

PRINCESS MHOON DANCE INSTITUTE
CELEBRATES...



A Decade of Dance

FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER

FROM OUR FOUNDER

A DECADE OF DANCE
by Princess Mhoon

OUR PMDI FAMILY

SAY HELLO
Meet Ms. Krystal, Rehearsal
Director

NEW & IMPROVED
New PMDI Family Shares Their
Experience

DANCE DREAMS
Letter from Studio Company
member, Cierra Barnette

DONOR SPOTLIGHT
Interview with Jaylon Givan

LOOKING AHEAD

GIVING TUESDAY
PMDI needs you!

TEN: PMDI's Anniversary Docuseries
10 stories, 10 dances, 10 Episodes

& More

A Decade of Dance



Princess Mhoon, Founder & CEO
Daughters Tashi (15) & Thandi (8)

It was the fall of 2010 and my grandmother, Juanita Mhoon, flew to DC from Chicago to attend my grand opening and ribbon cutting. She gave me a \$300 donation and told me to be patient with my progress. She looked at me intently, eyes staring over the rim of her glasses and said, "Rome wasn't built in a day."

My grandmother knew me well. I'm not a big fan of patience. Once I decide to do something, I move quickly in that direction and expect results. To put it mildly, I'm a maniac about my goals. There were many nights growing up where a simple homework assignment turned into an all night project. My grandfather would intervene and make me go to bed, explaining, "if you're dead, you can't do anything." My obsession with excelling at a task went too far for Papa.

I suspect, with my drive and focus, I could have become successful at any career. If politics were my passion maybe I could have walked through the door Kamala Harris just opened and become the first woman President. Who knows? A few times in my life I've wondered why I chose dance, and then it immediately becomes crystal clear...dance chose me.

Dance had her hooks in me from an early age. Both my parents danced professionally; they were multi talented performing artists and it's easy to believe that's why I followed this career path. However, I am inclined to believe we all are born to do something special. The fact that my parents were artists simply set the stage for what I was to become. My life's mission has extended beyond dance and as PMDI celebrates ten years, the plot is continuing to unfold.

The full story of PMDI's ten year history is an interesting one that I will share beginning December 2nd in a docu-series that will air on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. How the business grew, trials, triumphs and what it took to build a cultural institution in the Nation's Capitol will all be explained in 10 short episodes (that I hope sheds light on the journey).

The project is dedicated to my children, particularly my girls. I want them to know and understand their power, to walk in it, and to live boldly with passion and excellence.

Ten years is relative. Some view it as just the beginning, while others see it as a huge accomplishment. I see it as both and ultimately the completion of a cycle. Ten fingers. Ten toes. Ten commandments. Ten is numerical harmony and in mysticism is the perfect number. The symbolism in the number ten is not to be ignored.

Ten is the first number that needs a second part. By adding the 0 you magnify its power. PMDI is ten years old and we are ready for our next chapter. I am excited about deepening the reach of our mission to educate, unite, transform and heal our community through the power of dance. But, I am even more excited to begin to share my story, expand my platform and provide opportunities for other artists and entrepreneurs who need inspiration, resources, and a blueprint.

No, Rome was not built in a day, grandma. But, time sure flies when you're dancing. And Papa, no, you cannot do anything if you are dead. But, I am alive and will continue to kick these legs as high as I can, for as long as they will go up!

Happy Anniversary PMDI.

With love,

Where did you grow up? **I grew up in Washington, DC.**

When and where did you start dancing? **I was a late bloomer. I started dancing at Duke Ellington School of the Arts.**

What drew you to the art of dance? **I was not the best at telling stories with words but I was fascinated with the ability to do so with my body. I could transform into anything or anyone when I performed.**

Tell us about what you were doing in terms of dance and education between the ages of 8-18? **I have always been an athlete since the age of 6. I was a gymnast, cheerleader, and dancer. I went to Duke Ellington School of the Arts and then attended Long Island University as a dance major.**

When did you know you wanted to pursue professional dance and dance instruction? **While a student at Duke Ellington School of the Arts, we would go to IABD every year, and when I saw those amazing dancers on stage, I knew that I wanted to pursue dance as a profession! I have always enjoyed teaching so I knew I would want to give back to the new generation of dancers to come.**

Tell us about your journey as a professional dancer. What were the biggest challenges in becoming a professional dancer? What were some of your favorite moments/memories? **The audition process was challenging for me because I was living in New York and lying to my part-time jobs so I could attend auditions. Time and time again my ego was bruised but I worked twice hard and I never made the same mistake twice. I have had so many great memories during my journey as a professional dancer but if I can pick one, it would be the filming of the DVD, Shadowland, with Universal Studios and Pilobolus Dance Theater.**

A portrait of Ms. Krystal Butler, a woman with voluminous curly hair, wearing a black top and large hoop earrings. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

Meet Our Rehearsal Director

AN INTERVIEW WITH MS. KRYSTAL BUTLER



What are the different challenges and rewards of teaching versus performing? **Everyone has a different learning style. It is a little challenging to find out the best way of providing information to my students with different styles and levels. When performing, we all have a common goal to achieve and we are knowledgeable on how to do so. The reward is when I am able to understand my student's capabilities and push them to their limits. I get to see their growth with each class I teach.**

What makes you connect with PMDI and its mission most? **PMDI is using dance to educate and heal communities. I relate and have the same mission. Dance saved my life and PMDI has done the same for so many.**

What do you hope your students learn from you above all else? **I hope I have taught them how to harness their strengths. Also, pushing them out of their comfort zone.**

What do you look forward to as we end the fall season with our 10 Year Anniversary Dance & Final Performance Films? **I look forward to seeing what the students have taken from each choreographer and how they will make it their own. The choreographer gave them the steps but it is their responsibility to tell the story.**

What about when looking ahead to Spring? **I'm looking forward to more amazing choreography that will be set on the students and how I can continue to give them as many tools for their toolbox to be a successful dancer!**



In Their Own Words

A TESTIMONIAL FROM ONE OF OUR NEWEST PMDI FAMILIES

As a parent who grew up in a supportive dance community that based all technique in ballet and also facilitated training across dance types, I sought a similar experience for Hannah, once she made clear at age 2 that dance was her passion. In my tiny hometown of 6000 people, however, the dance studio where I attended was the only one in town. Washington, D.C., conversely, has an overwhelming number of choices! The virtual-dance-class world of the COVID-19 pandemic led us to look for a studio that could provide the supportive yet serious environment we desired, and we feel so fortunate that we have found a dance home in the Princess Mhoon Dance Institute.

The teachers are caring and also provide rigorous technical instruction, and Hannah loves the challenge of learning new choreography in each class. She comes home after class excited to show me what she has learned and ready to teach me new combinations. Even within the few months Hannah has attended PMDI, she has grown in her ability to be patient with herself while she learns new skills, and she has embraced a growth mindset that practice and consistency will help her improve. This focus on improvement and effort over immediate perfection grows directly from the philosophy of Princess Mhoon and the faculty who teach at the studio.

Despite often being shy, Hannah has made several friends in the Ensemble at PMDI and feels very much a part of a community. Everyone we have met at the studio, including the faculty, staff, and families, are welcoming and warm and make Hannah feel at home. Most notably, Hannah is excited to go to dance class every day and returns home tired but happy. We are very fortunate to be a part of PMDI and look forward to many future dance classes here! - Emily Raskin, mother to Hannah, age 7



"She has grown in her ability to be patient with herself while she learns new skills, and she has embraced a growth mindset that practice and consistency will help her improve."

A DANCER WITH

Big Dreams



Cierra Barnette is one of PMDI's premiere dancers, spending six days a week in the studio training & rehearsing with our Studio Company as well as additional private pointe lessons to finesse her ballet craft & take her skills to the next level. With professional aspirations, Cierra leads by example with her commitment & talent. We at PMDI feel so lucky to have her as an ambassador for our Institute as well as a role model for our younger students.

"When I began dancing with PMDI, it was meant to be temporary. I took private classes to prepare me for Duke Ellington School of the Arts auditions. Despite the original plan, I quickly found what I say with certainty, my Home Studio.

I built some of my strongest relationships with other dancers in Studio Company. PMDI welcomed me with open arms as one of their own. Learning and growing with the other dancers of PMDI Studio Company has been an amazing experience that I'll continue to cherish. Working with teachers who've pushed me to my limits and then some, has taught me so much about myself and my abilities as a dancer. I'll forever be grateful for the things Ms. Oyuna, Ms. Krystal, Ms. Thomas- who I call 'Mama T', and Ms. Princess have taught me. Balancing Duke Ellington and PMDI has not been easy, however I believe that doing so has prepared me for my future.

My ultimate goal is to have a long and fulfilling career as a professional ballerina for a classical company. I have no doubt that with the expertise and training I receive at PMDI, I'll achieve my dreams.

I know that without PMDI, I would not be where I am today. PMDI has taught me more than just technique and artistry, it has taught me discipline, poise, grace, and dependability. These are qualities that I have no doubt will be useful in the future. I've learned the importance of balance and time management. PMDI has taught me to be confident in myself and my talents and skill. Working with Ms. Princess and all of my teachers has taught me to go for the things I want, to take leaps of faith, and to not be afraid to fail. I gain important life lessons from the tasks and challenges I face.

As I continue to grow and reach new levels in my dance career, I'll never forget the people who helped me get there. PMDI will always hold a special place in my heart, even after I part with them. I want to thank the teacher, staff, students, and everyone who I see at PMDI for supporting me and my aspirations."

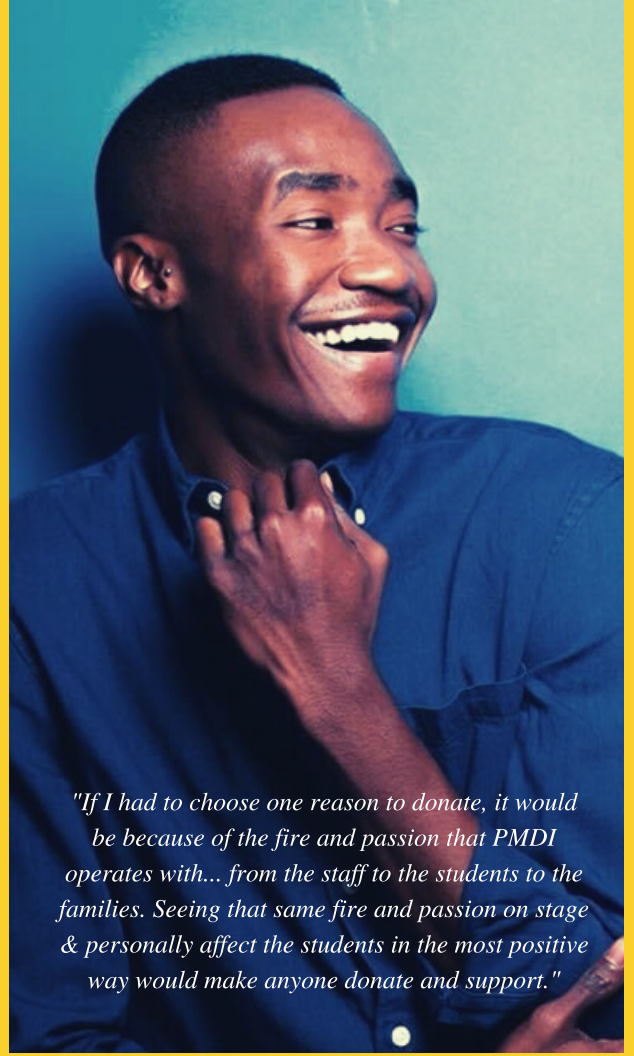
DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Jaylon Givan

Jaylon Givan, affectionately known as Mr. Jaylon came to PMDI as a recent college graduate with a BFA in Dance from Alabama State University. He started as an entry level instructor and quickly moved into leadership roles as Camp Director, Assistant Director of Studio Company, Senior Faculty and featured concert choreographer.

In 2019 Mr. Jaylon moved to Texas to be closer to family while pursuing his professional dance career, however has remained connected to PMDI. This connection is fueled by a strong connection to his former students and the PMDI mission.

*During our COVID-19 fundraising campaign, Mr. Jaylon surprised PMDI with a generous contribution to help PMDI keep our doors open.
Thank you, Mr. Jaylon!*



"If I had to choose one reason to donate, it would be because of the fire and passion that PMDI operates with... from the staff to the students to the families. Seeing that same fire and passion on stage & personally affect the students in the most positive way would make anyone donate and support."

Can you tell us about your dance background? **I have been dancing since diapers, it's always been my passion even before I started some sort of formal instruction at 13. I started with hip hop, then closer to college I started to learn various of genres & styles including ballet, modern, African and more. I've been able to perform professionally in the concert world & as a soloist. I am currently a freelance artist making decision as I see best fit for myself! Being an artist is what keeps my heart beating.**

Why do you find PMDI a worthy cause to donate to? **PMDI is most certainly a worthy cause for multiple reasons. If I had to choose one reason to donate, it would be because of the fire and passion that PMDI operates with... from the staff to the students to the families. Seeing that same fire and passion on stage & personally affect the students in the most positive way would make anyone donate and support.**

How do you stay in touch with PMDI? **I stay in contact through the PMDI Instagram, Princess herself & mostly Thandi (That's my girl). So make sure you students are on your game, cause Thandi will tell me.**

What are your hopes for the future of PMDI (it's students and the Institute)? **My hopes are simply that PMDI will keep fighting to stay alive and giving the community & world a chance to be a part & grow with them.**

DONATE TO A DANCER'S DREAM

#GIVINGTUESDAY



On Tuesday, December 1, 2020

the world will unite for a global celebration of generosity.

People around the globe will come together in unity and showing kindness and generosity in all its forms by giving their voice, time, money, goods, and advocacy to support communities and causes.

PMDI NEEDS YOU NOW MORE THAN EVER!

JOIN THE GLOBAL DAY OF GIVING AND SUPPORT THE PRINCESS MHOON DANCE INSTITUTE:

Donate online: www.princessmhoondance.com

Cashapp: \$princessmhoon

Check by mail: Princess Mhoon Dance Institute, 13603 Kushner Court, Silver Spring, MD 20904

All contributions are tax deductible.



TEN

A DECADE OF DANCE IN THE NATION'S CAPITOL



10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY DOCUSERIES CELEBRATING THE
PRINCESS MHOON DANCE INSTITUTE

EPISODES

ONE: ROOTS
TWO: HOWARD
THREE: INSPIRATION
FOUR: PHILOSOPHY
FIVE: PROCESS
SIX: SHOWTIME
SEVEN: PEOPLE
EIGHT: BUSINESS
NINE: CELEBRATION
TEN: LEGACY

AIRING DECEMBER 2-31, 2020
FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, YOUTUBE
WWW.PRINCESSMHOONDANCE.COM



SPRING 2021 CLASSES

NEW SEASON BEGINS

February 1 – June 12

[ENROLL HERE](#)

HYBRID PROGRAM

Join us virtually from the safety of your home or in small and safe in person classes.

For beginner, intermediate and advanced dancers ages 2–18yrs.

PMDI's COVID-19 policies can be viewed online at www.princessmhoondance.com

BEGINNER'S WORKSHOP SERIES

A CHANCE TO DANCE is PMDI's all new program for beginner dancers!

Try ballet, jazz, tap and hip-hop in one exhilarating session designed help you explore a range of movement vocabulary that will stimulate your mind, body and artistic impulse to dance. No experience necessary. Ages 5–18yrs.

PRINCESS
MHOON
DANCE
INSTITUTE