



# En Avant

Newsletter for America's Ballet School

2012 Issue # 1



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## New Year, New Beginnings

Dear Parents and Students,

As the New Year begins, we are in the middle of major changes at America's Ballet School. Our infrastructure is changing for the better as the artistic and creative aspects will be covered by Paula Nunez and the rest of ABS' faculty and the business side will be under Roberto Saez's purview. ABS is growing each week as this new structuring of the business takes shape.

We are looking forward to a successful year in performance and organization. DanzAmerica's Project is also undergoing some changes. Right now, what we need is support of any kind. We are also open to any and all suggestions and complaints as we continue to restructure America's Ballet School and DanzAmerica's Project, Inc.

In the midst of all these changes, ABS wants to encourage the dancers to live healthy lives physically and mentally. The lobby will now hold a student homework station (read more on page ). Also, Marguerite Chen, who spoke at the Open House, will be available to talk with the dancers whenever needed. We believe in training healthy bodies and supporting positive body image in this field.

Thank you,

*Paula Nunez*

Paula Nunez  
Artistic Director  
America's Ballet School & DanzAmerica's Project, Inc.

*Roberto Saez*

Roberto Saez  
Executive Director  
America's Ballet School & DanzAmerica's Project, Inc.

# YAGP Results

ABS just competed in the Semi-Final Round for Youth America Grand Prix. We are pleased to announce that all of our students did well and represented ABS at the highest level.

- Nathalie Adams placed 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Pre-Competitive Category
- Courtney Gunsteens, Rose Kabat, Gabriella Stilo placed in the Top Twelve in the Junior Category.
- Brandon Carpio won 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Junior Contemporary Category and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Junior Classical Category.
- *Pablo's Disasterpiece* and *Storm Surge* placed in the Top Twelve Ensembles.
- The *Pas de Deux from Satanella* performed by Brandon Carpio and Gabriella Stilo placed 1<sup>st</sup> in Pas de Deux Category.
- *Pablo's Disasterpiece*, *Storm Surge* and the *Pas de Deux from Satanella* have been invited to the YAGP Finals in NYC this April. Brandon Carpio has been invited to compete as a soloist in the finals as well.

We would like to be able to send as many of the dancers as possible to the YAGP Finals in NYC. There will be an information meeting to plan and discuss fundraising options on Friday, February 3, 2012 at 5:30pm. This meeting will also discuss the other performances that DanzEnsemble will be participating in this spring.

# Upcoming Performances

America's Ballet School is continuing to participate in these performances around the Tampa Bay area.

On Jan. 27<sup>th</sup>, ABS performed *Storm Surge*, an ensemble, and the *Pas de Deux from Satanella* in the Blake High School Dance Department's Dance Review.

At the beginning of March, ABS will be participating in the Central Florida Dance Celebration in Lakeland and the American Dance Competition in Orlando/Daytona. The CFDC will be on March 3, 2012 at 7pm. ABS will be presenting several ensemble pieces, pas de deux and possibly a solo. Each participating studio is required to sell 100 tickets to the performance. The participating dancers will be selling the tickets; each one is \$8. Please support our dancers by going to this performance at Florida Southern College in Lakeland.

ABS is also planning on submitting work to Hillsborough Community College's Four Days of Dance in April and Moving Current's NewGrounds in May.

In June, we are planning on competing in the American Ballet Competition in Miami.

Our end-of-the-year performance will be *Alice in Wonderland*. ABS will present two performances, June 16<sup>th</sup> at 8pm and June 17<sup>th</sup> at 3pm. Parents should have received the information packet this past week. Participation is mandatory for all registered ABS students.

## Le Petit Salon de Danse

*News and Updates for Our Littlest Dancers*

We want to make sure that all the young dancers and their families know that the *Alice in Wonderland* production does include them. The dancers will be in the first act of the performance and will be able to watch the second act in the audience. Please turn in the participation form by February 15, 2012.

We look forward to having all of the dancers on stage this June!





## Dancers Must be Smart!

Though most of the time spent at America's Ballet School is in the studio, ABS firmly believes that a dancer must be smart to succeed in the dance world. Being smart is vital as a dancer will need to articulate well in speech, in writing, and in movement to sustain a ballet career. The development of the dancer must then be balanced between training in ballet and studying for school. Ballet classes

and school work can be informed by each other as ballet is an art that requires discipline and commitment like school. Technique classes not only train the physical body, but also the memory of the dancer. As the dancer processes and retains the sequences, they are learning the skills to do the same within school work. The vice versa is true as well; for example, the physics and biology course work in school informs the dancer on the mechanics and the anatomy of the moving body. Studies have been done that show that involvement in the arts (dance, music, visual arts, etc.) help boost academic test scores. Therefore, time must be devoted to homework and studying each day and to facilitate this, ABS has created a new area for homework in the lobby.

### ABS Student Homework Station

As we realize that the dancers spend quite a bit of time at here at America's Ballet School, we are adding a new homework station in the lobby. Students will have access to a computer and a printer as well as work space to work on any homework that they have. Two qualified tutors, Lisa DeCastro and Charmaine Jones, will also be available to help the students. Tutoring can be set up through emailing Roberto at [absroberto@gmail.com](mailto:absroberto@gmail.com).



### New Software for ABS

In order to improve billing and communication between ABS and its customers, America's Ballet School is switching to web-based software from MindBody. Through this software, customers will be able to pay online, keep track of your account, sign up for new classes, schedule privates, and much more. You will have a personal login and password to access your account and all of the features. We are beginning the conversion and hope to be up and running with it by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Please bear with us as we make this transition



### DanzAmerica's Project Corner

DanzAmerica's Project is beginning a partnership with the Hillsborough County Arts Council for school outreach programs.

DanzAmerica's Project has the potential to be successful as a contemporary ballet company in Tampa. Right now, we are looking for support of any kind. If interested in pushing this organization forward, please contact Roberto Saez at [absroberto@gmail.com](mailto:absroberto@gmail.com)

# New Hip Hop Classes at America's Ballet School

In order to give ABS students another creative outlet, we will be opening two hip hop classes per week. The classes will meet on Wednesdays and Fridays from 7pm to 8:15pm. The classes are open to registered ABS students and new students, and you can choose to take one day a week or both sessions. Tuition is \$90 per month for one session. Dazaun Soleyn is a USF dance major. He has taught hip hop classes for several years and is excited to begin teaching at America's Ballet School. If you are interested in this new class, please email [americasballet@gmail.com](mailto:americasballet@gmail.com). The classes will open once we have at least 5 students in each.



## Hip Hop Class Description:

*As a dance discipline, Hip Hop is a technique that has grown from an underground dance style that originated from the streets of New York City, to a dance style that is respected and admired globally. Dazaun's Hip-Hop classes will explore the dance style fundamentals of Hip-Hop, while incorporating his strengths in his diverse movement background. He strives to push his students to explore their inner groove with precision and musicality in every class. In his class you will experience something fresh, different, challenging, but most importantly, fun to do!*

## Meet Dazaun Soleyn

### ***Our New Hip Hop Faculty Member***

Born in Brooklyn, New York Dazaun Soleyn has been dancing since the age of six, and choreographing/performing since the age of thirteen. With his father being a mainstream DJ in Brooklyn, New York, Dazaun was introduced to various street dances since the age of six. At the age of thirteen he moved to Tampa, Florida and since then he began to explore his creative voice by serving as a choreographer for local Step & Hip-Hop Dance Troupes.

Now as a pre professional dancer and choreographer Dazaun Soleyn is currently pursuing a Bachelor in Fine Arts degree in Modern Dance at the University of South Florida with a minor in Business Administration. While at USF Dazaun Soleyn has had the opportunity to be trained in Contemporary, Hip-Hop, Ballet, Modern, Street Jazz, Vouging, Pop-Locking, and Dancehall. Some of his teachers were professional icons that range from John Parks (Former, Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre), Jennifer Archibald (Founder of Arch. Dance Company, NYC), Paula Nunez (Artistic Director of America's Ballet School), and Osmany Montano (Ballet Master of America's Ballet School). He has also had the opportunity to complete various workshops such as Monsters of Hip-Hop Orlando, America's Ballet School Classical Ballet Summer Workshop, and the Florida Dance Festival. Aside from being highly involved in Florida's Dance Community, Dazaun frequently travels to New York City to train at institutions such as the Alvin Ailey School, Broadway Dance Center, Peridance Capizo Center, and Dance New Amsterdam. His love for dance allows him to be able to develop his artistry of movement by learning at every possible moment.

During the Spring of 2012 Dazaun has been commissioned to travel to Beijing, China to study, teach, and serve as an International Ambassador for the University of South Florida College of the Arts Department at several Dance Academies in Beijing.

## Student of the Month

### Arianna Morrison



Arianna became interested in ballet at the age of 3 when she saw her first production of *The Nutcracker*. When she

moved to Tampa at the age of six she began learning classical ballet at America's Ballet School. Over the eight years that she has been dancing at ABS it has become Arianna's second home. This year she enrolled as a freshman in the dance program at Howard W. Blake High School in order to augment her dance training.

Along with the annual ABS spring performances, Arianna has also performed in various roles of *The Nutcracker* with both ABS and the Moscow Ballet. This past winter she danced a solo as the spring fairy in Blake's production of *Cinderella* and participated in a modern ballet piece that was produced by a fellow Blake student and showcased at an arts festival at the Ritz in Ybor.

Arianna works very hard at both dance and academics. At school, she studies to maintain her straight A status. In dance she has competed in the YAGP for the past three years. Last year she placed in the top 12 in the semi-finals as a soloist in both the classical and contemporary dance categories. Her goal in competition is to improve her dancing as compared to the year before.

Aside from her love of dance, Arianna likes to listen to music, read manga, and cuddle with her two cats. She cherishes the close friendships she has with the students at America's Ballet School and Blake High School. Arianna wishes to thank Ms. Paula and Mr. Osmany for their guidance, support, and many opportunities that they have provided her over the years.



## Upcoming Events

### DanzEnsemble Parent Meeting

Friday, February 3, 2012 at 5:30pm

### Alice in Wonderland Participation Form Due

Wednesday, February 15, 2012 at 6pm

### Alice in Wonderland Parent Volunteer Form Due

Wednesday, February 15, 2012 at 6pm

### Alice in Wonderland 1<sup>st</sup> Payment Due

Monday, February 20, 2012 at 6pm

### Central Florida Dance Celebration

Saturday, March 3, 2012 at 7pm

### American Dance Competition in Orlando/Daytona Beach

Friday, March 9, 2012 through Sunday, March 11, 2012



**America's Ballet School**

15358 Amberly Drive  
Tampa, FL 33647

813-558-0800

[www.americasballet.com](http://www.americasballet.com)

[americasballet@gmail.com](mailto:americasballet@gmail.com)