

# Liberty Call

## Express yourself through Dance



Dominique Diggs, 2 years old, performs a "ballerina" turn during a Mommy and Me ballet and tumbling class offered through MWR.

### MWR offers dance classes for all ages

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There are many ways people can express themselves. One artistic way is by moving the body in a rhythmic way, usually to music and within a given space, for the purpose of expressing an idea or emotion, to release energy, or to simply take delight in the movement itself. Dance allows a person to do just that.

That's one reason why Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center Pearl Harbor offers a variety of dance classes for Sailors and their family members of all ages to express themselves. From tap to ballet, jazz to hip-hop, MWR has it all. Skilled instructors from Leeward Dance teach classes throughout the week at the various Navy installations.

"We started with just a few classes at Iroquois Point," said Cat Rost, assistant youth director for MWR. "Now there are more than 10 different types of classes at various Navy installations. The demand for classes grew and Julie [Leeward Dance director] has been very accommodating."

MWR worked together with Leeward Dance to tailor classes to fit the military lifestyles, according to Rost.

Julie Hart, Leeward Dance director and a former professional dancer, is also a military spouse and knows the importance of having programs that accommodate military families. After moving to Hawaii she incorporated her own dance studio and quickly became linked with MWR.

"Many families with children would like to enroll their children in dance classes at one point or another," said Hart, Leeward Dance director. "In the military it is hard moving around all the time and finding a place where a person can be comfortable. It is nice to have a program that is tailored to the military's needs and going through MWR is inexpensive compared to out in town."

Classes range from beginner to advanced and are designed to teach the discipline of dance while showing expression and creativity.

"I do what I love to do—dance," said Heather Anderson, a Leeward Dance instructor. "I love teaching children and I see progress every week. The classes are fun and dance also helps children and adults express their creative side."

Dance classes are also structured discipline and allow young children to learn a skill and learn to follow rules. According to Hart, it's also a great way to stay in shape.

"Our jazz class takes the art form of aerobics, providing a great workout and the opportunity to learn a great dance," said Hart.

Leeward Dance also has a performance company which performs throughout the year at various locations around the island, according to Hart.

"This is sort of the next step for the more serious dancers; this is not just for the talented," said Hart about the performance company. "But this is for those students who never miss a class, practice constantly and are truly dedicated," she added.

The dance classes hold a recital at the end of each dance year in June. The recital is for the students to enjoy themselves and to show off what they have learned throughout the year.

This year's recital is June 2 at 2 p.m. at the Aloha Theater on Hickam Air Force Base. It is open to the public and admission is free. For more information on classes, call 456-0890.



Tap dancing students perform intricate steps to a Frank Sinatra song during an adult and teen tap class. MWR offers tap classes to all ages at various Navy installations. Classes are open to military members and their families.



Left: Joselene Herrere, age three, puts on her ballet shoes before her Mommy and Me class begins.

Above: Kelly Nelson, a dance instructor for Leeward dance, teaches pre-ballet to girls ages five and six. MWR dance classes range from beginner to advance and are designed to teach the discipline of dance while showing expression and creativity.



Far Left: Victoria Carr, 2 years old, and her mother, Anne, stretch before they begin a ballet and tumbling class.

Left: Heather Anderson leads a tap class in practice steps across a hard wood dance floor. Anderson teaches a variety of classes from jazz to tap and ballet/tumbling classes. All classes are open to active duty servicemembers and their families.