



## How I Practice Catholic Values Outside of School and Church

*By Diana Amalfitano*

My experience working directly with the underprivileged students in the Citydance non-profit DREAM (Dream, Research, Evaluate, Act, Motivate) program is an adventure that makes a difference. Someone once said *to the world you may be one person, but to one person you may be the world*. The Dream Program lets me be the world to students in need. The Dream program's main purpose is to bring after-school dance, creative writing, literacy, and community building to underprivileged children, grades 3-8. As a Dream teacher's assistant at J. O. Wilson School, located in the heart of North East Washington, D.C. I teach dance, educational classes and build dreams. Jesus meant the world to the people he touched. In the business of life and the profession of dance, my goal is to be like Jesus in the streets to encourage, share, give and be light to someone.

I have found joy, purpose and passion in dance. Although dance may not be perceived as the typical business model, the skills of performance, drive, determination, and dedication are the skills that each dancer experiences as they strive for excellence. These skills are a foundation of a sincere Catholic work ethic and will remain core values throughout my professional life as I work to encourage and enhance the self esteem of others. By being a Catholic role model for these students, peers, and mentors, my goal is to help others to become honorable good citizens and stewards of their environment, be charitable, and learn what it means to have faith. Most of all I will share my gratitude for the beautiful blessings that God has blessed me with and to give back to others in the same way others have helped me.

Many wonderful people support the mission of the DREAM program to help change lives through the arts by bringing encouragement, self discipline, self esteem, and community building opportunities to students that would not have exposure to the arts. If everyone strives to do the same, then our world and relationships with one another would be far better off. "For, dear brothers, you have been given freedom; not freedom to do wrong, but freedom to love and serve each other. For the whole Law can be summed up in this one command: "Love others as you love yourself". *Galatians 5: 13-14 TLB*. This verse advises its readers to help, love, and act respectfully towards others, Catholic values that I will continue to uphold throughout my professional business career. I plan to pursue a career in dance, and develop a business that will provide an interrelationship between performance, academics, and community outreach/service.

"If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up". *Ecclesiastes 4:9*. The Dream program is like that friend that saw someone fall down and picked them. I often think of how much these underprivileged students would have missed if the Dream program were not part of their school. Jesus lived a life of service; He walked the streets changing and improving the lives of others with prayer and kind deeds. He thought of the needs of people and changed the world. It is also our responsibility to help one another. Being part of the Dream program has placed me in the real world to practice Catholic values that I will use as I build my personal Catholic Business Network.