

By Judy Piercey Oct 31, 2013

Founder of UC San Diego's Dance Program Establishes \$100,000 Endowment

Margaret Marshall came to campus in 1975 as its first full-time dance faculty member



The first dance concert at UC San Diego was held in Mandeville Auditorium on March 19, 1977.

Professor emerita Margaret C. Marshall, founder of the dance program at the University of California, San Diego, has established with her husband, Mark G. Marshall, a \$100,000 endowment fund to continue the legacy of dance in the Division of Arts and Humanities. The *Margaret C. Marshall Dance Endowment* will provide support for undergraduate dance productions in UC San Diego's department of theatre and dance in keeping with the eclectic curriculum Marshall established during her tenure.

“We wanted to create an endowment to support the undergraduate dance students that rise to the top,” said Margaret Marshall. “They need to have an arena—a production—to show the world their talent. Student productions offer invaluable training for professional careers. In San Diego, there are many UC San Diego dance alumni who are leaders, teachers, choreographers, directors, performers and patrons. The list extends throughout the U.S. and around the world.”

“We thank Margaret Marshall for her generous support,” said Jim Carmody, chair of UC San Diego’s department of theatre and dance. “Her tireless efforts as our first head of dance have created an exceptionally diverse and rigorous dance program.”



Margaret C. Marshall

The *Margaret C. Marshall Dance Endowment* will exist in perpetuity to support innovative and imaginative combinations of choreography styles taught in the department, including but not limited to ballet, contemporary/modern, jazz dance (including hip hop, musical theater and tap) and cultural dance styles. These productions will be choreographed by faculty, visiting artists, graduate or undergraduate students enrolled in dance classes, and performed primarily by undergraduate dancers.

Marshall came to campus in 1975 as UC San Diego’s first full-time dance faculty. There was no dance major or minor at the time, and dance classes were taught through the physical education department. Under her direction, the dance program grew rapidly and by the 1980s, it offered 25 classes with more than 800 students enrolled each quarter.

As the success of the program grew, Marshall continued to advocate for dance to be moved under the academic umbrella of the arts. In 1991, dance officially became part of the department of theatre. A dance minor was offered first, and a dance major was established in 1996, and an M.F.A. was approved in 2007.

“The simple presence of dance on campus shows diversity in educational options,” said Marshall. “It adds another way of communicating. The language of dance is like no other. It is a way to express emotions, tell stories, celebrate diversity, create artistic interaction, share traditions and entertain in variant ways.”

Marshall says that the talent and intellect of the students at UC San Diego who choose to pursue dance is what really sets the program apart from those of other universities.

New York-based choreographer Monica Bill Barnes, a 1995 graduate of UC San Diego with a double major in theatre and philosophy, said, “I had the incredible good fortune of being a student of Margaret Marshall’s during my four years at UCSD when we were dancing in the top floor of a gym. She encouraged and supported me to present my work in every possible venue, including working with the graduate theatre department, at Mandeville Auditorium and in other spaces. I feel that one of the most necessary steps in understanding yourself as an artist is to present your work often in front of an audience.”



Photo by Jim Carmody, UC San Diego department of theatre and dance.

Barnes added, “Margaret is an extraordinary teacher and endlessly generous mentor, and this endowment to support undergraduate dance productions is the best gift I can imagine giving to developing choreographers and performers.”

Marshall, who earned an M.F.A. at UC Irvine, is known for her investigative, witty and eclectic choreography, excellence in teaching and innovative leadership. She has trained in all areas of dance and has performed, choreographed and directed across the U.S. and internationally including Australia and China. She headed the dance program at UC San Diego from 1975-1997, 2000-2002 and 2004-2005, and authored the dance major and minor degrees. Marshall served as the artistic director of the San Diego Dance Institute 1997- 2001, where she supervised more than 30 teaching artists. She recently served on the California Department of Education’s Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Framework Criteria Committee, for the UC Office of the President as director for the UC/CSU Visual and Performing Arts statewide entrance requirements, and as vice chair of the UC Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools. She has received numerous grants and awards for her artistic and community work.

Students at UC San Diego’s department of theatre and dance need support to be able to experiment in choreography, design and performance. Student productions offer professional training opportunities that are critical to the mission of the department. To continue the training that students need, private philanthropy is essential. Learn more about giving to the Student Production Fund [here](#) or call (858) 534-9043.

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