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Newsletter Editor: Dena Abergel

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Student Life Program 20th Anniversary

The professional ballet training that happens each day in our studios is legendary. Yet the enrichment, nurturing and support SAB students receive outside the ballet classrooms are perhaps our best-kept secret. As the School's Student Life program celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2011, this issue of the SAB Newsletter highlights the many exceptional programs, staff and resources that make the SAB experience what it is. From wellness initiatives like Pilates and Physical Therapy to Residence Life, the School's Student Life program has developed over the past two decades to best serve our students' needs. In addition to Student Life, this Newsletter highlights aspects of the SAB curriculum that aren't as well known. Music, Ballroom, Character and Weight Training are regular classes on the intermediate and advanced students' schedules that enrich their training in important ways.

In an effort to be more environmentally and fiscally responsible, this SAB Newsletter is also our first electronic issue. We hope you enjoy visiting us online at www.SAB.org, and then live at SAB's Workshop Performances on June 4 and 7. For more information, visit www.SAB.org/workshop.

As always, we thank the many friends and supporters who make everything we do at SAB possible. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Peter Martins
Artistic Director

Marjorie Van Dercook
Executive Director

STUDENT LIFE

Residence Life

Each Winter Term up to 64 students occupy four floors of the Meredith Willson Residence Hall above the Rose Building. In the Summer Course that number increases to over 200. Our Student Life staff is charged not only with making sure that these students are safe and well taken care of, but that they are exposed to important educational, developmental and social lessons.



Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

Sion Harrington, Director of Residence Life, leads the Residence Life staff in creating programming that helps enrich our students' lives and makes them well-rounded individuals. The "iDANCE" Finding Your Way program model helps guide the educational and developmental programming that takes place in the Residence Hall.

iDANCE

Finding Your Way programs make up a majority of the educational and developmental programming that takes place in our Residence Hall. We use the acronym "iDANCE" to categorize our programming efforts. Each letter stands for a different category of programs that students must attend. Our goal is to lead students through a series of fun, interactive programs that challenge and engage them around a variety of topics.

International Education. Students are challenged to look beyond their immediate selves and communities to widen their exposure to global issues and concerns.

Diversity. Students discuss ethnicity, ableness, religion and those things that make us all unique.

Alcohol & Drug Awareness. Students learn about the effects and dangers of alcohol and drug use particularly as it relates to teenagers and an athlete's body.

Nutrition & Wellness. Through a holistic approach, students are challenged to think about physical and mental health issues such as nutrition, fitness, stress relief and self-expression.

Community Service. Students find time to give back to the community through a variety of projects at SAB and in the greater New York City area.

Explorations. Designed to get students out of the neighborhood and outside of the "dance world," programs include cultural outings, historical tours, a trip to share a unique snack in a fun part of the city, or pretty much anything else you can think of!

With the responsibility of looking after up to 64 resident students in the Winter Term and coordinating all of the wellness programs and resources available to students throughout the many levels at SAB, it's no surprise that the Student Life Department is one of the largest at the School. This group of individuals interact with the students on a daily basis and in many ways act as "parent figures" for students, many of whom are far from home. They also have frequent communications with students' actual parents to discuss the ongoing development and well-being of these young people as they blossom in their personal and professional lives. The staff is charged with an enormously important task and it is with much pride that we celebrate the 20th Anniversary of this program.

Student Life Staff

Six live-in staff members (pictured at right and below) and three support staffers—Perry Edwards, Patricia Ezewoko and Roslyn Ruiz—are responsible for the daily well-being of the residential community.



Sion Harrington (Director of Residence Life), Kelly Novitski (Director of Student Life) and Victoria Farris (Student Life Coordinator).

These staff members

engage with students on many levels: from planning and implementing social and educational programming to escorting students to doctors visits, the Student Life staff is dedicated to



Assistant Residence Hall Directors Chad Alligood, Alexis Gibson and Kristin Tortorici.

the emotional and physical well-being of SAB's young dancers living away from home.

Four student leaders, our Community Development Assistants (CDAs), round out our staff. Students apply annually for these leadership positions and are interviewed as part of

the process. They return a few days early at the beginning of each Winter Term to help with student move in, meet once a week with an adult staff member to plan an in-house Friday program for their peers, and help administratively by reporting for desk shifts and coordinating larger all-hall programs. Interest in this position has grown immensely in the past 6 years with up to 15 students applying annually.



Community Development Assistants: Bianca Bulle, Alexandra Hughes, Eleanor Hitt and John Poppe.

Cultural Program

With funding and guidance from SAB alumna and board member, Nancy Lassalle, SAB created a cross-disciplinary program in 2009 to increase intermediate and advanced students' exposure to the cultural landscape of New York City. To tie into our students'



Silas Farley, Olivier Bernier and Peter Johnson.

greatest interest, the program uses ballet as a point of departure, focusing on important dance works and showing how they connect to other art forms, including film, theater, design and the visual arts. In past years, the program has examined Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*, and this year's focus is Balanchine's seminal 1928 work, *Apollo*.

Additional dance history lectures are offered and give students some basic context. During SAB's 75th Anniversary year, Barnard College Professor Mindy Aloff presented a lecture at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. In March, Olivier Bernier, art historian and guest lecturer at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, gave a dance history overview to SAB's advanced students. In May, the students will visit the Met for a tour of the Greek and Roman galleries, and a hands-on project created by the museum's Education Department.

"It was quite refreshing to learn the history of this prolific and marvelous art in which I invest all of my time. To know the history of what I love to do, and to learn how it developed over time is very enlightening and eye-opening."

—Peter Johnson, Intermediate Men

Academics

SAB is committed to fully supporting the dancer-in-training, including his or her academic education. The School requires all Winter Term students who have not earned high school diplomas to be enrolled in academic programs. Student Life staff works with parents and students to determine the best educational choice. Most intermediate and advanced



Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

students attend the public Professional Performing Arts School or the private Professional Children's School. All academics are coordinated and supervised by Victoria Farris, SAB's Student Life Coordinator. SAB also coordinates prep and college counseling seminars, and actively encourages all high school seniors to apply to college, even though most students will postpone college while they pursue a professional dance career. In the past three years alone, students have been accepted to Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Stanford, Cornell, Syracuse, Northwestern, University of Chicago, Barnard College and New York University, just to name a few.

Can You Guess?

How many Peanut Butter & Jelly sandwiches are served up as late night snacks each month? **180**

Number of Residence Hall programs throughout the Winter Term? **89**



Students welcome the season with the annual "Festifall" celebration.

How many languages are spoken in the Residence Hall? **5**

How many countries are represented at the School? **8**

How many states are represented? **22**

Number of residential students in the Winter Term/Summer Course?

64 WT + 225 SC = 289

Number of meals eaten in the cafeteria in a Winter Term? **740 meals**

Number of live in staff?

Winter Term 6;

Summer Course 13

Ages of Winter Term Residence students?

14-19 years old

Time of Curfew for 14 year olds? **10:00pm**



Holiday-themed Residence Hall programs.

Adult to student ratio in Residence Hall during Winter Term? **1:10**

Hours of Pilates conditioning and Physical Therapy offered weekly during Winter Term?

22 Pilates, 7 PT

Number of keyboards in the music room?

7 electronic keyboards and 2 baby grand pianos

How many loads of laundry per month in the Winter Term? **560**

STUDENT WELLNESS

Pilates

For the past 10 years, Pilates at SAB has been a centerpiece of our wellness programs, offered to the intermediate and advanced students completely free of charge. Professional dancers, including many of SAB's faculty members, have practiced this unique conditioning technique during and after their dance careers. For many dancers, especially young teenagers with developing bodies and intense training schedules, Pilates promotes improved flexibility, muscle control, coordination and strength.



Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

During the Winter Term, Pilates instructor Phoebe Higgins—an alumna of SAB herself—spends 22 hours a week in the Pilates room, providing individual and group instruction six days a week to some 30 students each day. Summer Course students benefit from weekly Pilates mat classes, also led by Ms. Higgins.

With her years of experience working with dancers, Ms. Higgins customizes a Pilates regimen to the needs of our teenage ballet stu-

dents. She manages a constantly busy Pilates room while still offering focused attention to students at varying levels of experience and strength. Beginners receive careful, hands-on instruction until they have mastered the correct form and breathing used in the Pilates method. Students with more experience may work independently but are still continually observed, coached and corrected. Faculty members often consult with Ms. Higgins, asking her to focus on specific strength-building or flexibility exercises for particular students. Ms. Higgins works very closely with the School's physical therapist toward injury prevention as well as to develop special programs for those students who are recovering from injuries.

The Pilates Program is made possible by the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation.

"I love how the teachers and Phoebe work together to help us get stronger. I feel more prepared and ready to execute ballet movements after doing my Pilates exercises. Pilates helps me feel centered and more pulled together."—Olivia Boisson, C-2

Student Seminars

Heidi Skolnik, the School's nutritionist, is on site every other Wednesday for individual consultations with advanced students. She also develops special nutrition-themed events and creates engaging seminars for our Summer Course and Winter Term students of all ages. In April, upper Children's Division students were invited to a Health Fair. Healthy snack options and bone health were emphasized through fun games and prizes.



Students learn about healthy snacks at the Health Fair.

Weight Training

Weekly weight training classes begin at the Intermediate Men's level and are taught by SAB and NYCB alumnus Peter Frame. Classes are designed to condition and strengthen the musculature of the upper body, thereby enhancing partnering skills.

"We focus a lot on stabilization and strength building to prevent injuries. I feel like I've gotten stronger by doing these specific exercises under Peter Frame's guidance and I can use the proper muscles in partnering class."

—Peter Walker, Advanced Men



Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

Physical Therapy

Another key component of supporting our students' physical health is the School's physical therapy program. This program provides on-site attention by professionals to students who sustain injuries throughout the year, but like the Pilates program, it also serves as an important form of preventive care.

Given the number of hours advanced students train each week and the physical challenges of ballet, injuries are inevitably part of a dancer's experience, just as they are for any kind of aspiring professional athlete. While SAB strives to reduce the risks our students face by emphasizing proper technique, along with flexibility and strength training, through our physical therapy program, we are also able to teach our students to seek care before a minor warning sign becomes a serious issue.

During the current term, SAB has added Wellness Workshops for upper Children's Division students. On February 26, students and their parents attended a workshop entitled "The Pre-Adolescent Dancer: Avoiding Injury & Staying Healthy!" that focused on how changes in flexibility, strength and balance can affect their bodies.

Andrea Zujko, of Westside Dance Physical Therapy, has been SAB's physical therapist since 2004, and is joined this year by her colleague Cameron Gomez. Additional therapists from Westside Dance Physical Therapy consult when necessary.

Beyond the Ballet Barre

Music Program

"See the music, hear the dance," George Balanchine was fond of saying. SAB's students learn to "see the music" through a Music Program originally established by Mr. Balanchine for intermediate and advanced students. Under the guidance of SAB's music teacher Jeffrey Middleton, today's students pursue weekly studies in keyboard, composition, music theory and history. Some students supplement these lessons with private piano instruction.



Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

The music curriculum was designed around a three-year model in which students are introduced to basic reading and keyboard skills in the first year; move onto more advanced keyboard work and general music instruction—including terminology, analytic and listening skills—in year two; and, during year three, focus on music history and the study of compositions used in ballet.

Jeffrey Middleton has taught music at SAB since 1986 and in 1991 he helped create the current iteration of SAB's music program. He graduated from The Juilliard School and Yale School of Music, where he completed his Doctor of Musical Arts degree. He has performed as a solo pianist, a chamber musician and a vocal accompanist. He was awarded the 2010 Mae L. Wien Award for Distinguished Service at SAB.

"Taking music classes at SAB has made me realize that without music, there would be no dancing. It establishes cohesiveness between steps and helps to translate the story of the movement to the audience."—Madeline Carver, C-1

Gymnastics

In the Children's Division, Boys II, III and IV students take a weekly Saturday gymnastics class taught by Frank Sellitto. This optional class is designed to help the School's younger boys, ages 9 to 13, build the strength and flexibility required of male dancers.

"I like the class because, just as in ballet, it is important to take risks. In the gymnastics class we are always taking risks with new routines and movements. Also, it has really helped my strength and flexibility in general."—Jonathan Alexander, Boys IV



Character Class

SAB faculty member Andrei Kramarvesky teaches weekly character classes for Intermediate Division students. Students learn the polonaise, mazurka, and other formal and folk dances of the past that appear not only in the classical repertory but also in contemporary works.

"I teach a combination of different character styles. I had a very good character teacher in Russia, and in my performing experience I danced many demi-character roles—Hungarian, Russian, flamenco, even Broadway—so I teach a combination of them all, an international style. It's very useful for students to feel different muscles and kinds of movements."—Andrei Kramarvesky



Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

Ballroom Class

For eight weeks each fall, Eva Carozza and Eric Sydnor (pictured), instructors from American Ballroom Theater, lead a Ballroom class for advanced students.

Eva and Eric describe their work as follows:

"Ballroom dancing has been a part of the curriculum at SAB for nearly 30 years, when Peter Martins, who had experienced ballroom dance in his youth, first invited the world renowned Yvonne Marceau and Pierre Dulaine to teach at the School. The ballroom class brings a different experience in partnering to the students. It exposes them to the dance forms and music that are a part of a variety of cultures and gives them an awareness of their partner. It teaches the students how to hold each other and introduces them to the concepts of leading and interpreting the lead. The basic figures of the Merengue, Foxtrot, Salsa, Tango, Swing and Waltz are the dances typically covered. Sometimes the simplest thing is the most challenging, like learning how to walk. With another body in front of you, it is completely different from dancing on one's own."

"I love how the boys must turn into gentlemen for the ladies. Learning dances like the Foxtrot, Swing, Tango or Merengue is so much fun, and a nice break from our never-ending pliés and tendus. My personal favorite is Swing because it reminds me of when I was little and my mom and dad would be making dinner together and then they would turn on the radio and start to Swing! My dad would pick me up and swing me around."—Claire Millard, C-1



Guest Teacher

Jose Manuel Carreño

SAB was pleased to have Jose Manuel Carreño, a world-renowned Principal Dancer from American Ballet Theatre, teach a number of Advanced Men's classes in March.

"I had a great time working with the Advanced Men at SAB. They are a very talented group, and it's always inspiring to work with students who have a wonderful hunger to learn."—Jose Manuel Carreño

"From the moment Jose Manuel Carreño stepped into the studio, he had the undivided attention of every member of the Advanced Men's class. We all knew and respected his extraordinary gifts as a dancer, and were eager to see how that stage magic would transfer to the classroom. And indeed it did. Jose's combinations were simple and linked by a few key elements. He was insistent, in particular, on establishing crystal clear positions as quickly as possible. It was an inspiring moment each time he demonstrated a step. His most subtle presentation of the chest and neck was as captivating as his dazzling virtuosic pirouettes."—Silas Farley, Advanced Men



Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

Alumni Weekend

On Friday and Saturday, February 4 and 5, some 80 alumni joined SAB faculty and staff for the annual Alumni Weekend. The pre-performance cocktail party on Friday night celebrated faculty member Susan Pilarre's 25th year teaching at SAB. Suzy began studying at the School at age 11, and after a successful career with NYCB, she returned to



Suki Schorer, Samantha Basford, Lane Harwell and Stephanie Greenwald at the cocktail party.

the School in 1986 to teach. A generation of dancers has been influenced by Suzy's passion, commitment and energy, and SAB looks forward to having her teach for many more years.

Following Suzy's toast, guests crossed the plaza for a mixed repertory program at New York City Ballet: Balanchine's *Mozartiana*, Martins's *The Magic Flute*, featuring 18 young SAB students, and Susan Stroman's *For the Love of Duke*.

On Saturday, SAB opened its doors for alumni to enjoy breakfast and class observations, including a co-ed advanced class taught by Peter Martins.



Photo by Kyle Froman

Save the Date for Workshop 2011

June 4 at 2 & 8pm
June 7 at 7pm

This year's program will present SAB's young children in Jerome Robbins's *Circus Polka*. Albert Evans, recently appointed an NYCB ballet master, will set Peter Martins's *Les Gentilhommes*, with faculty member Arch Higgins (pictured below). Balanchine's *Allegro Brillante* and *Who Cares?*, which were last performed at Workshop in 1992, will conclude the program. This year's Workshop Benefit will honor longtime board member and outgoing chairman Robert Fribourg.

Visit www.sab.org/workshop to purchase tickets



Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

New York Choreographic Institute

The New York Choreographic Institute presented its Spring Session on March 11, featuring 25 students from SAB. Three choreographers—Robert Binet, Joseph Morrissey and David Morse—created distinctive works on the advanced students to commissioned music composed by doctoral students from The Juilliard School. The NYCI provides SAB students with a unique opportunity to be part of the choreographic process before they join a professional company. Pictured are advanced students Sarah Lee and Aaron Sanz Madrid with choreographer Robert Binet.



Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

Association Open Houses

Halloween and Valentine's Day Open Houses were very popular once again with Association and Donors Circle members. As the advanced students enthusiastically shed their dress code, guests had the chance to watch them hard at work in their classes while expressing their creativity in original costumes! Benefactor and Donors Circle members started their day early with a new Open House Breakfast and Behind-the-Scenes Tour of SAB's 5th floor, which focused on the iconic artwork on display.



Members of SAB's Association (\$100+) enjoy year-round opportunities to observe students in classes, rehearsals and demonstrations.

For more information please visit www.sab.org/membership or call (212) 769-6611.

D O N O R spotlight

MIRIAM PELLMAN

October 23, 1929-January 25, 2011

In Memorium

In 2009 during its 75th Anniversary, SAB held a special lunch to thank its longtime donors. Four dedicated patrons who had supported the School with annual gifts each and every year for over 25 years were presented with special certificates of recognition. No one in the room was surprised when Miriam Pellman's name was called.



Miriam Pellman with advanced students on Valentine's Day in 2003.

Miriam and her husband Edwin were longtime New York City Ballet subscribers, and they began supporting SAB in 1983, in the earliest days of the Association. They never missed a year. After Edwin's death in 1997, Miriam continued her annual gifts, and gave each one in his memory. Miriam also made a planned gift and signed a Charitable Gift Annuity with SAB to provide her with extra income in her retirement.

Beyond Miriam's generous financial support, she was a valued member of the SAB family. She volunteered at NYCB and SAB for many years. Most recently, she could be found at SAB on Thursday afternoons (never early in the morning after so many early days as a teacher!) sorting and filing press clippings and performance programs. She attended every Workshop Performance, studio showing, class visit and special program.

Miriam's generous spirit and passion for our young dancers lives on at SAB, not just in the hearts of everyone who knew her but in the **Miriam Pellman Scholarship Fund**, an endowment established with gifts from many friends and family members earlier this year. For information about contributing to Miriam's fund, please contact Louisa Swain at 212-769-6614 or via email at lswain@sab.org.

REMEMBERING SAB IN YOUR WILL

What do Jerome Robbins, John Taras and Patricia Zipprodt have in common?

They all left bequests to the School of American Ballet.

Bequests are a flexible planning tool that may be the ideal way for you to meet your personal objectives while also supporting SAB. You can provide now for a future gift to SAB by including a bequest provision in your will or revocable living trust. By making a bequest you do not part with anything today. However, when your gift is received it will be added to the School's endowment to help provide a steady stream of income for future generations of SAB students.

If you make a bequest to SAB, you'll be eligible to join the Founders Society—a special patrons group named for George Balanchine and Lincoln Kirstein and dedicated to their visionary ideals for ballet in America. Founders Society members have made the School of American Ballet a part of their estate plans to help ensure the long-term vitality of SAB and future generations of dancers.



For more information about making a gift that can benefit you, your family and SAB, please contact Carrie Hinrichs, Director of Development & Planning, at (212) 769-6615 or by email at chinrichs@sab.org.