

The MLSD Beat

Miss Laura's School of Dance

September 2016 - Volume 1 Issue 1

Hours of Operation

Monday-Thursday 4:00-9:15pm
Wednesday Morning 9:30am-12:00pm
Friday 4:00-6:45pm
Saturday 8:30am-12:00pm

Studio Phone (309) 696-4600

Studio Email

CustomerService@MLSDance.com

Miss Laura's Email

MissLaura@MLSDance.com

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Peoria Heights, IL 61616

NEW Monthly Newsletter

New this year, we will be creating a newsletter each month called "The MLSD Beat." It will be full of important information for the year. We are doing this in an effort to consolidate the information into one place, so we can reduce the number of emails we send, while still communicating with our MLSD families! We will also include fun material like teacher tips, dance history, staff spotlights, students of the month and upcoming events!



Laura Pritchard Owner/Director

National award-winning teacher/choreographer. Highly trained in the performing arts.

Dan Pritchard Owner/Treasurer

TEACHING STAFF

Hannah Brownfield
Ellen Cook
Alyssa Cottingham
Danielle Rivard
Tyler Smith
Heather Wort

OFFICE STAFF

Katie Blackwell
Sharon Durkee
Traci O'Laughlin



What You Should Know About the First Weeks of Class

1. The studio will be crowded, loud and very busy.

This will get better in the upcoming weeks. The first few weeks are always a bit hectic as the parents and students get into their groove. Watch Weeks will always be crowded, but things will start to settle down as the initial excitement of the first couple of weeks passes.

2. Your child may cry or hesitate to go back to class.

This is completely normal! The first few weeks of class in a new place, with a new teacher, and new classmates can be scary. They may cry or say they don't want to go to class. I have been teaching dance for over 15 years, and every year I have this happen. 99% of the time, these students go on to do just fine! In fact, some of my strongest dancers were the student that cried in class or said they didn't like dance at first. They are out of the comfort zone in the beginning and kids handle this differently. Give them a month or two to get comfortable and more than likely you'll see a HUGE difference 😊

3. Your child may be bored, or not sure if they like the class they're in.

In the first couple of weeks, we as teachers are evaluating the abilities of our students, so things may move a little slowly. For some of the more experienced dancers in the class, this may be a little boring, but it's necessary so we can lesson plan and make sure we are working everyone at the appropriate level. Brushing up on basics is good for even the most advanced dancers! For the younger classes, especially, it takes them a few weeks to learn the structure of their new teacher's class. Things will start to move along faster in the next week or two 😊 For the students that are trying a new style of dance and aren't sure if they like it. **Give it time and trust the process**...if you drop before we've had a chance to get past the groundwork we're laying, you're not making an informed decision. They may never get a chance to let everything soak in and see if the style or class is right for them. It can take a few weeks to adjust to their teacher and make friends. I recommend trying a class for 2 months before dropping. If after that they don't feel it's a good fit, then talk to us and we'll find the right class for them!

4. The teacher may not start their recital dance right away.

The recital is tons of fun and a great way to showcase what they have been working on all year. However, technique is important, and we are dedicated to giving our students a strong technical foundation. They have to learn basic technique before they can handle choreography. We may start putting together a few steps for fun, so they aren't bored with just technique, but we will focus mostly on technique in the beginning. As the year progresses we will start to spend more time on the recital dance closer to the 1st of the year.

5. Some weeks they may not "dance" much.

We like to train our students in as many ways as possible. Learning dance history, healthy choices (focusing on eating healthy, the importance of exercise and sleep, etc), injury prevention, dance improvisation, acting/facial expressions and basic anatomy (understanding their skeleton and muscles) are all going to help them be the best all-around dancer they can be. For the younger students we won't be able to go into as much detail as the older students, but we do want to touch on these things, even at a young age. Plus they find it fun! We also will do goal-setting and team-building activities. That being said, we will be scattering these lessons throughout the year and won't let them take up the entire class, when we do them, to ensure they are getting their actual dancing in each week, as well.

6. We're here to help!

If you ever have questions or concerns please contact us. Our receptionists at the desk can answer many questions for you. If they don't know the answer, they can put you in touch with us!

Upcoming Events

September 2016

Saturday 30th – No Weekend Classes

October 2016

Saturday 1st – No Weekend Classes

Monday 3rd thru Saturday 8th –
WATCH WEEK!

Saturday 8th - Welcome Back Party!!
Read more below!

Friday 21st thru Thursday 27th –
Costume Measuring in Class

Friday 28th & Saturday 29th – No
Weekend Classes

Monday 31st – Happy Halloween!! (No
Lessons)

November 2016

Tuesday 1st – Costume Deposits
Due!

Tuesday 1st thru Monday 8th –
WATCH WEEK!

Wednesday 23rd thru Saturday 26th
– Thanksgiving Break (No Lessons)

December 2016

Monday 5th thru Saturday 10th –
WATCH WEEK!

Monday 19th thru Saturday 31st –
Christmas Break (No Lessons)

**Lessons Resume Monday
January 2, 2017**

SECURITY CAMERAS

You may notice security cameras in each of the dance rooms and in the lobby. The security cameras were installed for safety reasons. We want to make sure that everyone is aware they are there, so that no one uses the dance rooms/lobby as a changing area. Prior to having them installed many of the kids sometimes used them to change and try on costumes. Now we always have them change either in the bathroom or down by Studio C where we don't have a camera installed. There are also Heritage Square security cameras outside, in the parking lot, and in the hallways by Studio C and the elevators 😊



WELCOME BACK PARTY

**Saturday October 8th 1:00-3:00pm
at MLSD**

We thought this would be a fun way to get to know our MLSD families a little better and for the kids to make some new friends! Hot Dogs will be provided from The Other Dawg, and we'll have snacks, drinks, activities & games, a photo booth and music! If the weather is nice we'll set up out in the Heritage Square courtyard to enjoy the beautiful fall weather! Stop by anytime from 1:00-3:00pm to grab a bite & help us kick off our 5th dance season!!



CELEBRATE WITH US!



Check out our **NEW MLSD App!**

Download our MLSD App for FREE from the Apple App Store or Google Play. Stay up-to-date on News/Events, register for classes, access your account & make payments, and receive important push notifications reminders.

Things to Look Forward To This Year

TWIRL PROGRAM – This is a new program we're piloting in Miss Laura's Monday 5:00pm Caterpillar class this year. We encountered it at the Dance Teacher Summit in New York and it's lots of fun! Each student gets a workbook, participation ribbon, and certificate of completion at the end of the year. It also came with great music that we're using in all our Tiny Tot classes, and the kids are loving it! We're kicking off the lessons in the pilot class in October!

COSTUME ROOM! – Some of you have heard about our awesome new Costume Room. This is where all costumes will be received, processed, tried on, and altered/embellished. Miss Traci is working down there on Wednesday and Thursday evenings this year as our Costume Coordinator. As costumes come in she will sort and hang them, and coordinate trying them on. If there are any issues with how they fit she will ensure they are either exchanged for the proper size or altered to fit properly. More information to come on the costume process, and the sewing classes we will be offering, in our next newsletter!

WOW CARDS – This year we have really cute cards called "WOW Cards." These are a way to recognize good behavior, reaching goals, or great attitude/effort in class. They have fun, in some cases "cheesy," sayings on them, but they would make anyone smile. 😊 They will be given out by teachers and staff to anyone at the studio (parents included) who we think deserves recognition!

INJURY PREVENTION – Our staff is dedicated to continuing our own training by attending dance seminars and classes to stay up-to-date on the latest dance trends. This year we are also going through injury prevention training to become officially certified in safe stretching techniques to share with the kids!

BIRTHDAY CARDS – Each month we will be mailing out home-made birthday cards to each student with birthdays that month. Some of you may have already gotten them. We know how excited we were to get real mail as kids, so we are really excited to make them 😊 Please make sure your address is correct in your account, and let us know if you don't get one within a few days of their birthday. We don't want to miss anyone! We've already mailed August & September and the kids seemed to like them.

WORDS OF THE WEEK – In our recreational classes, we're implementing words of the week to help reinforce the importance of technique and knowing terminology for each style of dance. Quiz your kids to see if they remember the words when they get home 😊

IMPROVED COMMUNICATION –

- 1) "YELLOW FORM" – If at any point during the year you have a concern about your child's class or teacher, please stop at the desk to fill out our Teacher/Student/Parent Concern Form (aka the "Yellow Form") and we will address it.
- 2) RECREATIONAL FACEBOOK PAGE – Hopefully you all got the email and have requested to join the page. We have one for our competition parents, too. This is a great way for you all to communicate, or to ask us quick questions 😊
- 3) MLSD APP FOR PUSH NOTIFICATIONS – Be sure to download our free MLSD App. We will send push notification reminders about important deadlines and events! And it's an easy way to log into your account to view your balance and make payments.
- 4) PROGRESS REPORT FORM – We have a standard progress report we can fill out, by request, so you can find out how your student is progressing. This is great for students with a goal of auditioning for our competition team or a school dance team, to make sure they're on the right track!
- 5) ONE EMAIL ADDRESS - This year we are using one centralized email address for communicating with us. If you have any questions, please email them to: CustomerService@MLSDance.com. This will ensure the appropriate staff member will see it and respond as soon as possible.

TIP: Most email reminders about fees being posted or due are generic reminders sent to everyone. If you think you have paid the fees, DON'T PANIC! Log into your MLSD account using the App or our website and you can see if you have a balance!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

MISS LAURA PRITCHARD



Dance Fun Fact

“Dancers are known to be disciplined, focused, and high achievers who tend to be successful students and hard workers. Young dancers start developing this discipline at a young age, which is just one of the good reasons to sign your son or daughter up for a children's dance class. Not only will he or she have lots of fun, but they will be reaping the benefits, both physically and mentally, for many years to come.”

“Dancing with the feet is one thing. Dancing with the heart is another.”



How old are you?

32

Favorite Color(s)

Royal Blue, Tiffany Blue & Pink

Favorite Food

Fruit & Coffee!!

Do you have kids?

Yes, I have my son Grayson (almost 2) whom most of you know. And I have two fantastic step-children, Morgan (15) and Easton (8).

When did you start dancing?

When I was 3 years old!

How long have you been teaching?

16 years officially, but I was a teacher's assistant for several years prior.

What's the best part of being a dance teacher?

Seeing my students grow. I love seeing them finally reach a goal they've been working so hard toward.

What's the worst part about being a dance teacher?

Seeing a student give up before reaching their full potential.

What's your favorite style of dance?

Jazz!

Who do you admire most?

My parents. They raised 7 children and made it look easy. And they are the most loving, accepting, kind-hearted and generous people I've ever known.

Who is your favorite choreographer?

Wow....I have so many favorites! Jazz: Mandy Moore, Sonya Tayeh & Ray Leeper. Contemporary: Travis Wall, Mia Michaels & Stacey Tookey. Tap: Anthony Morigerato. I've taken from all of them and they're not just great choreographers, but fantastic teachers and wonderful people <3

Why did you become a dance teacher?

I choreographed my first dance for my high school dance team my sophomore year. I LOVED it, and quickly realized I liked choreographing even more than performing. Once I got my first class of students I was hooked. Getting to connect with my students, and the challenge of figuring out how each student learns, seeing them grow, and then seeing them shine up on stage. For me it's so much more exciting than being in the spotlight myself.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

At the beginning of every month, each teacher will announce their Student of the Month from the previous month. They will receive an “All About Me” poster to fill out and hang in our hallway, a “Student of the Month” certificate, a \$5 gift card for ice cream from Emack & Bolio’s, and a picture on our website/social media. We will also list the students on this page in our monthly newsletter, so check back here next month to see who they are! 😊

“A dance teacher helps their students find the song in their heart, the beat in their feet and a passion for life.”

