

## **“Virtual” public school option makes it possible for young McKinney dancer to pursue passion, career**

**December 2015 (McKinney, TX)** —Between extra-curricular activities and homework, it’s not unusual for many elementary-age kids to have a calendar with more spots that are filled than empty. But when it comes to hard-working McKinney resident **Madyson Grobe**, she’s taking “busy” to a whole new level. The ambitious fifth-grader, who already has a resume filled with modeling appearances, competition awards, and ballet roles, spends upwards of 20-30 hours a week training at **The Dallas Conservatory** (TDC), an exclusive private performing arts school located in the Park Cities area of Dallas.

She’s able to maintain her challenging schedule and keep up with her academic studies thanks in large part to the fact that she’s one of the 10,000 Texas students enrolled in a virtual public school—in this case, [iUniversity Prep \(iUP\)](#), one of the state’s few online-only public school options. Operated by Grapevine-Colleyville ISD, iUniversity Prep is open to any Texas resident in 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade—tuition-free, in a schedule-flexible web-based learning environment.

### ***“A perfect school choice”***

Since iUniversity Prep’s opening in 2013, Madyson is one of a half-dozen TDC students who have elected to enroll in iUniversity Prep instead of choosing traditional or home school options, and the conservatory’s leadership anticipates that those enrollment numbers will continue to grow. The inter-school partnership between iUP and TDC has been so successful, in fact, that TDC decided to hire a dedicated academic staffer who can assist and supervise TDC-iUP students when they ‘attend’ class during the day.

“Our experience with virtual school and iUniversity Prep has proven to be a real game changer,” said Madyson’s mother, Destine Grobe. “We usually have several hours during the day when they can get out their laptops and ‘go’ to live class, watch archived classes, complete assignments, or interact with their iUP teachers. When it’s time for dance class (or acting or singing class), they simply shut down their laptops and get to work. The school’s flexible schedule and the elimination of travel time has made a world of difference for these girls.”

The results for her own daughter have been equally impressive, says Grobe. “Previously she was spending too much time in the car or working past her bedtime to keep up with her studies,” she explains. “Now she’s on a much better schedule, even when she has to travel to competitions or take time out during the day to do a photoshoot or go to an audition—and she’s learning more, too. Dance means the world to Madyson, but as her mother I know that she needs to make school a priority as well. iUniversity Prep has been the perfect choice for us.”

Adds Dr. **Kaye Rogers**, iUniversity Prep’s Director of Virtual Education: “We have a number of highly-motivated, ambitious students like Madyson and the other TDC students enrolled in our school, who are actively pursuing their interests in athletics, the arts, and other areas. All of them bring something special to our student body population, and our instructors truly enjoy guiding them in their efforts to ready themselves for college and reach their full academic potential.”

Says **Jaqueline Porter**, Artistic Director for The Dallas Conservatory: “The virtual school option means that our students can keep up with their studies even when they are getting ready for a production, working, or on the road, and iUniversity Prep’s challenging curriculum means that they aren’t getting shortchanged in their academic careers. We’re looking forward to continuing to grow our relationship with the school.”

### **More about Madyson Grobe: *[Full resume available upon request]***

- 5<sup>th</sup> grade student iUniversity Prep/Student at the Dallas Conservatory
- Company member, Dallas Youth Ballet
- Ballerina/Dancer/Model/Actor (The Campbell Agency)
- Has won competition awards/scholarships from top tier national/international events, such as the Youth American Grand Prix, the Bolshoi Ballet, the Joffrey Ballet, the American Ballet Theatre, and the New York City Dance Alliance.

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***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 the few 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 fourth through 12<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.iuniversityprep.org).