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A Tale of Two Academies

Partnership between a virtual Texas public school and Dallas-based performing arts conservatory offers “best of both worlds” options for high-performing students

November 2015, Dallas, TX –For most kids, dance, music and acting lessons are “just for fun”, one of many enriching extra-curricular activities that round out their school careers.

But it’s a little bit different at **The Dallas Conservatory**, where gifted dance and theatre arts students from North Texas and beyond are training for more than just a spring recital.

“The Dallas Conservatory offers world-class dance and theatre training for high-talent students who are serious about pursuing careers in the performing arts,” says **Jacqueline Porter**, TDC’s Artistic Director. “In fact, some of our students are already working professionally, and a number of them also compete at national and international levels on a regular basis.”

The intense training, travel and competition schedules that many TDC students manage can present significant challenges to keeping up with school work, says Ms. Porter. “So we started looking for a viable alternative to traditional schooling to suggest to our parents, an option that would allow increased scheduling flexibility while still providing a top-notch education that prepares our students for college. When we learned about **iUniversity Prep**, we knew we’d found the perfect solution.”

“A world of difference...”

Currently, a half-dozen TDC students ranging in ages from 10 to 14 are enrolled in iUniversity Prep, a Grapevine-Colleyville ISD virtual academy that offers tuition-free, state-accredited elementary and secondary education in a flexible, collaborative, online environment.

“Our program, which is one of only two online public schools in the state, is designed to meet the needs of non-traditional students, including those with high potential in athletics, arts, and other areas who are actively engaged in the pursuit of those passions,” explains **Dr. Kaye Rogers**, Director of Virtual Education. “The school’s virtual environment, combined with our rigorous curriculum, gives these highly motivated, high potential students the opportunity to attend class and complete schoolwork without interrupting their training —and even more importantly, without compromising the quality of their education.”

According to Dr. Rogers, the faculty members at iUniversity Prep have been delighted to welcome students from The Dallas Conservatory, who have joined the school’s ever-swelling ranks of aspiring young dancers, actors and athletes from across the state of Texas.

Parent **Destine’ Grobe** (who also serves as TDC’s Director of Education) says that TDC-iUniversity Prep enrollment is likely to continue to grow.

“It’s made a world of difference for us,” says Grobe, a McKinney resident whose fifth grade daughter is a professional model and full-time TDC student.

“Before, she was attending school all day, then commuting to Dallas for dance classes, then arriving home late at night to start her homework, and also traveling every month,” says Grobe. “Now she is on a much better schedule that allows enough time for school, dancing, travel, rest, and normal kid stuff. She can get out her laptop and attend school in-between dance classes, she can ‘go to’ school on evenings and weekends, or she can work ahead if she’s going to be out of town.”

“And best of all, she’s enjoying her school work and receiving top-quality instruction, and getting to interact with kids from around Dallas and around Texas,” adds Ms. Grobe. “iUniversity Prep has truly been an ideal solution for her and for other students at TDC.”

About The Dallas Conservatory:

The Dallas Conservatory (TDC) is a private performing arts school for talented and serious students of dance and theater, ages 8-18. Founded in 2010 by Jacqueline Porter, TDC offers world-class training and performance opportunities to prepare for a possible professional career. [Learn more.](#)

About iUniversity Prep:

iUniversity Prep opened in August 2013 as GCISD’s newest school. The academy is a tuition-free, state-accredited online public school operated by Grapevine-Colleyville ISD and is one of only a handful of public virtual education solutions in the state offering elementary, middle and high school programs. It provides rigorous academics under the guidance of engaging instructors all within a collaborative school community. iUniversity Prep offers an inspiring, flexible learning environment that encourages and prepares students to be college and career ready by supporting learning through technology, fostering citizenship, and teaching the importance of mutual respect in a virtual environment.

All students living in Texas who are in fifth through 12th grades are eligible to enroll in iUniversity Prep. Students can attend class, take tests and complete coursework from any location as long as they have access to a mobile device and an internet connection. To inquire about enrollment or learn more: 855-779-7357 or visit www.iuniversityprep.org.