

KNOCK ON WOOD TAP STUDIO

6925 Willow Street, NW Suite 101

Washington, DC 20012

www.knockonwood.org * knockonwood@gmail.com



Dear Friends,

For more than 20 years, Knock On Wood Tap Studio has passed down the excitement, energy, and history of tap dance to students of all ages and abilities. As one of only a handful of all tap dance studios in the country, we take our mission to preserve and promote this uniquely American art form very seriously.

Ms. Yvonne Edwards, one of our beloved co-founders, has recently hung up her tap shoes. We sincerely wish to keep her legacy alive and in order to do that, we critically need new funding. Knock On Wood Tap Studio is launching a Capital Campaign so we can continue ensuring that tap not only survives, but thrives in our community.

Today, tap dance is experiencing a resurgence and is gaining new audiences and students all over the world. Both nationally, from New York to Minnesota to DC, and internationally, from Spain to the Ukraine to Brazil and beyond, students are learning about the iconic and important history of tap dance, while enjoying the experience of community and the health benefits of the activity. Storied venues such as Jacob's Pillow, Lincoln Center, and our own Kennedy Center, Arena Stage, and Signature Theater are inviting audiences to appreciate tap dance more frequently, and showcasing this valuable, uplifting, and fun dance genre.

Knock On Wood Tap Studio has been at the forefront of this trend. Since opening in 1994, we have served a diverse student body in the DC area. Knock On Wood Tap Studio had one of the very first youth tap ensembles in the country, Tappers With Attitude. We continue that leadership with our current pre-professional student ensemble in residence, Capitol Tap.

KOW also boasts an adult "Lunch Bunch," a group of mature amateur tappers who perform at festivals and nursing homes, led by Knock on Wood faculty James Hughes; we conduct in-school and after school tap classes in local schools; we participate in community festivals; and we hold tap jams, open mics, master classes with leading dancers, and provide opportunities for performance for our students and the community.

Our studio has a history of alumni securing professional tap jobs and creating successful independent careers after leaving our nest. We can't contain our excitement to see what our current generation of students has in store – is one of them the next Gregory Hines, Gene Kelly, or Michelle Dorrance? We hope so, and we value the opportunity to nurture our current young students toward bright careers in the field of tap dance.

Knock On Wood Tap Studio, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that fills an important niche in the arts world, a niche larger, more broadly focused dance studios cannot. We could not

have kept tap alive across multiple generations of tap dancers without the generous support of donors like you. Please consider supporting us financially at whatever level is comfortable for you. Each donation is fully tax deductible and helps us continue the education of today's and tomorrow's tap dancers in the art, history, and culture of American tap dance. We sincerely thank those who have already donated to our studio.

Our overall target for this capital campaign is \$50,000. You can donate online or send a check to:

Knock On Wood Tap Studio, Inc., 6925 Willow St. NW, Suite 101, Washington, D.C. 20012.

We are excited about Knock on Wood Tap Studio's potential for reaching the next generation of tap dancers. We hope you are, too. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Dori Gillman
President of the Board of Directors

See Attachments

Knock On Wood Tap Studio Events and Accomplishments, 2016

In addition to our classes for ages 4-84, from the absolute beginner to the advanced level, Knock On Wood Tap Studio also held the following events:

OPEN MIC hosted by our youth ensemble, *Capitol Tap* and a guest youth ensemble, *House of Tap*

END OF YEAR SHOWCASE and reception at *Alice Deal Middle School*, Washington, D.C.

MASTER CLASSES

- ❖ **Michelle Dorrance**, MacArthur Genius Award Winner, New York
- ❖ **Michael Love**, member of Tapestry Tap Company, Austin, Texas
- ❖ **Nic Gareiss**, traditional percussive dance and Jordan Tice, guitarist
- ❖ **Ryan Johnson**, co-creator of Sole Defined, a percussive dance ensemble, and former member of STOMP and Step Afrika
- ❖ **Heather Cornell**, tap master, New York
- ❖ **Christopher Broughton**, tap dancer seen on Broadway in *After Midnight* and at the Signature Theater in *Jelly's Last Jam*, member of Dorrance Dance.
- ❖ **Mark Orsborn**, co-founder of the JaM Project, winner of ACE Capezio Award 2016 for choreography.



SPECIALTY CLASSES & EVENTS

- ◆ **Vernacular Jazz**, LaTasha Barnes, Urban Artistry Dance Company
- ◆ **Jazz for Tappers**, Stephanie Vadala, KOW faculty
- ◆ **Series of Hungarian Folk and Percussive dance classes**, Agi Kovacs, KOW faculty
- ◆ **Open House**, Community members were invited to try a tap class and watch a short performance
- ◆ **Series of Classic Tap Dance classes**, Shim Sham, Eddie Brown's Chorus, Andrea Cossettini, Lisa Swenton-Eppard, KOW Faculty
- ◆ **Tech for Tappers**, a class focused on Stagecraft and Lighting, Susan Kilbourne and Chris Insley
- ◆ **Three Tap Jams**
 - 21+ at Takoma Station restaurant and bar
 - Youth/Teen tap jam at Knock On Wood led by Ms. Yvonne Edwards and Gigi Buscaglio)
 - All ages tap jam at Knock On Wood hosted by Baakari Wilder
- ◆ **Participation in festivals around the area:**
 - Takoma Park Folk Festival
 - ArtHop
 - H St. NE Festival
 - Silver Spring Blues Festival
 - Cherry Blossom Festival



Capitol Tap members and the KOW Lunch Bunch have also performed for seniors at the Lutheran Home and the Hebrew Home in Rockville, among others.

WHAT OUR COMMUNITY HAS TO SAY ABOUT KNOCK ON WOOD TAP STUDIO

“Great work all these years. Carry on!” -**Brenda Bufalino, 2016 recipient of Bessie Award for Lifetime Achievement in Dance**

“Best dance I ever made was at Knock On Wood.” -**Josh Hilberman, tap master formerly from Boston, currently based in Belgium**

“Thank you for everything you’ve given to the tap community!” -**Hilary-Marie Michael, tap master, New Jersey, and founder of New Jersey Tapfest**

“Thankful to have you in our lives. Knock On Wood is an amazing example for the community!” -**Chloe & Maud Arnold, tap masters, DC, NYC, and CA, co-founders of DC TapFest**

“Eternally grateful to everyone at Knock On Wood.” -**Michael Love, former TWA member and member of Tapestry, Austin, Texas**

“I love these tap floors!” -**Michelle Dorrance, MacArthur Genius Award Recipient for tap**

“Knock On Wood has changed my life!” - **Pat B.**

“Knock On Wood was a second home for me growing up.”- **Alison C.**

“I will always keep Knock On Wood in my heart and in my feet.”- **Ally S.**

Knock On Wood Outreach Program Tap In Your Schools

Knock On Wood Tap Studio's goal is to bring creativity, energy, physical activity, and enjoyment to students in their own school through tap dance! Our tap teachers are available to travel to local schools on a schedule that works for students and teachers.

All students who participate in our Tap In Your Schools program are eligible to participate in performances at Knock On Wood Tap Studio, such as fall Open Mic events or our annual Student Showcase in June.



Students at CentroNia preschool learning basic tap steps



Students at Tyler Elementary School participating in a hands-on activity

Previous Outreach:

In the spring of 2016, Knock On Wood Tap Studio instituted an 8-week residency program at **Tyler Elementary on Capitol Hill**, geared toward second graders and conducted during school hours.

In May, Knock On Wood Tap Studio also began a 6-week after-school pilot program at **CentroNia Preschool in Takoma Park, MD** for kindergarten-ready students. Both programs were extremely successful and are continuing this fall.

Knock On Wood Tap Studio has added several other outreach opportunities in the fall of 2016 including:

- ❖ Janney Elementary School in Tenleytown
- ❖ The School Without Walls at Francis-Stevens Elementary School in Foggy Bottom
- ❖ Takoma Education Campus in Takoma Park (to begin late Fall 2016)

Your Capital Campaign donations will directly support our increased community outreach in the DC metro region.

Knock on Wood Tap Studio Professional Success Stories

KOW takes pride in the accomplishments of its family over the past 22 years. Many students have gone on to storied professional careers, have opened dance studios, teach, have troupes of their own, and have won awards.

Some of these include:

Baakari Wilder



“Bring in ‘Da Noise, Bring in ‘Da Funk” on Broadway, other off Broadway shows, actor in D.C. area, member Step Afrika, and an adjunct professor at several local colleges. Mr. Wilder has won many awards, the most recent one given by the WPA, The Pola Nirenski Award for contributions to dance in D.C.

Justin Lewis

Choreographer for Studio Bleu in Annandale, Virginia, and Universal Studios.

Jason Holley

“Shuffle Along” on Broadway, member of Sole Defined tap and step troupe, choreographer, teacher.



Mya Harrison

Grammy Award winning Rhythm and Blues Singer, appeared on Dancing with the Stars.

Ms. Yvonne Edwards

Co-founder, tap teacher (called “The Tap Lady” by most who know her), has won several awards in her long career, the most recent the Azalea Award for community service in Takoma Park.



Capitol Tap

Our youth ensemble in residence (led by Lisa Swenton-Eppard and Baakari Wilder), has been nominated in the past for several awards given out by the Metro Dance Association. Capitol Tap will have their first solo show co-presented by and at Dance Place in July 2017.



Mark Orsborn

Co-Founder of the JaM Youth Project and the adult JaM Project.

LeeAnet Noble

With Disney Theatricals, and featured in and helped to develop the DVD and online series of The Lion King experience.

Max and Sam Heimowitz

“Tappin’ Thru Life” with Maurice Hines at Arena Stage, teach the Centronia preschool class, perform their own choreography in addition to performing with Capitol Tap, and appear in outreach and community efforts on behalf of KOW.



Lauren Stamm, Michael Wooden, Rita Wilson

All grew up in KOW and now teach there. This list is just to name a few of our distinguished students!