

# Why I Want to be **Dancer of the Year**

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My life without dance? Yeah right! When I was younger, I used to play on a recreational soccer team, after about three summers I quit. I didn't quit because Marilyn said it wasn't a "safe" sport (a "safe" sport to Marilyn is a sport with no physical contact). I quit because the coaches of the soccer team wouldn't let me practice my dances in the field! I'd always get stuck playing the boring positions that never did anything but stand in front of the goalie. Marilyn always said to "practice, practice, practice!" So, when the ball was at the other end of the field, that's just what I did! My coaches kept yelling at me because I'd always miss the ball when it came back onto my side of the field, so I quit. Nobody was going to tell me not to dance!

For the past thirteen years, the studio has been my second home. I spend more time with the girls at dance than I do with my own family! Growing up, my house was always where the neighborhood recitals used to be. My friends and I were putting on little recitals for our parents constantly! I was practically born with the passion to dance and perform; I want to help instill the same passion in younger dancers at the studio. Being involved in dance has taught me life lessons that I hope to teach the younger dancers at Marilyn Schneider School of Dance. As a Company Dancer and an Assistant Teacher I have learned responsibility, commitment, and respect.

Being a Company Dancer and a dancer in general, you have a responsibility to the team and to yourself to perform and practice at the best of your ability. Being in Company means competing nationally, regionally, and locally. Each girl in the group has a responsibility to each other to perform the dance with accurate timing and steps. You have a responsibility to yourself to perform as well as you can. I have learned that responsibility means managing your time, setting priorities and making sacrifices.

Assisting beginning dance classes on Saturday mornings and auditioning for Company has taught me commitment. Once I have agreed to assist on Saturday mornings I learned that the students and Marilyn depend on me being there every week. When I am not able to make it, I have to call for a substitute to fill-in for me. This is part of the commitment I have to the students and to Marilyn. After joining Company you have a commitment to the other dancers add the Company teacher to stay in Company. It would be unfair to the other Company Dancers to quit Company halfway through the year. Being a dancer has taught me that once I have agreed to something, I have to stick with it.

As a dancers have learned to respect other dancers and teachers. It is respectful to stay and watch someone dance after they have watched you, even if you are allowed to leave. By staying, you are showing whoever is dancing you are interested in what they are doing, respecting them and the fact that they watched you, and it shows to them that you support them. To show respect to a dance teacher you must learn and perform their choreography to the best of your capability. By learning their choreography and performing it the best you can, you are showing them that you care that they took the time to make it for you. I have learned that throughout life it is imperative to respect others' ideas and thoughts, and to appreciate their creativity and effort.

I have been dancing at Marilyn Schneider School of Dance since I was five years old, and have been Assistant Teaching for two years. I am thankful for the experiences I have been given through dance; I have learned so much by being involved. I think it's important for younger dancers to have someone to look up to. I wish to teach them not only about dance, but about life. I want to set a good example or be a mentor for the younger dancers.