REACH Frequently Asked Questions

Information for Parents
In today's world, it's important that we prepare our children for the future, be it in high school, the workforce, at college, or elsewhere. With that in mind, Reach was designed to teach teens a variety of skills that will last a lifetime. By encouraging leadership, motivation, and problem solving, Reach helps put teens on track to a lifetime of success. But Reach isn't simply a summer dance program; Reach is a unique community service experience designed to help students grow. Over the course of the summer, our professional dance instructors focus on teaching students how to work together and to increase personal efficacy while preparing them for the company's two-week tour. While out in the community, students share their gifts and talents with nearly 2,000 youth from the Greater Boston Area, serving as role models and ambassadors of the arts. Students also make lasting friendships with their fellow dancers as they work together to create the tour. Reach provides practical team-building experience and helps students form skills they'll use in the workplace for the rest of their lives. By encouraging creative reasoning and problem solving, reinforcing good scheduling habits and discipline, and creating a safe learning environment, Reach's instructors set the stage for students to succeed in the future. They'll also spend time at Boston University, an urban college campus, and begin to get a feel for the discipline and hard work needed to perform academically and artistically at the college level. Each year, full and partial scholarships are made available.

Do I need formal training in dance? What type of dancer are you looking for?
We are looking for dancers who have a strong technical background in at least once style of dance (ballet, modern, jazz, hip-hop) but are willing to learn other forms. The classes are designed to make you a better dancer. We are also looking for those with a strong performance presence who like working with children. As to the type of person we're looking for, we need those who work well with others ("divas" need not apply) and can get to BU on time in the morning!

What dance styles are choreographed for the performances?
When it comes time to create the six or so dances, we draw on the strengths of the "company" members. Last summer the professionals, college interns and teen apprentices created, individually and collectively, a couple of modern pieces, an African piece, a Flamenco inspired piece, a hip hop piece, a jazz piece and a soca dance – a South American Carnival Dance. We have also had ballet pieces.

How will I know if I am good enough?
Feel free to call or write the coordinator, Micki Taylor-Pinney, or have your teacher contact her. But, most likely, she is going to say to come to the audition!

What will we do in the audition?
The audition will consist of a modern warm-up covering some basic ballet technique, followed by a hip-hop jazz combination.
Should I bring anything to the audition?
You do not need to bring anything to the audition since we will have already received your information on the application. However, if you have choreographic material that you would like to show, come prepared with your music. Shoes are optional for the audition class.

What if I can’t come to the audition?
If you are a well-qualified applicant with positive recommendations, we would be willing to arrange a separate audition. This is also for those who decide to apply after the deadline for the first audition. Contact the coordinator to see if there is still room and if an audition can be arranged.

Who are the professionals that work with the program?
Drawn from Dance Collective’s performing and educational company, the professionals are highly regarded dance educators with professional dance experience. Their bios can be found on the Instruction page.

When will I hear back about whether or not I was accepted into the program?
At the applicant’s request, we can provide a preliminary assessment one week after the application deadline. Otherwise, all decisions will be announced one week after the audition.

How are scholarships determined?
Scholarships are based upon financial need and determined by federal poverty guidelines.

When is the application deadline?
The application process will begin January 1 of each year. Applications for Reach will be due the Thursday prior to the audition. Please refer to the website for specific dates. Program and scholarship applications as well as tuition information can be found on the application page. Please contact Micki Taylor-Pinney, Director of Dance, for more information: mtaypin@bu.edu or (617) 353-1597.

“The creation of art - the integration of empathy, conceptual thinking, and design that art - making entails - is not a decorative add-on to an education… One of the reasons that we value art is that it gets at certain aspects of the human experience that other forms of study and practice rarely approach. It is central to what education, in our time or indeed any time, is about.”
- Harvard University’s Task Force on the Arts Chair and Cogan University, Professor Stephen Greenblatt