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## HoustonBallet

### **HOUSTON BALLET HOSTS VIRTUAL GRACEFUL GIVINGS EVENT TO BENEFIT HOUSTON-AREA SCHOOLS**

**HOUSTON, TEXAS [April 6, 2021]** — Demonstrating its ongoing commitment to its community, Houston Ballet hosts its 13th annual Graceful Givings event virtually to inspire hope in Houston-area schools' arts communities. The event provides a unique experience for dance and theatre teachers from more than 30 Houston-area schools to choose from more than \$49,000 worth of dance apparel for their programs and students, all free of charge. Graceful Givings is facilitated by Houston Ballet's Education and Community Engagement (ECE) team and takes place via Zoom this year on Saturday, April 10 at 10:00 a.m.

"Graceful Givings is such a special event, and we are thrilled to be able to continue this annual tradition in a safe way during the pandemic," says Alexandra Garza, Houston Ballet Education and Community Engagement Coordinator. "Our dancewear partners have been so eager to continue to contribute donations, which cements our ability to offer these items to students in need."

Houston Ballet aims to keep the virtual event as simple and spirited as the in-person event usually is. Each participant's predetermined number is spun in a digital wheel. When a participant's name and number are called, they're given the opportunity to choose an item from the inventory list. This process continues until all the items are claimed. Participants collect their items at Houston Ballet's contactless drive-thru on Sunday, May 2.

The event aligns with the values of the ECE department, as the items donated mainly benefit schools from low-income communities, with 75 percent or more students identifying as economically disadvantaged. Thousands of dollars' worth of shoes, costumes, accessories and apparel are donated each year from local shops, such as Georgie Girl Costumes, Jazz Rags Dancewear, St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School, Leapin' Leotards and Houston Ballet's very own Boutique. The donated items are well-loved within the schools where they find their home, as many teachers and program leaders can attest.

"Houston Ballet is invested in the Houston Fine Arts community and in the teachers and students who are in need of a sense of normalcy and hope," says Chadwick Peters, Dance Director/Fine Arts Chair at Meyerland Performing and Visual Arts Middle School. "In this year, specifically, it gives us something to look forward to using for performances and classes with our students in the future, one we can all look forward to."

Houston Ballet is committed to the health, safety and welfare of its community, as well as making a positive difference. Graceful Givings is just one way that the nonprofit seeks to foster a love for art and dance among the next generation. Visit [houstonballet.org](https://houstonballet.org) to learn more about the event or to register a school to receive donations.

## ABOUT HOUSTON BALLET

With more than 50 years of rich history, Houston Ballet has evolved into a 61-dancer Company with a budget of \$33.9 million and an endowment of \$79.2 million (as of June 2019), making it the country's fifth largest ballet company. Its Center for Dance is a \$46.6 million state-of-the-art performance space that opened in April 2011 and remains the largest professional dance facility in America. Houston Ballet's reach is global, touring in renowned theaters in Dubai, London, Paris, Moscow, Spain, Montréal, Ottawa, Melbourne, New York City, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and more.

Houston Ballet attracts prestigious leaders in dance. Australian choreographer Stanton Welch AM has served as Artistic Director of Houston Ballet since 2003, raising the level of the Company's classical technique and commissioning works from dance legends such as Julia Adam, George Balanchine, Aszure Barton, Christopher Bruce, Alexander Ekman, William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Edwaard Liang, Trey McIntyre and Justin Peck. Executive Director James Nelson serves as the administrative leader of the organization, a position he assumed in February 2012 after serving as the Company's General Manager for more than a decade.

Beyond its stage presence, Houston Ballet maintains a strong foothold in continuing to foster a love for dance in future generations. Its Education and Community Engagement program reaches more than 70,000 individuals in the Houston area annually. Houston Ballet Academy trains more than 1,000 students every year, producing more than 50 percent of the elite athletes that comprise Houston Ballet's current Company.

For more information on Houston Ballet, visit [houstonballet.org](http://houstonballet.org).

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