

DARBY'S DANCERS NEWSLETTER

A NEW SEASON BEGINS

What does nonprofit mean?

Darby's Dancers is a 501(c)(3) national organization and each individual chapter functions under our umbrella. Does nonprofit mean everything is free? No! There is no charge to the families of our dancers to participate in the Darby's Dancers program, but there is a significant dollar amount that is necessary to operate each local chapter and the national organization. When your local studio hosts a DD class, the studio owner is donating dance space, utilities, teacher time and forfeiting the money that could have been made from running a regular dance class in that room for an hour. There is no profit made, in fact they lose money. That's ok because they have made the commitment to the DD children with that knowledge. When you are asked to participate in a fundraiser, please do so! We need fundraising, donations, scholarships and partnerships to fund our programs. We want to sustain them for many years to come!



Community ~ compassion ~ acceptance

When it comes right down to it, this is what each Darby's Dancers chapter has in common. We strive to focus on our organization as a whole and how we are working together to achieve a common goal. That is, providing an opportunity for all children to participate in the performing arts in an atmosphere of compassion, acceptance, kindness, inclusion and community. This time 4 years ago, we had 2 DD groups going and I was thrilled. Fast forward to now and we have 50 studios hosting our programs in 24 states and we are serving approximately 600 children. Talk about a dream come true but still aspiring to do more. Thanks to everyone for all your hard work. See the last page for a complete list of our host studios.





Meet 10 yr. old Tate St. Louis who dances at Red River Dance. His mother describes him beautifully:

“Tate attends Horizon Middle School and is in 5th grade. He lives in Moorhead, Minnesota with his parents and two sisters Avery and Claire. He loves dance, gymnastics, baseball and watching sports of any kind. He is very excited to start playing the cello this fall in his school orchestra! He has Down syndrome, which means that he does have some developmental delays. If you spend five minutes with him you will know the names of everyone in his family, their occupations, their favorite foods, and become Tate's newest best friend. He truly loves all people! Tate has always loved music and has grown up with sisters who dance. The opportunity for him to take a dance class through Darby's Dancers where he can be with his friends but there is the extra support he needs has been a gift for our family. He loves his Darby's class and still listens to his spring recital song "This Is Me" and dances along often. He loves the spotlight and the opportunity to dance!”

HAPPY DANCING TATE!

Studio of the Month

What a delightful group in [Fargo, North Dakota ~ Red River Dance!](#) Program coordinator, Haylee Thompson is on a mission to change the world and she has started by adding Darby's Dancers to her programs at RRD. I love Haylee's big ideas and vision. Red River Dance is a nonprofit organization run by a board of directors. Their mission is to promote and support the art of dance to children of all ages and abilities. We are so happy that they saw a future with a Darby's Dancers program in their studio. Haylee has been dancing 26 years and loves to volunteer in her community and uses dance as a tool to inspire others. Haylee provides two classes for children (above in red and below) and then started a young adult class (top). She also teaches a dance class at a local elementary school to children with special needs who cannot get to the studio for class. She rolled out the red carpet for me when I came to visit. Just can't say enough about this beautiful dynamo! Pictured on top is also [Maggie Englund](#), a wonderful volunteer who danced at RRD and now attends Minnesota State Univ.-Moorhead. She loves our kids and had to come back for more! Maggie is on the dance team at MSUM and has given me some good ideas on how we can incorporate college girls who are working on degrees in dance into our program. Thanks for all you do, Maggie!



Parent Corner

One of the things I most enjoyed when Darby went to dance was the opportunity for me to spend some time with other moms who had children with special needs. There we were in the lobby of the dance studio, thrown together from all different parts of town, schools and situations, but we all had one thing in common. Who else could understand our language when we started to talk about IEPs, PT, OT, SLI, OHI and a whole host of medical terms and problems? I had someone to talk to who could relate to me and understand what I was talking about and going through!! We supported each other and became a group of women who had someone to turn to when we needed help. So moms, get in there and get to know each other. Exchange contact info, meet for a coffee, share information that you come across that might help someone else in the group. Let's face it, and nothing against moms of typical children, but they can't relate to us. Just one more benefit of the Darby's Dancers program.....it's a win-win for all! Send in your ideas, advice and stories to me and I will share it with others. Let's start our own online parent support group!

(Here is a picture of me with some great moms in Maple Grove, MN)



As I travel across the country and meet new friends, it never fails that my path crosses the path of another mom whose child is battling cancer. I've listened to their stories and I've shared mine. My heart is deeply touched when I meet other moms who are going through the same thing I went through. I try to be positive and encouraging to them, even though my story did not end well. I hope that I can continue to help others with their journey regardless of what that journey is. Whether it is a story of gut wrenching heartache, financial difficulties, struggling to keep life going when times are hard, finding your way in a world that doesn't seem to understand or care or simply the story of a mom who feels lost, alone or overwhelmed, I am here to listen and to encourage and help you see that there is always a silver lining in the darkest of situations. Please meet Abigail and Natasha Tillotson, 10 year old twins from Sandy, Utah (near Salt Lake). Patrick and I met

them and their parents when we went to the spring recital in June. These girls have Down Syndrome, big personalities, beautiful smiles and they are both leukemia survivors. I am so proud to also call them Darby's Dancers! Continued prayers and best wishes to these girls and their wonderful parents, Josh and Kimberly.

"Be brave like me!"

Darby's Dancers Host Studios

Bravo Dance	Albertville, MN
The Dance Company	Amherst, NH
Ashburn Academy of Dance	Ashburn, VA
Gigi's Playhouse	Atlanta, GA
Legacy Dance Studio	Bartow, FL
QC Dance	Blaine, MN
Midwest Dance Center	Burlington, WI
Integrity Dance Arts	Byron Center, MI
Centreville Academy of Dance	Centreville, VA
AMA Academy of Performing Arts	Des Plaines, IL
Miss Amy's School of the Arts	Dickson, TN
Ruckus Dance Alliance	East Rochester, NY
Dance Esteem	Eden Prairie, MN
Edenton Dance Stars	Edenton, NC
Studio J Dance	Edmond, OK
Red River Dance	Fargo, ND
The Dance Factory	Forest Lake, MN
Fredericksburg Ballet Centre	Fredericksburg, VA
Chara Christian Dance Academy	Friendswood, TX
NE Georgia School of Music & Dance	Gainesville, GA
Dance Prodigy Studio	Greenville, TX
Showcase Dance Performing Arts Center	Hudson, NH
Epic Dance	Mahopac, NY

Dance Express	Mankato, MN
The Dance Complex	Maple Grove, MN
Mason Dance Center	Mason, OH
Dance Arts Academy	Meridian, ID
Ascend Studios	Midwest City, OK
My Passion Dance Studio	North Bergen, NJ
Debut Dance	North Liberty, IA
Misty's Dance Unlimited	Onalaska, WI
Escalate Dance and Theatre	Osseo, MN
Bricks Studio	Phoenix, AZ
Leap of Faith Arts Ministries	Plainfield, IL
Dance Esteem	Plymouth, MN
Premiere Dance	Prior Lake, MN
Dance Revue Studio of Dance	Ramsey, MN
Steps to Grace Dance Academy	Rockford, IL
Utah Dance Artists	Salt Lake City, UT
Expressions Movement & Dance Center	Santee, CA
3rd Street Dance	St. Charles, IL
Arts in Motion	St. Louis, MO
Dance Evolution	Stow, OH
Destiny Dance	Tulsa, OK
Dynamic Dance	Verona, NJ
Liberty Dance Center	Waukesha, WI
Rhythm Dance Company	Westborough, MA
Drouin Dance Center	Westbrook, ME
West Chester Academy	West Chester, OH
Woodbury Dance Center	Woodbury, MN

