

Dancer of the Year 2010

I remember the first day I walked into Marilyn Schneider's School of Dance. Gazing at the bright pink and blue walls around me and looking at my fellow dancers wondering what to do. Then, I could have never imagined accomplishing and learning so much from dance. It has taught me commitment, responsibility, the meaning of hard work, and putting others needs before my own. Being a dancer has given me friendship, love, and passion. These are all of the characteristics that create a *Dancer of the Year*.

I have been dancing at Marilyn's since I was three years old. I have taken many types of dance including: tap, jazz, ballet, hip hop, musical theatre, lyrical and pointe. By the time I was eight I started participating in company events. Being in company has taught me how to commit, and it has taught me hard work. I signed a contract at the beginning of the year stating that I will attend company rehearsals, commit to the dances I've been placed in by the instructors, and work with all other the dancers in my group. I come into class every week knowing my dances and corrections given. I listen to my teacher in whatever they tell me to do, because I know that they are only telling me to make me a stronger dancer. I always work hard in whatever I do. Dance has taught me the meaning of how to really work for something. Sometimes there are those steps or routines you feel like you can never do, and with effort and long hours of hard work, its truly valuable when you have finally accomplished something you didn't think you could. By the time I was 13 I was assisting the Saturday morning kids from 9:00-1:00. I love teaching the little ones. I want to be able to put that twinkle in their eye that was put in mine at such a young age. It's my responsibility as a part of the Marilyn Schneider staff that I know the dances I assist teaching, call for a substitute if needed, and am able to help the dancer if they are struggling with something. As a staff member I've learned that my needs do not come first. The kids needs do. One thing I've learned is if I'm struggling with something I can't let it affect me, because it's not about me. It's about the group and the kids around me. Being a part of the staff, and being a dancer has really formed me into a young adult.

Being a dancer at Marilyn Schneider's School of Dance has shown me what it means to really love something and have a passion for it. While at a dance competition in Las Vegas, in 2005 I got hurt during my tap solo. I tore a muscle and was not able to finish the competition and was out of dance for two months. Those two months, were the slowest of my entire life. I felt like someone had just shredded my most prize possession right in front of me. I was truly lost without dance. Those entire two months all I wanted to do was dance and it was the only thing I couldn't do. Then I realized how much dance really meant to me. What a huge part of my life it was and how much I needed it to get me through the day. It's my passion. Dance has also given me friendship. Dancing at this studio was the reason I met people like Rocco, and Shannon, and also the reason why my cousin Lia and I became so close. Dance has given me so much. Dance has taught me that the sky is not the limit. That I can accomplish anything if I put my mind to it. I want to be a role model that kids can look up to and say I want to be like her, and that's why being Dancer of the Year would be such a great honor.