“It opens a new mindset on dance” – Brandon

Owen/Cox Dance Group’s Take the Stage Program is pleased to share the highlights of its sixth season spent inspiring Kansas City’s youth to personal excellence through the arts.

During the 2018-19 year, Take the Stage (TTS) employed six dance teaching artists and an additional nine professional musicians and performing artists to conducted 290 dance classes and rehearsals, and reached 324 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th graders in eight schools. Take the Stage presented 13 performances for a total audience of 2,500 and continued its tradition of collaborating with Kansas City’s leading cultural institutions for the benefit of its students. The 2018-19 theme and final showcase were curated with the help of TTS Season Partner - the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.
On May 17, Take the Stage presented its sixth annual Event-of-the-Year: A Night at the Museum—Shine a Light on Me!, uniting 150 students and educators from TTS partner schools and TeamEXCEL! in a joyful culminating performance with live music. Vocalist Brother John Anderson, and poet/educator T. L. Sanders, narrating as a ‘smart phone - gone docent’, along with five professional jazz musicians, joined dancers on stage at the Historic Gem Theater, presenting a matinee for TTS partner schools and a public evening show for an enthusiastic full-house. Leading up to the final showcase, students visited the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art for specialized tours and arts-encounter mask-making, as guests of the Museum’s Ford Learning Center. Dancers then spent two-action packed days on 18th & Vine rehearsing in the state-of-the-art Gem space and visiting the KC Urban Youth Academy. Performers enjoyed delicious lunches provided by Truman Medical Centers, and dined on pizza from Papa Keno’s - Crossroads in the Jazz Museum’s Atrium before the evening performance. Jason’s Deli-Downtown and Pinstripes-Overland Park generously provided sustenance for staff and volunteers during rehearsals. Cake from Cosentino’s Downtown Market was enjoyed by students and guests at a post-performance reception.

“I feel like a million bucks when I’m in Take the Stage.” – Luis

“It helped me concentrate more”
– Christian

“It helped find more in me.”
– Ava

“Take the Stage makes me want to go to school so you can learn a lot.” – Brianna
In 2018-19
Take the Stage

• Served urban schools where 94% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch, 25-70% are English language learners, 72% are Minority and 25% have an IEP

• Provided highly motivated students from multiple partner schools 20-weeks of advanced training in the TeamEXCEL! Program.

• Presented TeamEXCEL! dancers at The Gem, Kauffman Center Future Stages Festival, KC Public Library, and at both the Nelson-Atkins Museum’s Juneteenth Celebration and Big Picnic.

• Conducted 14-week residencies for:
  o 4th graders at Trailwoods Elementary (KCPS)
  o 3rd graders at Whittier Elementary (KCPS)
  o 3rd graders at Frank Rushton Elementary (KCKPS)
  o 1st - 4th Graders at Parker Elementary (KCKPS)
  o 2nd Graders at Holy Cross School
  o 1st Graders at Our Lady of Hope School

• Continued 28-week residencies for:
  o Hartman Elementary
  o Holy Cross School
  o Our Lady of Hope School and
  o Scuola Vita Nuova Charter School

• Conducted Workshops for Down Syndrome Guild of Kansas City

• Strengthened relationships with Truman Medical Center, the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance, KC Public Library, Kansas City Young Audiences, American Jazz Museum, Kansas City Urban Youth Academy, Kansas City Public Schools and Kansas City, Kansas City Public Schools.

"It was amazing meeting all the Take the Stage leaders and schools." – Amya
Thank You

$5,000-$10,000
The Bright Futures Fund of Kansas City
Country Club Christian Church
Estelle S. and Robert A. Long Ellis Foundation
Missouri Arts Council, Art Works
Frank and Margaret McGee Fund
Louis and Elizabeth Nave Flarsheim Foundation
Russell and Rebka Sakati

$2,500-$4,999
Linda Nottberg
Leo Gilbert Wetherill Foundation
The City of Kansas City, Missouri
Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund

$1,000-$2,499
The Breidenthal-Snyder Foundation
Lisa Choules
Dr. Robert Claassen
Jan Schoonver
Jewish Community Foundation
Jeffrey D. Zimmerman
Rod Parks
Kristen and Isam Sakati
Louis and Frances Swinken Supporting Foundation

$500-$999
Burton Justice
Mary J. Weber Foundation
Art Wortman
Sharon and John Hoffman
Shari L. Wilson

IN KIND SUPPORT
Kansas City Young Audiences
Kansas City Public Library
American Jazz Museum
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance
Truman Medical Center
Jeff Evrard Photography
Jason’s Deli
Pinstripes
Papa Keno’s Crossroads
The Brave Creative
Tom Styrkowicz
Praxis Promotions
Megan Toal
Dégagé Dancewear

Take the Stage would like to thank donors at all levels for their support

“There are two major categories of growth that I witness: 1. Respect for self and 2. Confidence. I see them follow rules for TTS that they normally would not. They take pride in what they are doing and who they are becoming. I got to witness one young lady, not even sure of where she was from because of so many refugee camps and countries she’s lived in—sing and dance to English words. Her smile said a thousand words in a hundred languages.” – Rebekah Wampler, Whittier Elementary educator

Take the Stage is thrilled to be a catalyst for personal growth among children in Greater Kansas City. We teach that joyful effort, focus, tenacity and teamwork can lead to personal success. Collaborating with an array of area organizations and civic leaders, we are dedicated to building a community of creative, motivated students who reach for the stars. We look forward to sharing the successes of our coming season with you in the months ahead. Let’s Dance!

Owen/Cox Dance Group
4220 Mercier St. Kansas City, MO 64111
816-533-5904 www.owencoxdance.org