

Local ballerina receives scholarship

Students of local dance schools were invited to the N.H. Academie of Dance where they were hosting world renowned ballet instructor David Howard of New York City to teach a master class. Howard has worked with the best, including Mikhail Baryshnikov. He coached great stars like Natalia Makarova, Gelsey Kirkland, and medalist Jennifer Gelfand. He has operated his own school in Manhattan's upper west since 1977.

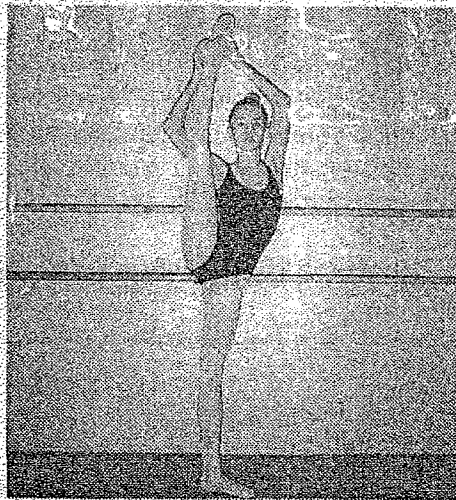
Being one of the participants of David Howard's master class, Michelle Dussault received high recognition from the teachers of the host studio, who believed that she has the potential to become a great dancer. Since then she has accepted a full scholarship to their school.

The scholarship entails six hours per week of classical ballet. Students are trained in the Royal Academy of Dance syllabus, in which they are tested by professional examiners at different levels. One must pass a level before moving onto the next. Some students of the N.H. Academie of Dance have achieved scholarships to the Joffrey School of Ballet.

Michelle, 11, has been a student of Teri Desrosiers since age 3. After a few years of training, Michelle's natural abilities became evident to Teri, who took her under her wing as a little prodigee. Teri watched her continued progress unfold and this inspired Teri even further into the teaching profession. Due to the fact that Teri couldn't convince Michelle's mom that her daughter did have a rare and special talent that would be unique to the dance world, Teri constantly furthered her

own dance education and training to meet the demands that she knew were required of all professional dancers. Teri's biggest fear had been not knowing enough to train Michelle in proper technique for the day of her discovery. Teri is now the owner and artistic director of the Salem Dance Network specializing in beginner dance training. Besides her six hours a week training at N.H. A.D., Michelle also continues her six hours a week training with Teri at the Salem Dance Network.

"Michelle loves dancing and would dance 24 hours a day if she could," says her mom. Dancing has influenced Michelle socially and academically. She has gained respect from her peers because of her love for the dance. She has learned self-discipline, responsibility, and gained confidence in herself. "Teri spotted Michelle's potential years ago," said mom, "but I took it for granted—Teri being a young teacher and all."



Michelle Dussault

All the events have been eye-opening for mom, who is realizing the impact Michelle is making on all the teachers she encounters. She can now perceive her daughter Michelle having a future in the world of dance.

Michelle is 11 years old and a fifth grader at Barron School in Salem. She has a twin brother, Kenny, and an older brother, Larry Jr. She is the daughter of Patricia and Larry Dussault.