

## YCI Letter

I have been a part of The Young Choreographers Workshop/Initiative for six years. With every piece that I have made, it ignited with the question of "What topic is important to me that I want to create and share a piece about?" A lot of the work I've made in YCI is inspired by activism and came from a place of passion that I and other dancers in the class had felt. During this experience I learned the importance of spreading awareness through movement expression, starting conversations, and sharing knowledge to others about important topics.

As someone who is planning on pursuing dance as a career, I feel so lucky to have been able to learn so much about the techniques of choreographing and practiced them by applying those to my own choreographic studies giving me experience that can go on my dance resume. There are pieces that I've made for myself, collaborated with small or large groups, and choreographed on other dancers. Through YCI I've been able to show my work at places like Jacob's Pillow, The Colonial Theatre, St. James Place, and even took it out of the Berkshires at the National Youth Artist Summit in Austin, Texas. The opportunities that come with this Initiative are endless. Along with choreographic skills, I've also strengthened performance confidence, personal confidence, leadership, time management, communication skills, problem solving, responsibility, respect and so much more that are essential skills for everything, not just choreography and dance.

On top of the professional benefits, it is a really fun group to be a part of. The lifelong connections I've made with dancers and other choreographers are incredible; full of memories and laughs. The trip we took to Texas was something I'll never forget, and as a group we became so close. Going through the process of making dance with people is so fun and so rewarding after it's complete. YCI has been an outlet for me to be able to express myself and find my own style of dancing.

The support Susan gives to every student is unbelievable. She truly cares about us not only as a dancer or choreographer, but as a person as well. She has and always will be there for us. She is dedicated to this program and that is shown in the care she puts into it. I'm so thankful to have been a part of YCI for so many reasons.

Rubielle Nejaime



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