytime it is needed, and*
-  *my desire to encourage those around me.*

For the past seven years, I have attended my arts magnet middle and high school dance departments, which encompass a vibrant,

creative community. I thrive on multiplicity and the give-and-take of collaboration. I understand the importance of cooperation rather than competition.

Throughout high school, I have participated in many performances to raise funds for both the dance program and the school's foundation. I have also interned with Miami City Ballet's outreach summer camp. Partaking in activities like these, helping communities through my love of dance, brings gratitude for everything I have and do every day.

Exploring movement is extremely interesting, and I plan to continue choreographing in solos and groups. In technique, there is no maximum pinnacle, and I am fascinated by the functionality and athleticism of the human body. Understanding the mechanics creates a fine awareness of oneself and others, and so, along with being a dancer, I strive to become a physical therapist who works specifically with professional dancers.

It is difficult to put into words how much dance means to me... even harder to measure its impact. Nevertheless, I know I will share what I have learned through this incredible art form and as I go on to college and discover my future path, I am glad I will apply dance along the way.





Viewpoint

Love Your Body!

By: Morgan Olschewske

2020 Finalist, NHSDA Award

Florida Ballet Conservatory

Advisor/Sponsor: Heather Olschewske



PC Morgan Olschewske

Dance has occupied an enormous part of my life for as long as I can remember. As soon as I could walk, I was obsessed with the art form, taking classes, and attending performances ~ always dreaming of the day when I would become a professional. As I grew older, I fell in love with ballet, but as I trained, I realized I did not look like many of the ballerinas ~ not only the shape of my eyes, or the color of my skin from my South Korean heritage, but my entire physique. It seemed everything about my body was entirely wrong for ballet. I will never forget how my heart sank into my stomach when I thought my muscular body-type was not welcome into prestigious summer intensives or ballet schools.

Confusion clouded my thoughts, as I adored performing but despised the way I was built. Fortunately, after years of battling with self-doubt and negative body image, I now realize having a different “look” is nothing to be ashamed of, but to be celebrated. I am incredibly grateful for everything I am, although I might not have been so if I did not have dance to show me the importance of individuality.

I realize giving into an unhealthy lifestyle full of eating disorders and insecurity. only to reach an unrealistic standard of “beauty,” does not help anyone. In fact, doing so is submitting to the stereotype that one’s natural body is never perfect enough. This negativity then convinces many that treating

their bodies poorly as acceptable in the attempt to achieve that *ballerina aesthetic*. By fueling my body properly, I push myself further in class and rehearsals. I have changed the way I look at myself in the mirror...I no longer search for my flaws. I set aside time to take care of myself and to occasionally enjoy chocolate cake and ice cream, because we all only live once.

I long to be a leader in the dance world, encouraging self-love and body positivity for everyone in all walks of life. I now focus on setting a positive example for young dancers who might feel alienated.

Simultaneously, I am growing into myself more and more every day, finding my voice as an Asian-American. I stay true to myself throughout all my roles and opportunities to show young dancers the beauty of their individuality. I do not think I would have realized this, and the importance of setting a healthy example, if not for dance. I am thankful for all that is enlightening this art form has taught me. Together, this understanding can help carry us through our lowest training moments and motivate us on difficult days, so that we overcome self-doubt, and... **Triumph.**



Learn more about the NHSDA “Love Your Body Week” on page 12 of this issue.



NEWS
Special Announcement!
2020 NDEO
Artistic Merit, Leadership, & Academic
Achievement Award

Congratulations to our Junior and Senior NHSDA students recognized here for their artistic and academic achievements and leadership skills. (PC Gabrielle Erickson)

Learn more about this award: nhsda-ndeo.org/nhsdaaward

Winner

Gabrielle Erickson
Desert Hills High School

Finalists

Jayla Froggatt
Northern Guilford High School

Morgan Olschewske
Florida Ballet Conservatory

Honorable Mention

Megan Bader
Apex Friendship
High School

Alexandra Lund
Dellos Performing
Arts Center

Stephany Santiago
County Prep High School

Anna Binkley
Centre for Dance and the
Performing Arts

Anna Taravella
Spotlight Dance Works

Katrina Schneider
Ridge High School

Jacqueline Boutilier
Infinity Dance Academy

Kimora Miller
Somerset Arts Conservatory

Aniyah Stokes
Farmington High School

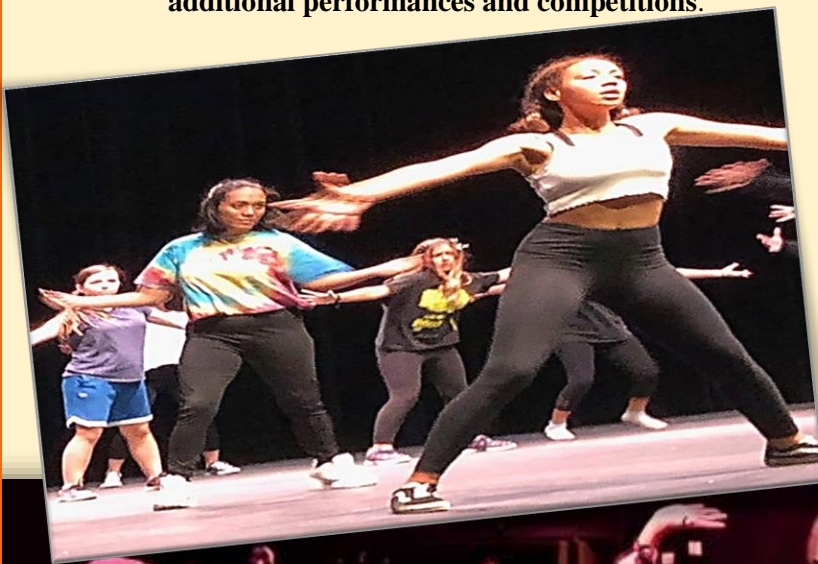
Ryan Jaffe
Dreyfoos School of the Arts



NEWS (cont.)

The Castle Performing Arts Learning Center (CPAC) ~ Reaching Out to the Community!

CPAC is a “performing arts learning center” dedicated to introducing the arts to young people on Oahu, Hawai’i. Its week-day classes offer James B. Castle High School students state DOE elective credits, while the intensive afterschool group ~ Castle Dance Ensemble ~ involves extended weekend rehearsals for additional performances and competitions.



All PC Castle Performing Arts Learning Center

Embracing the Oahu community, the Saturday Academy includes non-credit classes for all public-school students, grades 4-12.

Check out the amazing content:

- ✚ musical theater,
- ✚ jazz, tap, hip hop,
- ✚ Hawai’ian hula and Polynesian,
- ✚ conditioning,
- ✚ ballet, creative movement, and
- ✚ guest artist workshops!

🌸 Aloha! 🌸



NEWS (cont.)



PC Adlai E. Stevenson HS

Dance ~ The Rewarding High School Experience

Adlai E. Stevenson High School offers quality dance education as a rewarding experience to develop artistic integrity. Students grow in physical and mental strength and learn how to work constructively in groups. They are given clear course targets and are assessed using Evidence Based Reporting.

Their NHSDA students proclaim:
“Thank you to our dance teachers for helping us gain self-confidence, discipline, and satisfaction in our lives.”



Standout Studio!

PC Studio B

What makes **Studio B** a standout among all the other studios? ~ *Focus on family and community!* Older dancers in the leadership program meet weekly with the Studio Director to discuss diverse and important subjects like bullying, nutrition, how to properly conduct oneself on social media,

assisting/mentoring younger students, community service, and being a role model in the community. Dancers ages 7 and up participate in non-competitive dance companies that promote friendship and fun.

One major goal of Studio B Dance Center is for every child to feel welcome!



NEWS (cont.)



PC All That Dance

Love Your Body Week!

November 15 – 21, 2020

Dance is for every body and we are proud to be a part of the National Dance Education Organization, which shares this view. Co-creator Mary Gorder of All That Dance emphasizes: “*Love Your Body Week* is such an important part of our school community; we are excited to see even more NHSDA members celebrating this event together in 2020!” We invite all our NHSDA chapters to share uplifting experiences.



“Arts Education is Essential”

“As we have learned these past months, we have witnessed the healing and unifying powers of the arts: through creative works on sidewalks, shared music moments on our porches, in plays and dance performances from a distance, and every imaginable arts-making literation. Our NHSDA members have imagined new ways to share our love of dance, performing choreography online, writing stories and verses, creating artwork, reaching out to classmates and the whole community. As states and schools work through multiple challenges in the years ahead, arts education must be central to a well-rounded education and fully funded to support the well-being of all students and the entire community.”

Fifty-Two Arts & Education Organizations Unified Statement



PC Elevation Dance Studio

** Read the entire statement on the NDEO website! **

NEWS (cont.)

JFAA Presents: Student Films Reflect Critical Issues

"We are super proud of our students for their great efforts and success in producing quality dance films that deal with important themes affecting our students and the wider community."

~Rachel Swenson, Advisor/Sponsor, Idaho Fine Arts Academy

Dance filmmaking offers students practical ways to apply critical thinking through artistic collaboration and interdisciplinary learning. At the Idaho Fine Arts Academy, specially designed classes develop a virtual gallery to transform combined choreography and cinema experiences. Students explore a technology-based vocabulary that captures motion elements through time, shading, and sound: "action speed up/slow down/stop/reverse, zoom in/out, dissolve, edit..." all of which grasp multiple visual viewpoints.

When these young artists co-create with professional mentors, they confidently submit their finished products for international festivals. Although the in-class filmmaking is

mandatory, screening to a wider audience is optional. Students gather permissions from the performers, crews, filmmakers, plus sound contributors (spoken, text, effects, and music), and once a film has toured the festival scene, all are welcome to view it on the IFAA and YouTube websites.

In *"Shades of Charity,"* dancers created images inspired by their writings about *"Compassion."* Filmed at the Boise Train Depot, original music flowed amid movements, both pedestrian and technical, to convey its strong message. As an official selection to four competitions, including the *Film Art Dance on Screen Festival*, organizers screened it along with a related lesson plan as part of a public-school tour.



ALL PC Idaho Fine Arts Academy

Shades of Charity

OFFICIAL SELECTION
**Colossal
Cinematic
Showcase**
2019

OFFICIAL SELECTION
**Idaho
Screendance
Festival**
2019

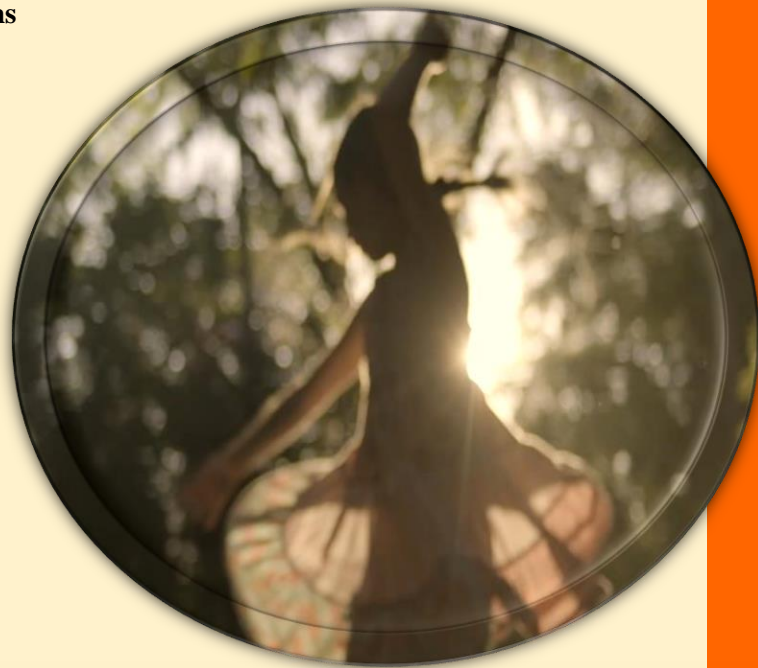
OFFICIAL SELECTION
**FAD Festival:
Film-Art-Dance
on Screen**
2019

OFFICIAL SELECTION
**Utah Dance
Film Festival**
2019

"Glued to the News" reported on how dance improves physical and mental health. Intriguingly, the short film **"Spective"** explored black-and-white versus color while emphasizing the need for community support. Both films were Official Selections in the *Idaho Screendance Festival*.

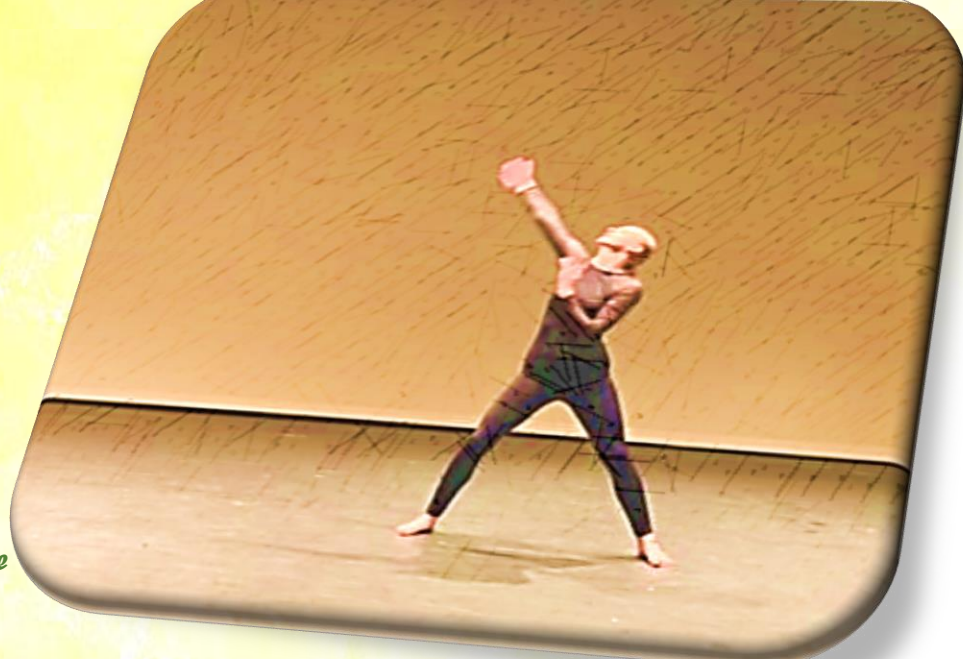
The IFAA's **"One Water,"** co-created with the Idaho Dance Theatre, was an Official Selection in the *Utah Dance Film Festival* and exhibited on Global Water Dance Day. This exquisite piece captured movement in slow motion with sweet violin accompaniment depicting waters' graceful flow. When the students both screened the film and performed at the Boise WaterShed Education Center, they stressed their concerns for conservation and social justice.

This filmmaking educational approach provides valuable material for dancers to expand upon their ideas with technological training ~ while positively impacting large populations. **Bravo!**



***Choreography ~
Uncertainty Transforms
into Creativity***

***By Gabrielle Erickson
2020 NHSDA Award Winner
Desert Hills High School
Advisor/Sponsor: Courtney Pearce***



All PC Gabrielle Erickson

***The title of my piece is
"Pathways of Uncertainty."***

When I considered choreographing this dance, I was two months into my senior year, which made me thrilled, anxious, and confused all at once. It seemed everyone around me had their lives "figured out." They knew where they were going to college, what they wanted to study, and how to go about it. I, on the other hand, felt utterly confused and too immature to make the significant decisions required of emerging adults. In some instances, however, I was decisive but still did not know *how* to get there. I have learned that sometimes plans are set off course, destinations postponed, and intentions rearranged. It is frustrating to feel stuck while others breeze past us, isn't it?

Six years ago, theater was all I wanted to pursue. I had taken voice and speech lessons, auditioned for a local theater production of "Peter Pan," and received a dance callback, but did not pass to the next level. Nevertheless, I was determined to improve, so I enlisted in studio classes in ballet and jazz. Soon, I grew to love dance and ultimately abandoned my theater aspirations.

I still remember the Desert Hills Dance Company performing at my intermediate

school lunch time. The dances they showed were mostly modern...a genre I had never seen before. I wondered,

***"What the heck are these people doing, rolling around on the floor?...
I love it!"***

Months later I auditioned for the Desert Hills Dance Company but did not make the team. Devastated, embarrassed, I was determined to prove myself and reaudition the next year.

After taking more technique classes, I expanded my repertoire and understanding of movement and choreography. I learned more about the origins of dance and developed a deep respect for the modern dance pioneers. I fell in love with Alvin Ailey because his organic and often romantic movement was and remains beautiful to me. I learned from him and my teachers about the infinite elements of dance.

In ninth grade, I auditioned and made it on the Junior Varsity team ~ I was thrilled! Four years later I can happily say I have been a consistent member, which has become my escape, my passion, my home. Here I

have had the amazing opportunity to explore an artistic side through the choreographic experience and performance. I have grown as a dancer and ultimately as a better person because I have developed a true desire for creativity. I find myself surrounded by innovative team members and learn from their ideas in group collaborations.

I appreciate these opportunities as more than just technique and I want to share what dance has given me.... how to overcome failure while building confidence based upon:

- ✦ **Potential and Hard Work,**
- ✦ **Commitment and Determination,**
- ✦ **Passion and Creativity,**
- ✦ **and Love**

This past year, I participated in an elementary school internship to teach dance

Impulses such as “sudden, uncontrollable, desperate, and inconsistent” were applied to the content, and, although often hesitant to experiment with certain steps and gestures, I cleared my mind ~ stopped thinking and just moved ~ to discover the pathway to success.

for children with special needs by helping them improve their physical and mental health. Seeing them beam when they dance is so rewarding, they have inspired me to pursue dance education to help many more children develop a passion for and understanding of moving and creativity.

These life's lessons drew me toward creating ***“Pathways of Uncertainty.”*** First, I identified my direction based on my original concept...I knew I would start and end at opposite sides of the stage, with movements in-between as obstacles on the way. In generating this, qualities were organized into the Four Primary Dance Elements:

- ✦ **Body,**
- ✦ **Energy,**
- ✦ **Space, and**
- ✦ **Time**





"Leave a Light On"

By: Naomi Wu

Whitney M. Young Magnet High School

Advisor/Sponsor: Jeanette Gordon

"Leave a Light On" is based on my experience when I left a light on for my friend to make sure she would not harm herself. This dance is not only a promise to her when she needs help, but also to my family, friends, and classmates ~ no matter where they are, I will stop whatever I am doing to make sure they are okay.

The choreographic process for this dance was difficult at first. I wanted to show a spectrum of my feelings:

***🚦 Anxiety and Fear,
🚦 Loss and Hope,
🚦 Confidence, and Love.***

I agonized over every single lyric in the accompanying song and explored numerous movements to decide what would best contribute to the meaning of the piece. I was absolutely shocked at how long this would take, but I knew I could not lose heart because this dance needed to be shown to give people hope that others will leave a light on for them.

This experience has taught me how dance can spread awareness to promote understanding about topics that may be difficult to discuss.

Raw emotion and feelings can be expressed without words. As a choreographer, I choose the intent behind every movement to tell my story. What I create has the potential to have a life of its own much more powerful than I could imagine. Through choreography, I have so much freedom.

My greatest hope is that people will continue to apply my story to their lives and care for those they too can leave a light on for....



All PC Jeanette Gordon

Lion, Be Brave

By: Kali Hightower

2019 NDEO Award, Honorable Mention

Cranbrook Kingswood Upper School




Advisor/Sponsor: Kathryn Reiders

Confidence...Some people are born with it while others spend their lives seeking it. High school is a difficult time academically but, even more so, emotionally. I have often struggled to find confidence in many areas of my life, questioning whether I am “good enough.” Nevertheless, while choreographing and then performing “***Lion***,” I pushed out of my comfort zone and trusted myself to be entirely taken by the vision and voice in a song. After hearing Shara Worden’s “*Be Brave*,” I was fascinated and inspired that her lyrics directly reflected my story.

How did “***Lion***” evolve? Initially, while choreographing this solo, the movements felt fake and awkward, as if I were trying to imitate someone else. I would execute the moves physically, although not connecting emotionally or being committed to them. Then I filmed my improvisation to see what might be gained from taking a different perspective. That approach helped me visualize something real, something transformational, that would translate my pure inspiration for the piece.

My total conviction meant giving all my energy to ensure I could maintain my stamina both emotionally and physically. The structural introduction represented mental barriers I have felt, but eventually, a freer, looser interpretation built into a confidence within me. Growing up a dancer, and working on this piece, I now understand I have gained two important qualities. It can be said dedication and disciplines are the foundation of any class and of composing original movement. What is so beautiful about choreography is how authentic one can make it...to become entirely unique from anyone else’s work.

We always remember our first love. Before I could walk, run, or speak, I could dance, and by expanding the process, such as exploring film as part of improvisation, I have enriched my creativity and resulting work, and I hope this piece demonstrates how dance speaks volumes. I have strived to:

-  hear its powerful roar,
-  respond emotionally and intellectually to its creative movement, and, most of all,
-  demonstrate clear purpose and confident strength.

My movements have translated my thoughts to unveil my greatest passions to the world.

PC Kali Hightower





Dance Arts Now!

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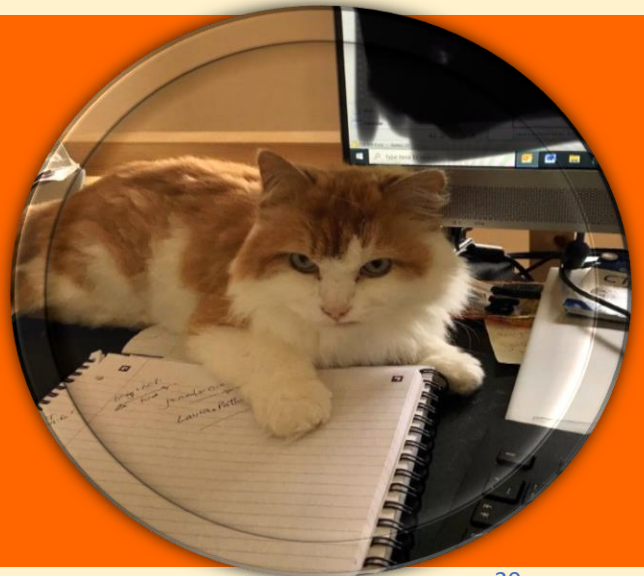


Be Published!

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: nhstda-ndeo.org/danceartsnw



PC@PowellsGall



***Hop into Fall &
Welcome Back to
Our Wonderful Schools & Studios!***



PC Stephanie Aiello, Ridge High School & Gotta Dance