

AHSHS DANCE ACADEMY

MAKING MOVES

DANCE ACADEMY NEWS



THE COMPETITION SEASON BEGINS...

Term 2 marks the start of our competition season, and what a season it's turning out to be. Our dancers have been devoting many hours to their training and the results are paying off.

In preparation for this term's busy schedule, our dancers attended training on their holidays - what commitment!! We used the time to rework choreography, refine skills, and of course, to bond as a team.



EISTEDDFOD SUCCESS

We have performed in two competitions so far and the results speak for themselves. Not only did we come away with great results and prize money for our choreographed dances, but we were also awarded the Sportsmanship Award at the Ipswich Juniors Eisteddfod. As the aim competing is to grow both as a dancer and as a responsible team member, this accolade is wonderful testament to both our program and our dancers.

New for us this year were our entries into student choreography, where students were required to create a piece with no teacher input (definitely harder for the teacher...!) These sections were highly contested. Chanelle Young (Year 11) created a Broadway Jazz dance for the Year 10 -12 section and Ashlyn Collie (Year 7) created a hip hop piece for Years 7-9. Both students gained 2nd place in their respective sections which is an outstanding achievement.

Ipswich Juniors Eisteddfod

- 1st – Senior Mega Hip Hop
- 2nd – Student Choreography (by Chanelle Young)
- 2nd - Junior Choreography (by Ashlyn Collie)
- 3rd – Senior Contemporary
- VHC – Senior Musical Theatre & Junior Mega Hip Hop
- HC – Senior Jazz & Junior Contemporary
- + Sportsmanship Award



Ipswich Combined Teachers Dance Festival

- 1st Junior Mega Hip Hop
- 2nd Junior Contemporary
- 2nd Senior Mega Hip Hop
- 3rd Senior Musical Theatre
- 3rd Senior Contemporary
- HC Senior Jazz and Junior Jazz



TEAMWORK AND RESILIENCE

To prepare for competitions and performances, dancers can train several times per week. This can be before or after school, during breaks, or on weekends. On competition days, due to limited space at each venue, training needs to take place in the morning to ensure a safe run through of each dance where lifts are checked, placement reworked if needed etc. Once at the event, dancers can compete late into the evening, with no set performance time given, due to late scratchings or additional entries, so maintaining focus and energy are a constant challenge, not to mention being psyched out by opposing teams you are sharing a dressing room with.

At the recent Ipswich Juniors Eisteddfod, our dancers had the added challenge of 2 dancers being withdrawn at the last minute due to illness and injury, which impacted the placement of several dances. Our mentors and coaches went above and beyond to guide and support our dancers during this time, showing fantastic leadership and problem-solving skills, and the dancers responded accordingly. You make us incredibly proud! Huge thanks also to Mrs Davis and Ms Lockwood who eagerly assisted each day. We could not have done it without you.



HIP HOP MASTERCLASS

In week 7, our dancers had the opportunity to work with past student and dance mentor Taylor Seage. Although Taylor has danced in all genres, he specializes in hip hop, and our students relished the chance to work with him. Taylor has worked internationally as both a choreographer and performer, and was most recently seen dancing on *The Voice* and with Rita Ora at Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. He loved being back in his old dance room and working with the next generation of Alex Hills dancers. We will certainly get him back again when he is next in Queensland.



DASH PERFORMANCE



To support the student council, our dancers perform at Dash each year. The constraints of the performance space determine which dances are suitable for the event, due to the floor surface and the very close proximity of the audience. Performing back to back dances in the heat of the sun is also tough. This year we presented our junior and senior hip hop troupes and our Year 7 Dance Academy class, and all students conducted themselves like true professionals as they presented their crowd pleasing work.

ASSEMBLY PERFORMANCES

We love to showcase the results of our hard work, and both the junior and senior assemblies have enjoyed some of our wonderful performances. Junior Mega performed following their win at the Ipswich Combined Teachers Dance Festival, where both students and teachers were thoroughly impressed. The Year 7 Dance Academy class performed their class assessment created by Rhys Hume from Lucid Moves in collaboration with Ashlyn Collie from the Year 7 class. It was a rewarding experience for the students to work with Rhys as well as providing Ashlyn with a challenge to extend her skills.



MORE WORKSHOPS



Part of our curriculum work involves students learning about the history and development of different genres, the philosophy of various choreographers and how meaning can be created through the choreographic process. This semester, Year 8 students investigated Social Dances of the past century, and the social, cultural and historical factors influencing their development. Dressing the part was a highlight. To finish the semester, Rhys from Lucid Moves continued to work with our students as part of our partnership, teaching the students their performance assessment. Rhys specializes in educating students about hip hop culture and ensuring they have strong technical and expressive foundations. As well as working with the Year 8 class, he also created a performance piece for the Year 7 dance class who were very impressive in both their aptitude for the style and their work ethic.

YEAR 6 DANCE CLINIC

In week 4, we hosted a dance clinic for our prospective Dance Academy students. Students from our feeder schools attended, and by all accounts, the clinic was a resounding success. The students spent the afternoon doing a workshop with Rhys from Lucid Moves assisted by Will and Ashlyn from our current dance troupe team. The Year 6 students did a range of activities to promote teamwork and develop their technical skills in hip hop. They also worked in small groups to create some choreography which they presented to their peers. In addition, the students were treated to a performance by our current Academy class as well as our senior contemporary troupe, followed by a Q&A session about life in Dance Academy at AHSHS. It was a high energy afternoon with lots of motivated prospective dancers, and the feedback we have been receiving from the Year 6 parents supports that the students had a wonderful time.



OPEN DAY BBQ

The BBQ was fired up and all hands were on deck for Open Day in week 8. There was a beautiful sense of community with staff, parent helpers and students working together to raise some funds for our program. We are always grateful for the ongoing support provided by our dance families. It was great seeing everyone in our dance gear also!! Thanks to the Year 11's for your creative input into our display and also to Mr Taylor who assisted us on the day. What a legend!



WE DANCED TO HELP OTHERS

In week 5 we hosted Dance for Sick Kids to help raise money for Ronald McDonald House Charities. Various challenges were presented throughout the week in which students could participate and we can't thank staff and students enough for their contribution:

Monday - Our dance troupes performed

Tuesday - Mr Harvey provided a VR experience

Wednesday - Mrs Flexman led a highland dance workshop

Thursday - Mr Tago and his students presented a Polynesian dance display

Friday - Mrs Candy and Mr Taylor hosted *Just Dance*

We are incredibly grateful to Mr Beaton and Task Force for their help throughout the week, and a MASSIVE thanks must go to Ms Lockwood for her organisation and coordination of the various activities. We set a goal of \$1120 and we are pleased to say we reached this and more, thanks to the generosity of our students and the wider community.



Dance for
Sick Kids

15 - 21 May, 2021



CAPTURING MOMENTS

To extend our Year 7 class, Mr Harvey worked with the students to develop an existing dance to incorporate the 360° camera. The task required teamwork, problem solving skills and spatial awareness. The students were challenged creating then viewing their dance from a different perspective. Due to a power outage, the workshop had to be relocated outside unexpectedly, but everyone showed commitment and resilience working in the heat during inter-school sport to finish filming the dance.



WHAT OUR STUDENTS ARE SAYING...

"Going to a high school where I knew no-one, I have met so many people through dance in a short matter of time. Dance has helped with my fitness, my motivation and my well-being. Dance is like a family that supports your decisions and mistakes which helps me get back on my feet again"...Jade Year 7

"Our teacher makes us go out of our comfort zone...it's lots of fun because we get to express how we feel"...Makayla Year 7

"If I had to explain dance academy in one word I would say "family". It's like having a second family with 80 kids in it"....Kirra Year 11

"My teacher has given me so many opportunities you could never find anywhere else. She gives you the chance to improve to be the best dancer you could ever be. You will notice how much your dancing improves over such a short course of time"...Tayla Year 7

"The most amazing thing about dance is the community you dance with and the people around you, because no matter what they will always support you and accept you for who you are"....Bella Year 7

"I really love dance, it's one massive family with Mrs Hill as the protective and tough-loving mama bear. It's always the highlight of my week. I'm so lucky to be a part of it. We get so many opportunities that I doubt would've been available to us anywhere else. I have made so many friends through dance, and it's going to be very hard to leave my second family."...Chanelle Year 11

"I love that we get to do heaps of different programs and projects throughout the year with different genres. It's been a blast learning new things and learning from different choreographers. We have all grown in our dance pathway so much this year!"... MacKenzie Year 7

LOOKING FOR PARTNERS



We are always eager to form productive partnerships with the community. If you know anyone who might like to work with us, please let us know.

Our Academy students continue to rise to the challenge and represent both themselves and the school admirably. Given the high expectations placed on them balancing rehearsals, performances and study commitments, our attendance data sits proudly at 94.1%, reflecting the dedication of our students. We continue to receive words of thanks, support and encouragement from our school staff, past students, families and the wider community which are greatly appreciated, and reinforces we are on the right track with our program. It's an absolute pleasure to work with our dance students, and I look forward to the exciting ventures awaiting us next term.

Mrs Hill
DANCE ACADEMY COORDINATOR