



DANCE MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



***An intense journey into an accelerated program
where the spirit of challenges reigns.***



The Mind-Builders Creative Arts Center Dance Merit Scholarship Program is an audition-based program open to the most dedicated dance students between the ages 10 to 18. It is a wonderful opportunity for all dance students with a serious interest and commitment to dance.

The Merit Scholarship Program objectives are to:

- Help students advance their levels of dance technique and performance.
- Hone students' abilities in pursuit of their artistic/creative goals.
- Offer students opportunities to participate in community service (i.e. serving as TAs in classes; assisting with distributing marketing materials, and greeting Mind-Builders' parents, students and friends upon entry).
- Introduce students to various creative and innovative styles in dance and performance.
- Offer students performing opportunities as experiential learning for the aspiring dancer.

The Merit program's dance classes include mandatory participation in Modern and Ballet classes and at least one elective in Tap, Jumps, Leaps & Turns, African/Modern Teen, African, or Hip Hop.

Scholars are placed in classes based on their proficiency in the dance genres offered at Mind-Builders Creative Arts Center.



Eligibility Requirements:

Both new and returning Mind-Builders' students are eligible to audition for the Merit Dance Scholarship program. To be considered for acceptance, all students must:

- Be between the ages of 10 - 18
- Apply through auditions (held in June and September) and interview with the Program Director.
- Have clear tuition/account balances from previous years/semesters.
- Be able to enroll and participate in at least two dance classes for the year.
- Be available for community service assignments with Mind-Builders in the year.
- Must have paid registration fee on or before start of fall semester classes.

**Applicants from New York City and the Bronx will be given priority consideration.*

Mind-Builders Merit Dance Scholarship Program Overview:

The Mind-Builders Creative Arts Center Merit Dance Scholarship is a comprehensive program for the serious dance student. The program was designed for motivated and talented students interested in refining technique, being exposed to professionalism, and expanding performance skills. The scholarship provides dance instruction and training, performance opportunities, work/community service experience, and mentoring.

The scholarship is for one school year from October to June. Eligible students must reapply for scholarship consideration each year. Applicants are selected by audition, held in June and September of the upcoming program year. Accepted students must claim their scholarship by completing their registration no later than two weeks after receiving their audition results.

Merit Scholarship recipients are expected to attend at least three (3) dance performance field trips. Our partnerships with various professional venues, such as the Joyce Theatre and City Center provides opportunities for Mind-Builders Merit students and their families to experience live performances from world-renowned dance companies. These companies include Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, Complexions, and Ron Brown's Evidence Dance Company.

In addition to going on field trips to the theatre, we strongly encourage Merit Scholars to attend Master classes held at Mind-Builders and studios of partner organizations. Master classes have been facilitated by local and international artists and dance companies. Past Master classes include The Paige Fraser Foundation *Dance is Healing* series; Sankofa DanzAfro, Pepatián Bronx Arts Collaborative, and Philadanco Dance Company, to name a few.

Scholarship Components:

Upon auditioning, scholars will be selected as either **Merit** or **Jr. Merit** students. Students accepted into the program will be required to adhere to a variety of enrollment and participation mandates, all designed to advance and enrich the student's growth and learning in dance and performance. These are:

- Mandatory enrollment in Ballet and/or Modern dance classes.
 - Merit students **must** enroll in a Ballet **and** a Modern class (tuition covered by the scholarship) and *at least one* discounted elective technique class.
 - Jr. Merit must enroll in either a Ballet or Modern dance class (tuition covered by the scholarship), and *at least one* discounted elective technique class
- Elective technique dance classes include *Hip-Hop, African, Tap, or Jumps, Leaps and Turns*.
- Participation in Mind-Builders' annual spring Dance Recital.
- Participation in trips, workshops, master classes, performances and Merit specific meetings.
- Work assignments in the Dance Department of at least 1-2 hours per week in supportive program roles such as **Teacher's Assistant, Office Aide, Café Aide, Marketing Outreach Aide**, and/or assisting one of our staff members.
- Merit Scholars are eligible to audition (**by invitation only**) for the Mind-Builders Pre-Professional Dance Ensemble, a program that meets once a week, and offers additional training and performance opportunities.

Dancewear Requirements for class:

Students enrolled in dance classes must come to class prepared and dressed in the designated uniform/attire requirements to meet the dress code.. Below is a list of appropriate dance attire specific to the classes they attend.

- **Classes & Workshops**
 - Black Leotard
 - Flesh-colored tights
 - Black leggings (may only be worn over tights)
 - Black Sweatpants for Hip Hop
 - Lapa/Daba pants for African Dance class
 - Black dance pants
 - Black Mind-Builders t-shirts
 - footwear: flesh-colored ballet slippers, caramel jazz shoes; black sneakers
- **Performances** – *in addition to the above, performance attire includes:*
 - Stage make-up

- Flesh-colored undergarments (*Panties must be high waisted and not visible when wearing costumes.*)
- Clear/invisible strap on bras or undergarment
- Hair pulled back and/or out of face.
- Stud earrings (no additional jewelry unless it is a costume accessory)
- Dance belt, when appropriate –or needed.
- Short nails

Specific attire required will be confirmed ahead of each performance

***Please note, hair beads and long/acrylic nails or gel wraps are not acceptable as they pose hazards to dancers.**

Mind-Builders Dance Ensemble:

The Mind-Builders Dance Ensemble is one of the Merit Program outreach components, and the official dance company of Mind-Builders. Members of the Dance Ensemble join by invitation or audition only and are required to participate in the Pre-Professional Dance Workshop class as their weekly rehearsal. The Pre-Professional Dance workshop meets every Thursday from 5:00-7:00pm throughout the Fall/Spring semesters. In addition to the weekly rehearsals, the Mind-Builders Dance Ensemble performs in community outreach events in various locations in the city throughout the year. Dance Ensemble members must make themselves available for extra rehearsals and outside performances.

The Dance Ensemble benefits from the following features of the Mind-Builders Pre-Professional Dance Workshop:

- ✓ Focused weekly sessions on refining technique
- ✓ Study with invited performing artists on various dance styles including Ballet, Modern, Jazz, hip hop, African, Contemporary, other Urban Street Styles, and Indigenous dances.
- ✓ Opportunity to attend Master Classes at Mind-Builders or partnering arts organizations.
- ✓ Opportunity to attend performances at major NYC Theatres to see prominent dance companies.
- ✓ Learn Mind-Builders Dance Ensemble repertoire
- ✓ Opportunity to perform company repertoire at various community events

Select Merit scholars are eligible to audition to participate in the Mind-Builders Pre-Professional ensemble. Merit scholars invited to audition will be notified by the Dance Director.

*Parents/students do not pay for costumes needed for Pre-Professional outreach performances. They are the property of Mind-Builders Creative Arts Center. The costumes must be returned to the Dance Department at the end of each performance. Costumes used in the dance recital by the Dance Ensemble must be returned no later than May 31st of the program year. Parents will be billed for any costume not returned. **Parents are also responsible for purchasing required undergarments, tights, and footwear for their child.***

Community Agreements

- ❖ *You are Mind-Builders Creative Arts Center's most dedicated representative. With this role comes responsibility and dignity.*
- ❖ *You set a disciplinary example for your peers and inspire high expectations from your teachers, parents and younger students.*
- ❖ *Take full advantage of this and any opportunity that presents itself in your future*
- ❖ *You - and you alone - can shape your path of great things to come. Mind-Builders Creative Arts Center and all of your instructors are enthusiastic at the prospect of enlightening that path.*

The above highlight core values at Mind-Builders and should guide all students throughout their learning journeys with us. To ensure we uphold these values centered on community, respect, and determination, all students, including participants of the Dance Merit program, are expected to follow a series of agreements and rules. These are:

Be on time. Be prepared. Be ready:

- Attend classes regularly.
- Come in dress code with appropriate footwear.
- Practice what you learned in between classes.

Learn from your teacher. Listen to each other:

- Observe Mind-Builders' *High 5*.
- Observe "1 Mic".
- Ask questions when you don't understand.

Keep our community safe:

- Avoid put downs.
- Avoid bullying and cyber bullying.
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- Respect personal boundaries and differences.
- Wash hands frequently with soap & water
- Use hand sanitizer as needed. *Dispensers are located in the building. Bring your own as well.*

Keep our community clean:

- **Only Water** in dance studios.
- Food and snacks must be eaten in the Café or outside the studio with teacher permission.

- Keep track of your belongings. Take your belongings with you after each class.
- If you find something that is not yours, bring it to *Lost & Found* on the first-floor front desk.

Practice Professional Skills:

- Come to class with the intention to improve a skill or reach a goal.
- Use appropriate language and tone when addressing your teachers, staff, and peers.
- Resolve conflicts verbally.
- Participate 100% with *energy, focus, and effort*.
- Ask for clarification to avoid confusion.
- Ask the teacher/staff member to be excused before you leave the class or a meeting
- Give **advance** notice when you know you will be late or absent

Non-Negotiables:

- Students walk up/downstairs. Students may only be on the elevator with their parent.
- The 3rd floor Conference Room is for Mind-Builders staff. If a teacher invites you in, remind them that the room is for staff only.
- Cell phone use is limited to the times that you are free. Please do not use your phone during class and/or during your community service assignment.
- You are expected to call if you will be late or absent as soon as you know you will not be on time or present.

Non-compliance (reported by anyone) will result in restorative action.

Mind-Builders' restorative framework emerges from the assumption that wrongdoing must be examined from the perspective of (1) what harm has happened because of a specific incident, (2) what needs to be done to repair the harm and (3) what needs to happen, so it does not occur again. We use the Mind-Builders' High Five to determine what harm was done and work to restore relationships/respect. All parties/students involved in the incident will be engaged in this process to ensure all perspectives are heard and captured.

It is important to understand that some offenses may lead to a dancer being suspended, losing his/her/their scholarship, or in extreme cases, be asked to leave the Mind-Builders community. Some examples of issues requiring restorative action are physical fighting, bullying/cyber-bullying, or stealing.

All adult caretakers will be notified of incidences that require a restorative conversation and whether the caretaker must be at the meeting. After the second offense or incident, parents(s)/guardian(s) will be asked to come in to speak with the Director about next steps.

Merit Rules & Regulations

- ☐ **I shall** be ready to begin on the hour, with proper attire, attitude and energy level. There are no excuses for less than 100% participation and effort 100% of the time. I will not miss any classes except for personal or family emergencies. *Three consecutive absences without justification or frequent absences for any reason may result in probation and/or loss of my scholarship.*
- ☐ **I am** required to register in a paid class in addition to my Merit (Ballet and Modern) classes.
- ☐ **I understand** that I am obligated to take part in Mind-Builders scholarship activities such as:
 - **Student Choreography Workshops**
 - **Outreach Performances – Dance Ensemble members**
 - **Summer Dance Intensive**
 - **Trips and Master classes on and off site.**
- ☐ **I understand** that costumes must be purchased to perform in the Mind-Builders recital.
- ☐ **I understand** that I may only ride the elevator with my parent/guardian, staff or to complete a community service assignment.
- ☐ **I understand** that the Conference Room is for **staff only**. I may only enter the space with the permission of the Dance Department Director.
- ☐ **I will** respect my fellow Merit students and assist or ask for assistance when necessary.
- ☐ **I will** retain corrections and review choreographic movements and music at home.
- ☐ **I will** maintain my scholastic grade at the highest level possible.
- ☐ **I understand** that food and/or beverages must be eaten in the lower-level café. Only water is allowed in the studio.
- ☐ **All my personal belongings will** be neatly packed in my bag except my coat and shoes. Electronic games, expensive jewelry, phones and laptop computers should be left at home. *Mind-Builders will not assume responsibility for any breakage, loss or theft of these items*

Dance Merit Scholarship Program Student Acknowledgement

Please read these guidelines carefully to understand these conditions of your scholarship before you sign this document:

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Mind-Builders Merit Scholars guidelines.

I understand that these guidelines provide an overview of the Merit Scholars Program and my role and responsibilities.

I understand that I am expected to meet all requirements.

I have read and understand these guidelines and will act with them as a condition of my good standing in the Mind-Builders Merit Scholars Program.

I have read and understand the Community Agreements Standards of Conduct expected by Mind-Builders and agree to act in accord with the Standards of Conduct as a condition of my scholarship.

I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about the handbook, I will speak with Ms. Melvada Hughes, Director of the Dance Program.

Finally, I understand that the contents of these guidelines are simply policies and guidelines. The contents of the guidelines may change at any time.

I _____, have received, read and understand the guidelines of my participation in the Mind-Builders Merit Scholarship Program.

I understand that failure to comply with the guidelines will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsions from the program.

Student Print Name

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Print Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Dance Merit Scholarship Program Parent Responsibilities

Please read these guidelines carefully to understand these conditions of your scholarship before you sign this document.

- ☐ I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Mind-Builders Merit Scholars Guidelines. I understand that these Guidelines provide an overview of the Merit Scholars Program and the role and responsibilities of my child.
- ☐ I understand my financial responsibilities. I will communicate with the Dance Department Director and/or Bursar if I am experiencing any difficulties in meeting my financial responsibilities.
- ☐ I understand that my child is expected to meet all requirements.
- ☐ I understand these Guidelines and will and will support my child in staying good standing in the Mind-Builders Merit Scholars Program.
- ☐ I have read and understand the Community Agreements Standards of Conduct expected by Mind-Builders and agree to support my child to act in accord with the Standards of Conduct as a condition of my scholarship.
- ☐ I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about the handbook, I will speak with Ms. Melvada Hughes, Director of the Dance Program.
- ☐ Finally, I understand that the contents of these guidelines are simply policies and guidelines. The contents of the guidelines may change at any time.
- ☐ I understand that failure to comply with the guidelines will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsions from the program.

I _____, have received, read and understood the guidelines of my child's participation in the Mind-Builders Merit Scholarship Program.

Student Print Name

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Print Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

For the Merit Student Parent/Guardian:

The Merit Scholarship program offers a variety of fee waivers and discounts as listed below including:

- 50% off the annual registration fee (valued between \$12.50- \$25). Tuition scholarship for mandatory classes for either two classes (Merit students) or one class (Jr. Merit students) (valued between \$600 - \$720 per class)
- Discounted tuition of the third mandatory class and/or any additional dance class chosen by the student (for rates and discounts review the chart below)
 - **ALL Scholarships exclude a Production/Costume fee (ranging between \$75-\$100) for each class the Merit Scholar is enrolled in**
- Access to discounted tickets for mainstage performances and dance productions.

Additional assistance for tuition fees parents/students are responsible for may be available to parents who qualify for work-exchange or tuition assistance.

Merit Program Scholarship Fees Table, 2024-2025

Merit Scholarship

Item	Base Rate	Student/Parent Pays	% Discount	Scholarship Covers
Registration Fee (1 child)	\$25	\$12.50/yr	50%	\$12.50
Registration Fee (family)	\$50	\$25.00/yr	50%	\$25.00
Production Fee Single Class	\$75/class	\$75/class	n/a	\$0
Production Fee Combo Class	\$100/class	\$100/class	n/a	\$0
Ballet Class	\$600.00	\$0	100%	\$600.00
Modern Class	\$600.00	\$0	100%	\$600.00
Elective 60-75 Minutes	\$600.00	\$150.00/yr	75%	\$450.00
Elective 90 Minutes	\$720.00	\$180.00/yr	75%	\$210.00
Tap	\$280.00	\$70.00/yr	75%	\$210.00
Each additional elective at discounted rate				

Jr. Merit Scholarship

Item	Base Rate	Student/Parent Pays	% Discount	Scholarship Covers
Registration Fee (1 child)	\$25	\$12.50/yr	50%	\$12.50
Registration Fee (family)	\$50	\$25.00/yr	50%	\$25.00
Production Fee Single Class	\$75/class	\$75/class	n/a	\$0
Production Fee Combo Class	\$100/class	\$100/class	n/a	\$0
Ballet or Modern	\$600.00	\$0	100%	\$600.00
Elective 60-75 Minutes	\$600.00	\$150.00/yr	75%	\$450.00
Elective 90 Minutes	\$720.00	\$180.00/yr	75%	\$210.00
Tap	\$280.00	\$70.00/yr	75%	\$210.00
Each additional elective at discounted rate				