

*Without you we
could never have
achieved so much*

Dear Mr. Kurella:

It's 8:45 a.m. on a recent Saturday. Most teens in New York City are fast asleep after a full week of school, curled up under blankets on this chilly, late autumn morning.

Not so for 1,000 public high school students this academic year.

"Good morning, SEO Scholars!"

In a jam-packed lecture hall, a friendly but commanding voice from the podium hushes the teenage chatter and freezes fingers gliding on screens, the hum of voices petering off as if turned down by the knob of an old radio.

This is the start of SEO's Saturday Academy. On this day, just like any other Saturday during the school year, our students will soon begin a full day of classes. They will delve into math, writing and reading skills.

At Saturday Academy we are preparing our students to succeed in college and careers. You've been a tremendously generous supporter since 2014. Thank you! !!

Together, we are closing the achievement gap between New York public high school students and their more affluent peers.

In the last year alone, your support made it possible for 235 SEO students to begin college, with over half attending Tier 1 schools like Cornell and Tufts - an all-time record for SEO. Please renew your support of SEO and help more young people from low-income communities attend and graduate from top tier colleges.

Every single one of them is now prepared to reach their full potential in whatever career they choose.

Thank you for supporting our Annual Awards Dinner earlier this year. I would be grateful if you were to make a year-end donation of \$2,000 so we can reach more students through Saturday Academy.

Saturday Academy would not be possible without supporters like you. SEO receives no government funding. Each year we must raise funds to cover the salaries of our top-notch instructors, the space we rent at Baruch College, and our full-time educators who create and constantly improve our curriculum.

Your gift of \$2,000 will help make it possible for one public school student – a future first-generation college student – to participate in Saturday Academy for the entire 2019-20 school year.

The student benefitting from your generosity will receive approximately 175 hours of intensive academic instruction, as well as mentoring from our teachers and program managers. They will also get peer support from other hardworking public school students committed to academic excellence and college success.

There are no better stewards of your donation than the students and their families who sacrifice and invest so much to be part of SEO. Our young people rely on generous supporters like you who make a meaningful – and permanent – impact on their lives.

They know their hard work will pay off in the form of admission to, and success at, top colleges.

All our SEO Scholars are motivated. They work hard. And they want to succeed.

On weekends many of our students are up before dawn, hopping on trains and buses, to get to our Summer Academy at Baruch College by 8:45 a.m. sharp. The last class ends at 4:30 p.m. and many don't get home until after dark – none during winter.

They make this sacrifice because they know a college degree will put them on a path to success, however they define it. The overwhelming majority - about 85% of them - will feel enormous pride to be the first in their family to graduate from college. For these young people, a college education means a better life and more opportunity not just for them but, eventually, for their children too.

The Saturday Academy is crucial but it's only the beginning.

Our work is not done once our scholars get into college. We have a team of 25 full-time professionals focusing solely on our 900+ college students. The team is there if students struggle in a class, have trouble adjusting to a new environment, or just need someone to talk to.

Your gift to SEO will yield unparalleled dividends. In fact, it already has.

100% of SEO Scholars - yes, every single one - gets into four-year colleges, year after year.

And 90% graduate college, compared to 20% for young people from similar backgrounds.

Our students invest in their education. They sacrifice their Saturdays and so much more to succeed.

Please invest in their future. Renew your support of SEO and make our Saturday Academy a reality for these determined, hard-working young people.

Sincerely,



William A. Goodloe
President & CEO

PS – In case you missed it, enclosed is the New York Times article on October 10 highlighting SEO's college graduation rate of 90%. Young people just like the ones appearing in the enclosed photos will benefit immensely from your generosity. Please renew your support and make your gift today.



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VOLS and Hour Children have been working together for two decades at the Taconic Correctional Facility. Lives have been changed. Families have been kept together. And there is a world of gratitude out there.

Sister Tesa Fitzgerald, Executive Director of Hour Children

Dear Friend:

Every day, low-income New Yorkers, many of them held back by injustice and poverty, turn to us for legal help.

These three clients capture the struggles and desperation of many:

In New York City, a VOLS client and her six children live in public housing with mold and a vermin infestation, triggering frequent asthma attacks and frantic trips to the emergency room. How will she take on a giant housing bureaucracy on her own?

A mom in a prison upstate risks losing her parental rights unless she maintains “meaningful” contact with her children and is planning for the return of her children. To secure this basic right, she must battle institutions with a tight grip on every aspect of her life.

And a worker at a beverage distribution company is falsely accused of cursing at a coworker and is fired on the spot, his rights to unemployment benefits stripped away. He is up against an employer willing to pull all the stops to deny the worker his rights.

Please renew your support for VOLS and help low-income New Yorkers beat daunting odds and win legal victories that will transform their lives.

A donation of any size would mean a lot to us at VOLS and we will put it to work right away to help low-income New Yorkers build a better life for themselves and their families.

Without help from legal counsel, many have no chance.

If a child's home is besieged by mold, peeling plaster, roaches, or rats, treating an asthma attack will do little to fix the underlying problem. Your donation will supply families living in toxic environments with the legal counsel to secure safe housing - away from conditions that are making children sick.

Too many incarcerated mothers in New York rarely see or speak with their children. Your support will make it possible for VOLS attorneys to help mothers in prison or jail to maintain their relationships with their children, establish or enforce visitation rights, find children in foster care, and plan for getting their children back when released.

And all workers rely on unemployment benefits for crucial, temporary income when they lose a job through no fault of their own. Yet some employers will fight tooth and nail to deny this protection to workers, often with help from highly paid legal counsel. Your donation provides low-wage workers with legal counsel at unemployment insurance hearings, almost tripling their chances of winning unemployment benefits.

Your donation makes everything we do possible. Your support leverages the good will and the power of a network of staff and volunteer attorneys to achieve justice for our city's most vulnerable residents: children, moms in prisons, seniors, immigrants, low wage workers, small business owners, and other New Yorkers.

Your gift keeps our partnerships with over 200 community agencies strong, so that we can reach New Yorkers most in need of our help.

And your financial support allows us to retain the staff that our volunteers count on for support and to screen cases for maximum impact and the most rewarding pro bono experience. Our staff attorneys train, mentor, and guide our volunteer attorneys - a key ingredient in the VOLS "special sauce" that expands our reach and wins so many victories for New York City's low-income residents.

Your donation this year will open up new opportunities for New Yorkers to access legal help.

Together, you and VOLS, we can reach:

- Veterans over the age of 60 and LGBTQ seniors, populations never before chosen for special outreach by VOLS;



- Low-income small business owners who, operating in a tough business environment, depend on VOLS more than ever to help negotiate leases with powerful real estate companies;
- And youth from immigrant communities who, facing unprecedented hostility from the federal government, need help to resolve immigration issues so they can stay in school.

Your donation, big or small, will make all this possible.

I am happy to report that the family living in public housing infested by mold and vermin got help from a VOLS volunteer attorney who persuaded the city agency to transfer the mom and six children to a safe and clean apartment in another public housing building.

And the mom incarcerated in a prison upstate held on to her parental rights. The VOLS volunteer attorney advocated on behalf of the mom, securing transportation from the foster care agency so that our client's children could visit their mother regularly.

A pro bono attorney also represented the worker falsely accused of confronting a coworker and unjustly fired. At an unemployment hearing, the VOLS volunteer attorney shined a spotlight on the employers' spotty evidence, secured testimony from a co-worker who vouched for the fired employee's workplace behavior and, ultimately, won unemployment benefits for our client.

You can leverage the power of some of the country's most talented attorneys to transform the lives of low income New Yorkers.

Please make your gift to VOLS today.

I wish you and your family a safe and joyous holiday season.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marcia Levy", written in a cursive style.

Marcia Levy
Executive Director

PS - Calls from low-income New Yorkers for legal help never stop, not even during the holiday season. Please make your donation today by mailing your check payable to "Volunteers of Legal Service" and mailing it to VOLS, 40 Worth Street, Suite 820 New York, NY 10013. You can also give at www.volsprobono.org.

Dear Ms. Peebler:

You have brought the joy of dance to thousands of children and adults. Thank you!

We are deeply grateful for your past support of our Spring Gala. And now, we ask that you please consider a gift of \$500 so that you and others can experience all that is magical about dance influenced by Latin American and Spanish cultures.

With your support, our School of Dance will train and mentor hundreds of children and teens – many of them on scholarship – to be the very best dancers they can be. Our teaching artists will infuse public school classrooms with dance, music, and culture. And our dance companies will wow audiences with their skill and passion – in New York and all over the country.

Every day, you make dance come alive. Here's a look back to just one recent October day in the life of Ballet Hispanico. Your gift made all of this possible:

- In a mostly Latino neighborhood of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, hundreds of children are packed into the auditorium of PS 84 and sit motionless on the edge of their seats, enthralled by the tango moves of BHdos, Ballet Hispanico's pre-professional dance company.
- Seven hundred miles away, in Clemson, South Carolina, dancers from Ballet Hispanico's professional Company in long, flowing costumes depict the rhythms of life, death, and love in a Catalan village, earning thunderous applause at curtain call.
- Back in New York City, at PS 75, where most students receive free lunch, a Ballet Hispanico teaching artist leads 26 middle schoolers on a journey to discover the music and culture of Cuba, filling the room with the sounds of Spanish guitar and Afro-Cuban rhythms.
- And just a few blocks away, at Ballet Hispanico's School of Dance, 12 children in just one of 14 dance classes meeting that day fall onto the floor and then leap in the air as they work on the techniques of Mexican modern dance pioneer José Limón.

This was just one day. Imagine what your gift can make possible every day in New York City, all over the country and all over the world.

Your generosity to Ballet Hispanico is a gift to the tens of thousands of children and adults who will experience the joys and magic of dance in the coming year. On behalf of everyone whose lives you will touch, thank you for your extraordinary generosity.

Mil gracias,

Lee Koonce
Executive Director

PS: Our goal is to award \$150,000 in need- and merit-based scholarships this year to enable children from low-income families to attend our renowned School of Dance. Please help support them by renewing your gift today!



Fueled by a Love of Dance and her Mother's Love, Amber Soars at Ballet Hispanico's School of Dance

When Teresa saw her daughter Amber dancing flamenco down the aisle of a Brooklyn grocery store, castanets in both hands, she thought nothing of it. Teresa also didn't give it much thought when she peaked under the dinner table one night and saw Amber's feet mimicking the moves of a ballerina.

After all, thirteen year-old Amber has loved to dance since she was a toddler. For the past three years, she's been a student at the Ballet Hispanico School of Dance. And her mom has been there to watch her learn each new step, whether flamenco, Hip Hop, or ballet.

On most days Amber and Teresa take the 90-minute subway trip from Flatbush in Brooklyn to the School of Dance in Manhattan's Upper West Side – school books resting on Amber's lap as she gets started on her homework. After dance class, at about 7:30 at night, mother and daughter are back on the subway, Amber completing her school work before getting home just after 9 o'clock.



This year Amber (middle) is the recipient of a Ballet Hispanico scholarship, funds contributed by the organization's generous donors.

Amber and Teresa do this six days a week. Every day except Sunday.

This is all part of "the deal" that Amber made with her mom. Amber can pursue her love of dance and take dance classes at Ballet Hispanico but school comes first and she must keep her grades up.

The "deal" is working. Amber is on the 8th grade Honor Roll at Public School 8 in Brooklyn.

In recent years Amber has flourished – both in dance and in school. As a School of Dance student, she has performed before hundreds of people in venues like the Park Plaza Hotel in New York and the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. She has gained poise and self-confidence, not just on the stage but in the classroom, says her mom.

Amber was timid as a little girl, recalls Teresa. She rarely if ever raised her arm in class. Today, she's much more confident, and has no qualms about speak-

ing up in class or anywhere else. In fact, she's almost fearless, says her mom. She's ready and even eager to dance on any stage, from a school auditorium to the most elegant of theaters.



Self-conscious at first, today Amber performs before hundreds of people at venues like the Kennedy Center and Park Plaza Hotel.

A much more confident Amber, built on ever increasing dance skills. Nerves of steel, welded into her core by the eyes of hundreds of audience members watching her every move on the stage.

And Teresa remains a source of strength – for Amber's soul and body. Every Sunday night, Teresa cooks a week's worth of meals for two, carries them to her job at a Brooklyn public school and later on the subway, and then reheats them at Ballet Hispanico where Teresa and Amber often have dinner, usually chicken or another meat with rice and beans, with seasoning inspired by Teresa's native Dominican Republic.

Amber is now auditioning for the very selective LaGuardia High School of Music & and Performing Arts. Her dream is to someday attend Juilliard and become a professional dancer, just like the dancers of the Ballet Hispanico Company, all of whom know her name and often greet her with a hug or encouraging pat on the back.

As for Teresa, she can be found most afternoons at the Ballet Hispanico School of Dance, shoulder-to-shoulder alongside other parents by a dance's studio's large glass window, watching Amber and other students working to master a new dance step.

Teresa's own mother will sometimes phone her on her cell and ask, "Mija, dónde estás?" (Daughter, where are you?). On most days, Teresa will reply, "Where else. I'm at the Ballet Hispanico School of Dance."

Ballet Hispanico

Eduardo Vilaro, Artistic Director

Please count me in! I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to Ballet Hispanico in support of the Company, School of Dance, and Education & Outreach programs which, combined, reach more than 40,000 people each year.

■ **\$5,000** will infuse arts, culture and dance into the classrooms of 500 public school students in Ballet Hispanico's 15-week school-based residency program, taught by Ballet Hispanico teaching artists.

■ **\$2,500** will pay for a special performance by Bhdos, Ballet Hispanico's second company, at which up to a thousand New York City public school students experience dance influenced by the cultures of Spain and Latin America.

■ **\$1,000** will cover the annual tuition for one class for a low-income student enrolled at Ballet Hispanico's accredited School of Dance.

■ **\$500** will allow 25 NYC public school students to attend a Ballet Hispanico Dance Company performance for free at the Apollo Theater, Joyce Theater, or other New York City venue.

■ **\$100** will enable 10 New York City public school students and their families to attend a Ballet Hispanico performance during the Company's New York Season at the Apollo or Joyce Theaters.

■ Other Amount _____



I would like for my gift to support one or more of the following Ballet Hispanico programs:

- ☐ All Programs ☐ Company
☐ School of Dance ☐ Education & Outreach

Name (as you wish it to be listed)

☐ I wish to make this donation anonymously.

Address

City

State

Zip

Email

Phone

☐ I plan to apply for a matching gift from my company.

Company name: _____

☐ I wish to receive the Ballet Hispanico E-Newsletter.

Form of payment:

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____
(Make payable and send to Ballet Hispanico, 167 West 89th Street,
New York, NY 10024)

Please charge my: ☐ Visa ☐ MC ☐ AMEX

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To make a gift of securities or other assets, please contact
Jessica Falco, jfalco@ballethispanico.org or 212-362-6710, ext. 46.

Photo: Paula Lobo

