

Heather Hawk, Pre-Professional Ballet Faculty

The School at Steps



Describe your dance class in 3 words:

Music, Movement, Joy

Did you have a mentor during your training? How did they influence you?

I had many mentors but the most significant was David Howard. He influenced me as a young student, a professional dancer, a teacher and most significantly as a human being. I was lucky to take many classes and have many conversations about a wide range of subjects, but the greatest influence was the man himself. His work ethic, his generosity, and his keen observations about life will always inspire me to try to be a better person.

What do you attribute to the success of your dance career?

Success in anything is the ability to see failure as a friend not a foe.

When the dust clears and the emotion recedes, the blueprint for why or how you may reinvent yourself appears. It can be the best teacher and agent of change if you embrace the opportunity either for renewal or reinvention. The key is to give yourself the time, patience, and love to let that cycle inform your life and experience.

What do you enjoy most about teaching at The School at Steps?

The children. Each group is unique and engaging. Each class requires my presence and intellectual agility. The energy, the number of students, among other variables can differ in every single class. It is a symbiotic relationship between teacher, pianist, and students. All need to be present and attuned to each other and the moment. Class, like a performance, only happens once and then it is gone. It is a wonderful practice of learning to live in the moment and respect each other.

What trait do you wish your students could learn?

Courage and Perseverance.

Each stage of life is challenging. Have the courage to meet the challenges. Have the perseverance to navigate a period of time that seems endless. Grade school, high school, or the pains of a broken heart, in the grand scheme of life are relatively very short experiences. It ends and something new appears. What always remains is the necessity for courage and perseverance.