

## 10th Anniversary Season

***danceability*** n: to empower through movement

*Danceability is an individualized dance, fitness and movement program serving the special needs community. Our studio is led by qualified staff and dedicated volunteers who create a nurturing environment that empowers our students to flourish and grow while promoting a healthy lifestyle...and having a little fun along the way!*



August 2016  
10th year edition

## 10 years ago...How it all Began!

The story of *danceability* began in January 2007 as a conversation between two friends. Christine, a special education teacher and Robin, a Hospice social worker had something in common, they both had been lifelong dancers. These women had a passion for dance and despite other career choices, they knew that dance still needed to be part of their lives. Having been dance instructors in the past, Christine and Robin agreed that there was something missing. Knowing the power of dance, had made an impact on their lives, they began the adventure to start *danceability* and bring dance class to those with special needs.



The teacher and social worker duo spent many long evenings studying and learning the finer points of business plans, budgeting, marketing, leases and building permits, not to mention government documents; all the while maintaining careers. Before the dawn of Kickstarter campaigns and crowdfunding, Robin and Christine wrote letters to everyone they knew telling them about their idea, then called "Breaking Boundaries." They asked people to simply give \$5 so that they would have enough for their security deposit on their studio space. The girls reached their goal, signed a lease, and claimed their space in July, just 6 weeks before *danceability*, as it was now called, was scheduled to open.

Now the grunt work began. Family and friends rolled up their sleeves and worked elbow to elbow with these ladies. They started scraping floors, laying tiles, painting walls, hanging barres & mirrors...but they didn't quite finish. Registration day came without a finished studio to see and without electricity. Prepped with a folding table and a camping lantern in the waiting room, *danceability* still managed to register 64 families.

Just weeks later, the work was completed and from the dust and fumes a therapeutic, warm, welcoming dance space was created. Each detail was designed around the students and their special needs.

Since its first year, *danceability* has grown more than both friends ever dreamed. In its 10th year, *danceability* now serves over 140 students and their families annually. 32 of them have been with us from the beginning. Of course, none of this could have been possible without the help of our volunteers. Over 300 have walked through the doors to work with our dancers. Many changes have happened throughout the years including the expansion from one studio to two, two volunteer instructors to 12 paid instructors, and no office help to one part time office manager.

*Danceability* grew from nothing to something neither woman could have dreamed of, but they are not finished dreaming yet.

## Calling all former volunteers! 10 years in the making!

If you have ever volunteered at *danceability*, we want to connect! Contact us and tell us where you are and what you have been up to. We'd love to have you attend our 10th Annual Performance on Saturday, May 13th, 2017. Email us at [www.danceabilitywny@gmail.com](mailto:www.danceabilitywny@gmail.com)!!



STAY IN TOUCH!



[www.danceabilityinc.com](http://www.danceabilityinc.com)  
[www.danceabilitywny.wordpress.com](http://www.danceabilitywny.wordpress.com)

## Volunteer/Dancer Spotlight

Since this is the start of our 10th Anniversary season, we wanted to honor and introduce you to a pair that have been together as Volunteer & Dancer since the very beginning- Christine Decaro and Brooke McGuire! Here is what they each had to say about their *danceability* experience.



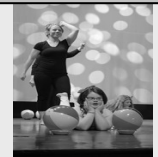
My name is Christine! I have been volunteering with *danceability* for ten years and I would just like to say that I have enjoyed every minute of it. I love coming to dance every week and seeing my dancers! The atmosphere is so welcoming; I love it here! I have had many different dance partners since joining *danceability* and I have enjoyed each and every one of them. They all have very unique personalities. I would not trade any moment that I have gotten to spend with them. No matter what is going on in my life, I always leave dance at the end of the day with a smile on my face! One of those partners, I have been lucky enough to have had the pleasure of dancing with since the beginning. I have watched her grow from this cute little girl to this beautiful woman who now towers over me! When we first started dancing together, Brooke needed many prompts to move and to dance! Now she can do it all (with some prompts!) She loves to dance and will often try to turn up the music so that we can all hear it better!! And after 10 years of dance, Brooke thinks my name is Monica, but I go right along with it! Thank you Brooke and thank you *danceability*!



Brooke has been dancing at *danceability* with her partner Christine since it opened. It is hard to believe it was ten years ago. Christine is integral to Brooke's enjoyment of dance. While the dance moves themselves certainly add to improving Brooke's balance, coordination and general health, the interaction and satisfaction she gets from learning the dance moves and being able to express herself through music is all due to Christine. She puts in such a great effort each week with Brooke and has great patience. Brooke gets very excited when she finishes her routine at the recital and lets out a great YEAH in a loud voice. Christine has calmly been able to direct Brooke and keep her moving along with the other classmates. Her patience and desire to help make the dance experience a good one for Brooke is evident in her kindness and dedication to coming each week and working with Brooke each year. My confidence level in having Christine with Brooke backstage and working with her makes me very relaxed and certain that Brooke is in good hands and will enjoy each and every dance class including the recital. Christine is one of the reasons *danceability* is a great place to have my daughter dance. Not only are the dance moves geared toward the dancers and kept in sync with what is happening and appropriate for their age group, the respect that they are given makes me comfortable and very certain that Brooke is participating in a program that she will find empowering to a person with an intellectual disability. Christine is so dedicated and extremely aware of Brooke's needs. She is a wonderful person, and we are blessed to have her work with Brooke.



## 9th Annual Performances Recap



On Saturday, May 7, 2016, *danceability* held its 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Performances, once again at Cleve-Hill High School. It was an afternoon and evening full of dancing feet, excited applause, and huge smiles from dancers, volunteers and audience alike. Hosted by Melissa Holmes and Heather Ly, the shows featured over 130 beautiful dancers and over 80 incredible volunteers. Class by class, dancers took to the stage, some for the very first time and some for their 9<sup>th</sup> or more. Each gave their very best performance and wowed the audience number after number. This year featured professional lighting which added so much to each piece allowing the dancers to "shine" that much more. Some of the pieces performed were "Incantation," "That's How We Do," "Rhythm Nation," "Blame it on the Boogie," and "Fire Under my Feet." Each year our dancers seem to top themselves and we wonder how we will ever make the next year better, but we know that as good as this year was, 2016-17 will be OUR BEST YEAR EVER. *Danceability* will be celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season and we hope to showcase the most dancers ever, as well as bring back people from the past volunteers and teachers. We hope you will join us. We want to fill the seats. Mark your calendars for May 13, 2017 and *danceability's* 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Performances!

## Farewells

As we start our new fiscal year, we say goodbye to two Board members who have stepped down. A big thank you to Darci Amos and Kelly Pokigo for their hard work and dedication to *danceability* while serving on the board. We know you won't be far, and we look forward to seeing you still help out at *danceability* events in the future.

As we say goodbye to them, we are fortunate to welcome five new board members! Mary Beth Debus, Monica DiCamillo, Diane Klein, Cara Rossi, and Vilona Trachtenberg who all come with a wealth of knowledge that will help continue *danceability* to grow. We are thrilled to have them on the team and look forward to putting their skills to use in the coming years.

If you know of someone who is looking to join our board, or you want to get more involved with *danceability*, please contact our Board Chair, Krystal Testa at [krystaltesta@hotmail.com](mailto:krystaltesta@hotmail.com).

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

### Volunteer Open House/ Registration

**Tuesday 8/30 & Wednesday 8/31**

**5pm-7pm**

Make a difference in someone's life and have fun too! *Danceability* would not be what it is today without our volunteers. This year, we ask that returning & new interested volunteers come to our placement days to discuss class assignments.

Join our team of volunteers!

\*Email us at [danceabilitywny@gmail.com](mailto:danceabilitywny@gmail.com)

\*One hour a week from September - May

\*Must be at least 16

\*No dance experience needed

\*Earn invaluable work experience while making new friends

## *danceability's* 2nd Annual Golf Tournament

On June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 *danceability* held its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Golf Tournament. It was a rather cold and dreary day, however that could not dampen the enthusiasm of over 130 golfers that showed up for the event. All proceeds of the event go toward benefiting the *danceability* scholarship fund and to support continued improvement of studio programming. Highlights of the event included the 18-hole golf tournament, giveaways including door prizes such as a 50" HD TV donated by Toshiba, over 40 Raffle baskets, silent auction, and 50/50 split raffle. The event was a huge success, raising more than \$16,000 for the organization.

The event was supported by many sponsors that included Platinum Sponsor Employee Resources, Inc., Gold Sponsors Erie Community College and Program Savvy, Silver Sponsors CNC Technical Solutions, Niagara Frontier Automobile Dealers Association, UAW Region 9, UAW Local #774, UAW Local #897, WNY Addiction Recovery, Bronze Sponsor Boston Valley Terra Cotta and Tee Sponsors Carpenter's Local #276, JP Fitzgerald, Mary Ellen Kranock and Uniland Development Company. *Danceability* wishes to extend its gratitude to these sponsors, who helped make this event a huge success.

*Danceability* would like to thank everyone who participated in this event including all the golfers, volunteers and sponsors that made this tournament happen. This tournament also would not have happened without the work of the Golf Tournament Committee that was made up Chairman John Slisz, and crew Kylie Bett, Terry Regan, Carol Rutz, Jim Shaw, Darrell Slisz, and Dave Zolnowski.

As for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual *Danceability* Golf Tournament, plans are being made for Monday June 12, 2017. A save the date flyer will be available in January once plans for the event are made official.



# Danceability in the Community

## TEDxYouth@Buffalo Conference

## WNEB "Making a Difference"

This past April, Robin and Christine set out to inspire others and spoke to a room full of youth at the TEDxYouth@Buffalo Conference at Buffalo State College. TEDx talks seek to inspire and bring about conversation and positivity. The theme for this year's conference was #EmpowerYOUth and the importance of everyone showing the superpowers they have inside them.

These two *danceability* co-founders explained how they got their start with the studio and how they've progressed through the years. Robin and Christine explained their superpowers of perseverance and inclusion. Ten years ago, Robin and Christine took a chance on opening the studio, using their trusted "Nonprofit for Dummies" book each step of the way. They wouldn't give up on their dream until they saw it become a reality.

In the 10th anniversary year, we all live to see the effects of their superpowers and how they have impacted our community in a positive way. Robin and Christine haven't stopped dreaming yet though, and will continue using their superpowers to further their goals and ambitions for *danceability* for many years to come.



This past year, Robin & Christine were given the honor of being selected for the WNEB | WBFO "Making a Difference," special, a television radio and digital initiative. This originally produced content is part of an effort to recognize everyday citizens of Western New York who are committed to making a positive impact in their communities.



"Making a Difference" was created to capture the stories of true champions who dedicate their time to worthy causes, emphasize the importance of volunteerism, and encourage others to step in and lend a helping hand.

The result is "Making a Difference," a half-hour program which features nine special people in Western New York, showing the ways they're giving back to the community, and how they inspire others to follow their lead. Through this special, Robin and Christine were able to share the story of *danceability* and all their wonderful dancers.

***Danceability* is gearing up for an exciting 10th anniversary 2016-17 season. There is a lot planned for our dancers and for their families & friends. We hope you will consider joining us! Stay tuned for more specific information as dates get closer...many more exciting events to be announced!**

- **September**
  - Volunteer orientation week—September 12-15
  - Classes begin—September 19-22
- **October**
  - Fred Astaire Dance Studio fundraiser—October 8
- **November**
  - Competing in Crowdrise's Holiday Giving Challenge kicking off on Giving Tuesday
- **April**
  - *Danceability's* 10th Anniversary Gala TBA
- **May**
  - *Danceability*— 10th Annual Performances  
—Saturday, May 13th, 2017
- **June**
  - June 12th— *Danceability's* 3rd Annual Golf Tournament



**Be a part of *danceability's* 10th year!**

**Fall Open House/Registration**

**\*Wednesday August 24th 5:00-8:00pm**

**\*Thursday August 25th 5:00-8:00pm**

- Tap, Jazz, Ballet, Creative Movement, Fitness & much more
- Afternoons and evenings; runs September through May
- End of the year performance (optional for every student)
- Call to schedule your *danceability* Birthday Party

**All Parents/Staff  
must attend  
registration.**

***Classes begin September 19, 2016!***

**SCHOLARSHIPS  
Available!  
Applications  
available at  
registration or  
on our website.**

Registration & Tuition Forms can be found online at  
[www.danceabilityinc.com](http://www.danceabilityinc.com)

Call 716-651-0094 for more information. Registration will be at our  
studio: 3859 Union Road, Suite 600, Cheektowaga, NY 14225.

*danceability*  
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