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The School at Steps

Describe your dance class in 3 words:

Discipline: Have to have it

Sincerity: You need to be simple and sincere to your action

Humor: Studying Ballet is hard; you must maintain a sense of humor

What is your fondest memory as a dancer?

I always love the moment on stage when a second becomes an eternity. It feels like you live in that moment forever.

You put young dancers on pointe every year. Describe the process and any challenges you face.

Point work is not for everybody, although some issues can be overcome through the dedicated effort of the individual. We do put students who are of borderline physical capability on pointe, offering an opportunity to find out if they can manage it. Sometimes, although difficult, it is best to come to the conclusion that pointe work isn't for that dancer. This realization is always hard on the student, and can be especially difficult for me as a teacher, when a student struggles. I try to stress that there are other beautiful ways to continue dancing!

What advice would you give to parents of young dancers going on pointe?

Preparation for going on pointe starts immediately from day one of the semester. I take my students to their first point shoes fitting each year to ensure proper fitting. This is only possible because of the unique trust and support I get from The School at Steps - there are no other studios that do this.

I want parents to attend the Pointe Shoe Workshop in April 2017 so that they may have a better understanding what their children are going through. I am really thankful to The School at Steps and Director, Kate Thomas for holding the workshop and giving me time to prepare my students.

We do all of this to keep our students healthy and injury free. My purpose is to give the student a dance *education*, so they can have a long and healthy relationship with dance.

If you had to pick, what is one thing you wish your students could learn?

Learn how to deal with yourself; time will pass, situations may change, but you cannot give up and walk out on yourself. We all observe and approach information differently. Trying to achieve perfection is not always the best, as it can also come with high stress. Some dancers may need to repeat the task more than others to master it -- this is not good or bad, we are all different. I like my students to embrace who they are and build their own learning skill.

Tell us a little more about your life outside of The School at Steps?

I love gardening!! Especially growing my own vegetables. I had nice crop of strawberries, snow peas, and lettuce this spring. Right now, tomatoes are getting ready to turn red, there are bunch of mini cucumbers, peppers, and eggplant. I cook everything with fresh herbs and make my own fresh herb tea. Gardening teaches me to be patient and keeps me calm.

