

Hope Easterbrook, Pre-Professional Alumna & Faculty

The School at Steps



Why did you first become interested in dance?

My mom put me in class at my local studio in Goshen, NY at an early age, although it wasn't until I got cast as Clara in The Nutcracker before I became more serious about dance.

How has your training at The School at Steps helped prepare you for dancing in the ensemble of Hamilton on Broadway?

One of the biggest aspects that I took away from my training in the Pre-Professional Program at The School at Steps was the diversity in classes included in my schedule. Immersing myself in the different styles that were offered – ballet, hip hop, theater dance, jazz, and Horton - made me into the dancer that I am now. Hamilton's choreography is incredibly versatile, so I'm lucky to have that kind of training.

Describe your relationship with your mentor and the best advice she has given you.

My mentor is Laya Barak, who was my hip hop teacher while I was studying dance at The School at Steps. After graduating I was lucky enough to become her teaching assistant, which was such an eye opening experience for me. Having the opportunity to collaborate and work with someone you admire so much is amazing! She has taught and continues to teach me a lot about the importance of being professional in this industry, and mastering "the hustle" of it all.

What is your favorite part of dancing in Hamilton on Broadway?

I could go on and on about how wonderful it is dancing this show, but it's the little things that get me. I love being in that theater every day, surrounded by some of the most brilliant artists on the planet. I feel like the luckiest girl on earth.

What will you miss most about teaching at The School at Steps?

My students!! Teaching there challenged me as a performer, because it forced me to become comfortable in my freestyle. Freestyle does not come easy and I am still working on it, but teaching was an outlet to let my creative juices flow. I can't wait to make my journey back into it when the time comes!

What advice would you give to young aspiring Broadway performers/dancers?

Don't let the hustle get you down. Just like the saying "whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger", rejection is inevitable, but always remind yourself why you started in the first place and keep pushing towards your dream.