



Venettes Cultural Workshop, Inc.
A not-for-profit organization
Academic Motivation Through the Arts

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*****Press Release*****

**Local Dance Troupe Takes Home
National Honors**

The Venettes Cultural Workshop (not for profit performing arts organization) wins 8 national dance awards at the International Dance Challenge Competition

Vanessa Baird-Streeter,
Executive Director

Directors of Divisions

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(July 30, 2007, Wyandanch, NY) The Venettes Cultural Workshop, a 39 year old not for profit performing arts organization located in Wyandanch, took home 8 national dance awards at the International Dance Challenge competition. The dance troupe performed 2 group numbers and one solo piece at the IDC National Convention in Lowell, Massachusetts. The students who range in age from 11-18 were elated and filled with pride after receiving numerous awards for their dance productions entitled; *Asian Fusion, They Didn't Know and Believer*.

"I am so proud of each and every student," said Vanessa Baird-Streeter, Executive Director of the Venettes Cultural Workshop. "Each student worked to their fullest potential and truly displayed the level of talent needed to receive such recognition for their performances." The dance troupe received the following awards: **2 National Platinum Score awards** (highest level of scoring for entries in the competition), **Art Stone Global Entertainer Award, Best Choreography Award, 1st Runner Up-Production Challenge Champion, 1st Runner Up-Ultimate Challenge Champion** (received second highest score out of 364 entries), and **Entertainment Challenge Contender**. The Venettes Cultural Workshop soloist, Jada Singletary, 13, received the following awards: **Gold Score Award, Best Emotional Execution of a solo piece and Top 10 finalist in the Jr. Miss IDC Competition**. Twenty five Venette students participated in the competition which took place from July 18 through July 22.

The production piece entitled; *Asian Fusion* will appear on the IDC's Television Spectacular program sometime in late September or early October. "I was so happy and elated when were chosen as winners, said Alayna Miller of North Babylon. "I felt like all of our hard work paid off." "We practiced 2-3 times per week for at least 3 hours at a time," said David Alleyne of North Babylon. "Sometimes it was rough because we all had to juggle our work schedules and family commitments to be a part of the competition team but in the end it was all worth while." **The Best Choreography award** was bestowed upon Karyn Kemp-Smith and Kim Patrick Harris of North Babylon, NY, and Thomas Spencer and Vanessa Baird-Streeter of Dix Hills, New York. "We were elated to know that the piece we put together would receive such an honor," said Karyn Kemp-Smith. "We created the piece to depict the crucifixion of Jesus through dance. We were concerned about the judge's and audience's reception of the piece due to the content and theme but evidently that didn't matter because it was well received by all." "We danced in honor of our Lord and Savior and we were rewarded immensely," said Thomas Spencer.

The Venettes Cultural Workshop is embarking on its 40th year of existence. The workshop was founded by the late Mary A. Baird in 1967. She felt that there was a lack of activities geared toward the youth of her community and decided to use her love for dance and the performing arts as her vehicle to inspire students. She began the workshop with 12 students in her basement exposing

them to all forms of dance, jazz, ballet, tap, modern and African dance. The workshop began to flourish and found a new home at Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Church in Wyandanch, NY. The students of the workshop excelled in dance but more importantly they received positive reinforcement in the academic arena. Mrs. Baird's motto for the workshop was; Academic Motivation Through the Arts. Mrs. Baird passed away in 1992 and her daughter Vanessa Baird-Streeter has continued in her Mother's footsteps. The workshop now has over 400 students and is currently housed in the Wyandanch School District Buildings and the Town of Babylon Annex building. All of the graduating seniors of the workshop receive scholarships towards their post-secondary education, keeping in line with the motto of the workshop. The students are exposed to the arts on local and national levels by attending Broadway shows and dance conventions throughout the country, all of which are partially subsidized by the workshop to allow all students to be exposed to the arts. The students give back to the community by performing for a variety of community and civic organizations in the tri-state area.

For additional information please visit our website at: www.venettesculturalworkshop.org

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