

## Take the Stage Annual Report 2016-17 Season

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

During the 2016-17 year, Take the Stage (TTS) employed fourteen teaching artists, conducted 260 dance classes, and reached 350 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders in seven schools. Take the Stage presented 16 performances for a total audience of 4,500 and strengthened its *Scholars—Willing And Talented Program*, inviting 20 students to 20-weeks of advanced dance training and special performing opportunities.



"Take the Stage makes me happy and it makes me feel like I'm alive and it makes me feel like I'm excellent." -3<sup>rd</sup> grade student, Whittier Elementary

On May 9, 2017, Take the Stage hosted its 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Event-of-the-Year: ***In the Groove, On The Vine—A Swing Through KC Jazz History!*** Over 150 students and educators from five area schools danced through scenes of Kansas City's rich jazz heritage on stage at the historic Gem Theater for an enthusiastic, standing-room-only crowd. Dancers shared the stage with the professional Take the Stage Band, student musicians from the Kansas City Jazz Academy, special guest narrator and vocalist, Brother John Anderson and the AJM's Community Outreach Coordinator, Karen E. Griffin in a cameo appearance.



"They helped me focus" -Diego



"It keeps you healthy." – Jason

"Take the Stage makes me feel smart, because I learn new things."

-Mohammed



A PROGRAM OF  
THE OWEN/COX DANCE GROUP

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### OWEN/COX DANCE GROUP

Jennifer Owen  
*Artistic Director*

Rebka Sakati  
*Artistic Director,  
Take the Stage*

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Rachel Raines  
Danielle Robbins  
Robert Robinson

**BE EXCELLENT.  
SHINE ON.**

## In 2016-17 Take the Stage

- Continued its Scholars-Willing And Talented Program (S.W.A.T.), providing 20-weeks of advanced training for highly motivated students
- Added Scuola Vita Nuova to its list of full-year residency partner schools
- Expanded programming, launching new programs in three schools:
  - a 10-week residency for 3rd graders at Whittier Elementary
  - a 14-week residency for 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders at KC Neighborhood Academy
  - a 17-week residency for 1<sup>st</sup> Graders at Citizens of the World Charter School—Kansas City
- Continued partnerships with Hartman, Holy Cross, and Our Lady of Hope
- Performed at The Gem Theater, Kauffman Center Future Stages Festival, Johnson County Community College, KC Public Library, Arts Day at the K and the National Conference of the Association of Maternal and Child Health Practitioners.
- Fostered and strengthened collaborative relationships with KC Public Library, Johnson County Community College, Kansas City Young Audiences, The American Jazz Museum and the Kansas City Jazz Academy
- Served urban schools where 87% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch, 25-70% are English language learners, 72% are Minority and 25% have an IEP

"Take the Stage changed how I feel about myself. I feel brave and strong."

—Eh Tha Ku



"Take the Stage changed how I feel about other students because now I can help other people." --Amani



"TTS was always something our students looked forward to...it was a great way to release energy and channel it in a fun and educational way."

—Melissa Zirkel, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Educator, Whittier Elementary

## Thank You

### \$5,000-\$10,000

American Jazz Museum/KC Jazz Academy\*  
Country Club Christian Church  
Estelle S. and Robert A. Long Ellis Foundation  
Missouri Arts Council  
National Endowment for the Arts. Art Works.

### \$2,500-\$4,999

The Bright Futures Fund of Kansas City  
Leo Gilbert Wetherill Foundation  
Russell and Rebka Sakati

### \$1,000-\$2,499

The Breidenthal-Snyder Foundation  
Kansas City Young Audiences\*  
KC Art Angels\*  
Jan Schoonover

### \$500-\$999

Country Club Bank  
John Hoffman

### \$200-\$499

Californos\*  
Barb Deane  
Kathrin Goldman  
Johnson County Community College\*  
Burton Justice  
Laura Loyacano  
Kate B. McKinney  
Rod Parks  
Chris Steineger and Shari L. Wilson  
The Kansas City Royals\*  
Art Wortman  
Jeffrey Zimmerman

\*denotes in-kind donation

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



"Where do I start? Take the Stage has allowed my students to grow in social, emotional and physical ways. My students LOVED going to dance...[all] students wanted to be a part of it. Achievement has been raised in all areas. Students practice perseverance and focus on things rather than quitting right away. Our students often came back and made connections in later lessons. It was fabulous for our diverse populations. It made them feel like a community and a family. Take the Stage is unlike other dance programs—the instructor was loving and kind—most of all, patient. She waited and worked with ALL students. The dance was tied to history, art, culture.... Absolutely loved it and I highly recommend it."

—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!**



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