

Universal Dance Academy takes pride in developing well-rounded students

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A number of Universal Dance Academy students have succeeded in related college activities and professional careers, but the No. 1 source of pride at UDA is the number of Sportsmanship Awards the students and their families receive at competitions.

"These awards reflect the students' behavior and serve as a testament to their morals and values," said Vivian Ball, who owns UDA with Angela Beery. "More than anything, we try to play a role in helping each student become a better person. We take a lot of pride in that."

UDA's rise in popularity over the past 18 years has also been linked to its reputation for being a good fit for a wide variety of interests and ambitions. The casual and the competitive dancer both find a comfortable home at UDA.

"Our competition teams receive recognition for the awards they earn, and that's great, but less than 20 percent of our total enrollment is our competition-team membership," said Vivian.

"Most of our students are social dancers who take anywhere from one to five classes per week," she noted. "It's not unusual for classes to be running in all four studios simultaneously."

Each studio has its own separate viewing room, allowing parents to monitor the lessons as their time allows.

Universal enjoys teaching all ages, from age 2 through adults. The studio has a professional staff that teaches all styles and ages and varieties of dance.

The studio owners teach the majority of the roughly 100 classes per week.

The 2013 staff includes Erin Murray, Ashley Petersen, Sharon Teo and Sarah Vaggalis.

Among the newest staff members is Allie Lange, a past Universal competitive member and a current Universal Dance Association instructor.

Also joining the staff is Courtney Piccoli, teaching musical theater and various other styles. Piccoli is the lead choreographer for a number of community theater productions at Pinewood Bowl.

Universal Dance Academy originated in 1995. In October 2011, UDA moved into 7,500 square feet of space on the north end of the Centro Plaza, 48th and R streets. See ad for details of its remaining open house, scheduled from 5 to 7 p.m. Monday, Aug. 19. The fall schedule of classes at UDA will begin Sept. 3.