

# **Tessence/Terry Stonom Dance Academy Inc.,**

Parent/Student Handbook

*(updated 01/06/22)*

## **The Mission of TSDA**

**(Terry Stonom Dance Academy)**

To be His agent in the development of the gifts and talents  
given to us by God.... With the vision that they will be  
used for His Honor and Glory!

- U** -Uplifting God's People to ---
- N** - Never give up on cultivating an
- I** - Intimate relation with
- T** - The One True God ---
- Y** - YAHWEH

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**Terry Stonom**

Choreographer/Instructor

Miss Stonom has been involved in dance and theater for the past fifty-one years, in the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago as well as in the United States. She studied and performed with the Carlton Francis Dance Theater and the Eugene Douglas Dance Troupe. She was also fortunate to have had performances with the Malick Folk Performers under Mr. Charles Gullaume, one of Trinidad's leading dancer and the Trinidad & Tobago Folk Performers, under Ms. Allison Browne. Additionally, Ms. Stonom performed with groups such as, Little Carib Theater, St. Babbs Best Village Performers, North West Laventille Folk Group, Trou-Macaque/Laventille Village and a host of others for her country's annual Best Village Competitions.

Presently, Ms. Terry (as she is affectionally called) is the Choreographer/Instructor for the Mount Bethel Baptist Church's Liturgical dance ministry. She was also the Choreographer/Instructor for their Cultural Arts Center, a position she has held for its inception.

Her performances and choreography includes, liturgical, jazz, modern, afro-caribbean, and a range of African dance genres... such as, bongo, bele', calypso, limbo, east Indian, Chinese, Japanese stick, pique.. to name a few.

## **Kenndrah Stonom**

### **Instructor**

*Born and raised in Fort Lauderdale Florida, Kenndrah Stonom is the youngest daughter of Choreographer Terry Stonom and Musician/Pianist Kenneth Stonom(deceased). Kenndrah's dance career began at the early age of 5 when it was discovered that she was able to retain and execute the choreography of the adult dancers effortlessly! At that moment everyone realized, Kenndrah is gifted in dance and it was well encouraged by her mom.*

*While attending Mount Bethel Christian Academy in her early years, Kenndrah was a part of the Cultural Arts Center and the Liturgical Dance Ministry both under the direction of Choreographer Terry Stonom. She then followed her mother as she formed the company T'Essence in 2003, where she worked her way up to become a Junior Instructor choreographing and leading her own team of young dancers. Kenndrah is skilled in various forms of dance genres such as Ballet, Liturgical, Jazz, and Afro Caribbean to name a few.*

*During the company's brief lapse, Kenndrah used that time to hone her skills and make preparations to catapult T'Essence into the future taking with her a new generation of dancers who aspires to perfect their God-given talent in dance.*

*Soli Deo Gloria'*  
*For His Glory Alone*

# Reflections

*from the instructor*

## ***Are you truly 'called' to dance?***

In Jeremiah 1: God said to Jeremiah, "Before I formed you, I knew you, and I have ordained you as a minister of the Gospel." In this instance, we are talking about ministering through dance.

Can this be me....?

*Well....* Do you feel like dancing every time you hear music? you just can't help yourself or.... while listening to music you can envision the various movements to the words or melody or, .... how about, you can feel what the person is experiencing as they are singing? If so, maybe, you have been '*called*' to Minister in Dance, but where do you start?

It is common in churches to hear people expressing their desire to be a part of the 'dance ministry' or saying that they have been '*called*' to dance. The idea is that they believe that God has selected them for this task. But in my experience, very few are serious about what the '*call*' entails.

The idea of having a specific purpose in life and in the church is very trendy these days. But the question is how can you know that God has **chosen** you to something, particularly in the ministry of dance? This is a dilemma.

Many people claim to feel that 'call', myself included, but does that mean we have been chosen? Ministry is serious business and not one to take lightly.

I suggest that you spend some time with the one who placed the call, to confirm this 'calling'.

If you are genuinely called to vocational ministry, you will have a strong sense of both the greatness and the awe-inspiring challenge of that call. You will then realize that this 'call' is bigger than you and that it will be more difficult if you try to achieve all it embodies on your own. It's inescapable and trying to deny it is futile! Don't be like Jonah, save yourself a lot of grief.... just give in!

Being 'called' into ministry means, you are being called to be a **servant**. Most dancers think that ministering is a time for them to be '*seen*'. This is the wrong attitude and motive. Ministry will always be about '**HIM**' and not us.

The Bible says that we must study to show ourselves 'approved'. Attending rehearsals are a must. You wouldn't be pleased if your Bishop stood up to deliver the Word of God and appeared unprepared. So too, as ministers of God, we too must be prepared to '*edify*' the Body of Christ. This also means that it will cost us something. It may be our money, time, friends, or even family members. Remember, God has promised that He will not take anything from us without giving something back..... *It is worth it!*

It also becomes our responsibility to develop the 'call' God has placed on the inside of each of us. Like the parable Jesus spoke about concerning the servants with the talents, take what He has given you and multiply it, so you can return it to Him with '*interest*'.

Being the best, you can be sometimes means getting additional training. God sees this as your spiritual offering and your earnest desire to develop the gift He has given you. In response, you will find that you are excelling in the Art of Dance. All to His Glory!

Now, the question remains...are you truly 'called' to minister in dance and, are you willing to go the extra mile to develop the 'calling'?

In Love,

## **NOTE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Welcome to **T'Essence**/Terry Stonom Dance Academy! Our students are about to embark on an exciting journey into the world of the Arts! Students will have an opportunity to learn about many different genres of dance, including but not limited to stage presence in performances, poetry in motion and applying theatrical/stage make-up

They will be exposed to various workshops, outing and/or field trips as well as given the opportunity to perform outside of the Academy. It is understood that these will be as the instructor's discretion.

Dancing is a disciplined activity. In order for us to have productive rehearsals, maintain a safe environment while in the studio and have a successful semester, it is of the utmost importance that students follow all class rules and procedures. The following rules and procedures are a basic part of becoming a successful dancer.

Kindly discuss with your student(s) the entire handbook to ensure that the rules and procedures are adhered to.

We take this opportunity once again to thank you for enrolling your student(s) here at the T'essence/Terry Stonom Dance Academy.



## RULES AND PROTOCOLS

# Protocol

**“Attitude is everything”**

***“Weakness of attitude becomes weakness of character. “***

Albert Einstein

In order for us to ensure spiritual, growth educational development and the overall safety of all students, each student will be required to conform and obey all rules and regulations of the Academy. Our primary objective will be to develop respect for authority and to develop self-discipline on the part of the student.

ALL students are always subject to the authority of any ‘adult’ member while in the studio during rehearsals or any place and/or premises that the Academy may be visiting. Students will be courteous and respectful to the instructors, aids, volunteers, den mothers, visitors etc, always.

The student(s) are expected to:

- Follow the directions the first time they are giving
- Appropriate language ONLY – no swearing teasing, jeering, or yelling is permitted
- Keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself at all times
- Be punctual, and ready to work at all rehearsals
- No personal grooming during class
- No Jewelry!
- No chewing of gum
- No horse plays
- Do as you are instructed
- Hair MUST be worn in a neat “bun’ at each rehearsal. Hair must be off the face and the nape
- Proper and complete dance attire (as indicated by the instructor) must be worn at every Rehearsal.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

**Personal items included but not limited to cell phones, iPad, jewelry etc.... brought to rehearsals and/or outside events will not be the responsibility of any of our instructor, volunteers, Den Mothers, should be lost or stolen.**

## RULES AND PROTOCOLS (cont'd)

- Remember, we are a team, let us act like one, treat and talk to each other as you would like to be treated and spoken to. No criticizing other dancers! Laughing at another student dancer will not be tolerated. You are expected to help you co-dance in their times of need.
- Do not come to rehearsal with an attitude. We understand that there may be days that you are not feeling your best. Notify us and we will excuse you from the class.
- All dancers must be well groomed at all times – be proud of who you are...You are **“T’ESSENCE”** .. SHOW IT by the way you carry yourself!
- There is no “I CAN’T” in dance – put your mind to it... ask for help... we have every confidence in your ability to achieve...

Any dancer who received 4 demerits **MUST** be present at all upcoming events, however, they will not be able to participate until the next performance. It is necessary that dancers understand the importance of team support.

A dancer cannot miss more than two (2) rehearsal to participate in an upcoming performance.

Disrespect in any form towards the instructor, officers and/or member will not condoned and/or tolerated. Any dancer who exhibits these traits will be asked to resign

Attendance is mandatory. If you are absent from rehearsal and return the following week, don't spend time during instructions to learn what you missed. The onus is on the dancer to learn the steps that were taught in their absence.

If you arrive late, ask permission to join the class.

The instructor has the option to change a step at any time.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Terry Stonom Dance Academy's (TSDA) program is designed for children 3 years to adulthood. This program runs at 6-week intervals with a 3 week break in between each 6 week session.

## **GOAL**

To give students the opportunity to experience the Arts

To help students to discover their latent God-given gift in dance

To assist in the development of these gift by teaching and demonstrating

To provide a positive and meaningful experience

To help students develop self-esteem through the medium of dance

To involve students in structured group activities

To promote personal growth and development

- We are convinced that these goals will be attained with the help of God, a competent and proven faculty, parents, guardians and committed students!

## **PHILOSOPHY**

By providing a healthy, safe, happy creative and stimulating atmosphere. The **T'ESSENCE/TERRY STONOM DANCE ACADEMY INC.,(TSDA)** helps Prepare students for a career in dance, should they so choose. Students will reap the benefit of a lifetime in dance studies because of enrolling in these classes, in addition to becoming morally and spiritually strong adults.

## **SIGN IN/SIGN OUT PROCEDURES**

All students enrolled in TSDA's program, must be signed in at every rehearsal and must be signed-out at the end of the class. The only persons permitted to pick the students up are those listed on the Registration Form. For the protection of all students, persons not listed on the Registration Form We are requesting we at the Academy be notified ahead of pick-up time. That individual must produce a photo ID before the student can be released into their care. Without prior notification from the Authorized caregiver. The student will not be released.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

The instructor may have additional policies in the studio. However, as a general rule, students are expected to attend rehearsals each week. If a student must be absent, the parent/guardian should give the instructor a minimum of 24 hours' notice.

All lessons missed by the instructor will be re-scheduled.

Generally, each class will be for 60 minutes.

## **MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES**

As a rule, no applicant younger than four (4) years old will be accepted. Students Three years old may be accepted with the approval from the Board of Directors.

There will be no parent/guardian in the studio area when students are receiving their instructions, unless the instructor extends an invitation.

Students must want to study the art of dance and not be enrolled solely because of the coercion of their parents or others.

## **PERFORMANCE POLICIES**

In order for the student to be chosen as a member of the Performance Team, that student must meet the entire requirement as per the Board of Directors

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that the student arrives at the designated site for the performances and is picked up after performances. Costumes may be a necessity for performances. Acquiring and/or submitting fees for costumes are also the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian.

The Board of Directors reserve the right to refuse registration, to exercise expulsion and/or the opportunity afforded the student to perform in the name of the Academy

Written notification and permission must be obtained in order for any student to perform pieces choreographed by the instructor outside of the Academy. Failure to comply may result in Legal Actions.

## **STEPS TAKEN TO CORRECT INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR**

- Communication to participants - 2 demerits
- Written report and notification to Parent/Guardian - 2 demerits
- Conference scheduled between Parent/Guardian and The Board of Directors - 3 demerits
- Suspension (Time determined by the Board of Directors) - 4 demerits
- Expulsion  
(WITH EXPULSION, TSDA IS NOT OBLIGATED TO REFUND TUITION OR ANY PART THEREOF)

## **TUITION AND FEE CHARGES**

### **Registration Fee**

Students interested in enrolling at TSDA must complete the registration form prior to the first session. The form must be completed in its entirety and submitted with the relevant registration fee for consideration. The registration fee is non-refundable, non-transferable. No application will be processed without the registration fee and no student will be scheduled for lesson until the appropriate registration fee is paid. All payments must be made in cash or money order.

### **Refund Policy**

The Refund Policy only applies when 100%<sup>^</sup> of the tuition is paid and the student has not participated in ANY rehearsal. **A WRITTEN** request must be submitted to the Board of Directors and a minimum of ten to 14 (10 - 14) days allowed for the refund.

### **Tuition**

Parents will receive a payment schedule at the commencement of every session showing the days allotted for payments. Students will not be allowed to participate in any following rehearsal if their tuition is not current. There will be no make-up rehearsals for the missed class(s). Tuition Fees may be subject to change. Parents will be given a foreknowledge of the change.

### **Late Fees**

For Late tuition payments, there will be a late charge of \$15.00 if not paid by the allotted dates.

### **Return Checks**

There will be a charge of \$35.00 for any check that is returned to TSDA, due to Insufficient funds. This is in addition to the amount of the check and a late charge will be also included!

### **Orientation**

After registration the student and their parent/guardian must meet with the instructor during the Open House. The instructor will then discuss the studio policies and confirm session times and dates as well as inform students of their dance attire.

## TESSENCE/TERRY STONOM DANCE ACADEMY

### WAIVER FORM

The undersigned (hereinafter "participant") acknowledges and agrees that the risk of injury from activities engaged in at the facilities housing dance classes for the T'Essence/Terry Stonom Dance Academy, with primary studio located at, Southside Cultural Arts Center, 701 S. Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. 33316, or any other location where classes may be held, is significant, and while particular rules, equipment and personal discipline may reduce risk, the risk of injury does exist; **and the participant knowingly and free assumes all such risks**, both known and unknown, even if arising from the negligence of the Releases or other and assumes full responsibility for the participation by the participant in any and all such activities. The participant willingly agrees to comply with the stated and customary terms and conditions for the participation an any and all such activities engaged in at the dance studio of the T'Essence/Terry Stonom Dance Academy or any associated off -site activities including, but not limited to, performances or competitions, involving the T'Essence/Terry Stonom Dance Academy, IF, however, the participant observes any unusual significant hazard during his/her presence or participation, the participant will remove himself or herself from participation and bring such hazard to the attention of an authorized representative of T'Essence/Terry Stonom Dance Academy. Further, the participant, for himself or herself, and his or her heirs, assigns, personal representatives and next of kin, hereby releases, indemnified and holds harmless T'Essence/Terry Stonom Dance Academy, its owners, managing agent, officers, instructors, officials, agent and/or employees, other users, sponsoring agencies, sponsors, advertisers, public relations agencies and affiliates ("Releasee's), with respect to any and all injury, disability, death, or loss or damage to person or property, whether arising from the negligence of the Releases or otherwise.

TSDA publishes a website in which it posts photos of dancers without full names listed. A dancer's photo could be published as part of a performance, school group shot or a solo picture. If you do not wish to have your dancer's photo posted on the website, please contact us in writing stating you do not wish to have photos published on our website. By signing this waiver, you aare giving TSDA permission to publish photos on its website.

I have read this release of liability and assumption or risk agreement, fully understanding its terms, understand that I have given up substantial rights by signing it and sign it freely and voluntarily without an inducement.

### **FOR PARENT/GUARDIANS OF PARTICIPANTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18 and dancers over the age of 18 AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION**

This is to certify that I, as parent/guardian/dancer over the age of 18 with legal responsibility for this participant, do consent and agree to his/her release as provided above off all the Releases, and for myself, my heirs, assigns and next of kin, I release and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Releasee from any and all liabilities incident to my minor child's involvement of participation in any activity at T'Essence/Terry Stonom Dance Academy even if arising from the negligence of the Releasee.

Parent/Guardian (or dancer if over the age of 18)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

### **MEDICAL INFORMATION**

Are there any allergies or other conditions that may restrict the participant from participating in normal dance activities? If yes, please include special instructions:

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I/We the parent(s)/guardian of the child listed above, by signing below, do hereby consent to any ambulance and/or medical treatment that may be rendered to said minor under the general or special instruction of the Emergency Room, or M.D. Whether such diagnosis or treatment is rendered at the office of said physician or at a licensed hospital. It is understood that this consent is given in advance of any specific diagnosis or treatment being required but is given to encourage any responsibility adult and said physician to exercise their best judgement to the requirements of such diagnosis or treatment. This consent shall remain in effect while said persons entrusted with the custody of said minor.

Name of Dancer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

## **PRIVATE SESSIONS**

Private Lessons are offered. Fees to be determined by the instructor.

Private choreography is accepted with advance notification. Cost per choreography and the number of lessons needed will be determined by the instructor.