

Na'teliaq



December 2019

Taking the lead: Eskasoni dancer in the role of "Clara" in the Savoy Theatre's Production of The Nutcracker



December 1st was a special day for Neylan Stevens of Eskasoni, as she danced in the leading role of Clara at the Savoy Theatre's "Nutcracker". We had a chance to sit down with Ney and talk to her about her experience in this ballet and the importance of dance in her life.

How old were you when you started dancing and was it something that you enjoyed doing from the start?

I started dancing when I was two years old at Dance Sync in Sydney. I don't really remember dancing at that age but I do remember dancing at NADACA around the age of 4-5.

I always loved dancing but I was an extremely shy kid so it was really hard for me to perform because I was so shy. I finally broke my shyness around the age of 13-14 years old and began having a passion for dance.

In the beginning, what type of dance did you do?

In the beginning I started off with the typical styles like ballet, tap, jazz, and hiphop. When I was a little girl I don't think I could tell the difference between them at the time but NADACA allowed me to open up to the basic styles of dance. Currently, I dance most of the styles that you can do and that is Ballet, Pointe, Jazz, technique, lyrical, contemporary, modern, tap, hiphop, and open. I try my best to balance out all the styles and not favour one style, even though some styles can be more challenging than others I try to enjoy them equally.

When did you start ballet?

I started ballet at a really early age, age 2 is when I started dancing in ballet and I think I really loved it instantly because it's so soft and graceful and that's what I always strive to be.

Nutcracker (continued)

I started enjoying dance and practicing more in it when I was 13-14 years old and that was the age where I got my pointe shoes. I couldn't stop practicing in my pointe shoes when I got them because I was just so amazed by them and it's crazy to me that I have dance many solos in pointe and I think my 13 year old self would be so proud.

What are some of the roles that led to you being the lead role in the nutcracker?

When I first auditioned for the Nutcracker I had just received my pointe shoes so I wasn't ready to do a 7 minute pointe dance in them so soon. I got the flower role which is on soft shoe and I also was a rat in the battle scene. The next year I auditioned in pointe and I wasn't expecting to get any pointe role because I had just been a year into my pointe dancing, I tried my very best and I had unexpectedly got the role of snowflake and Spanish dancer. I was so shocked because I was only 14 years old at the time and I couldn't believe I would be dancing with the older girls that are on pointe too. The third year I received the snowflake role again but this time I got the Reed Flute role and that's when you dance with Clara and Sugar Plum Fairy. I was so excited and nervous because I looked up to them so much. The fourth year I got the shocking role of Sugar Plum Fairy and I didn't expect it at all, I was so excited and couldn't believe I got the 2nd leading role of the show, I was also a snowflake that year as well. This year, my fifth and final year I got the honour of being the lead role of Clara. I couldn't believe it when I got the news because it's something I would never believe I would get and from being a flower and rat the first year to being the lead role the fifth year just amazes me because you can see all those years of growth and hard work.



What was your first reaction upon finding out that you had the lead role?

My first reaction when I got the lead role was shocked because I didn't expect nor imagine being the lead role at all. I was so excited to announce the wonderful news I have received and when I would tell people I was so happy to see people's reactions about it.

How often do you practice each week? How often did you practice for the nutcracker?

For the nutcracker, we start practicing in the summer months of July and August and we practice all the way up to the day before the show opens.

Nutcracker (continued)

During the summer and beginning of fall we would practice once a week, once it started getting closer to the show we would have more days and longer practices. Tech week was the most challenging because that meant we practiced everyday and had very long hours. Being from Eskasoni and travelling all the way to Glace Bay and North Sydney was a challenge because that meant long drives to go practice. I had my usual dance practices as well so it was really hard to balance and school on top of that so it was really stressful but I got through it which is the good thing. I dance Monday's, Tuesday's, and Thursday's which is not as often as I use to dance couple years ago. I decided i didn't want to stress myself out as much for my senior year because I want to do good in school and enjoy my last year of being in high school. I use to dance 4-5 times a week but it's 3 times a week now. I enjoy dancing a lot but it gets really challenging.

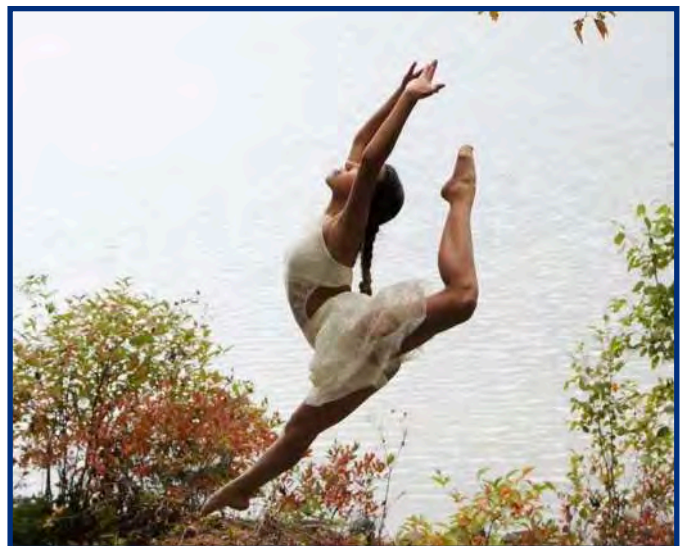
What are your goals for the future?

My goals for the future are to attend CBU for my BA or BACS (still undecided), and take my Bachelors of Social Work. With dance, I still don't know my plans and what I'm going do with it but I know I don't want to completely throw away my passion for it. I plan to take as much dance classes until I'm too old to dance and can't move anymore.

Do you have any motivational words you'd like to share with any young dancers?

I would always live by the motto "Dancing with the feet is one thing, but dancing with the heart is another." For younger dancers out there, please strive for your very best and follow your heart and dreams. I didn't let being the only native girl stop me from reaching for my dreams and it can get you really far in life. Make sure you show a good example because every little girl will look up to you and admire you. Don't take any opportunity for granted and have fun!

We would like to thank Ney for her interview and wish her the best of luck with her future goals. Congratulations!



Role Model of the Year ABMHS

(Story submitted by Clifton Cremo, Eskasoni)



The Role Model ceremony, which honours elders for their hard work and dedication to their community, has been taking place for many years at Allison Bernard Memorial High School (ABMHS). Each year, the students get together and decide who they would like to honour. This year they chose Allan Jeddore Sr.

Allan Wayne Jeddore Sr. lives and works as a bus driver and Councilor in Eskasoni First Nation. Though those jobs come second to his family. Allan is a loving husband to his wife of 42 years, Vivian Jeddore, née Prosper; with whom they have 4 children: Chastity, Allan Jr., Alaina, and Alwyn. They also have 13 grandchildren; 7 grandsons and 6 granddaughters.

Allan was born August 1, 1954 to his parents George Jeddore and (Mary) Rita Marshall. He has 4 siblings; Sheila, George, Andrew, and Georgina. Unfortunately, the family lost two other siblings, Mary Eileen and Terrance Patrick at very early ages. Allan and his siblings grew up very close to where he currently resides in Castle Bay. They had it tough growing up, having to do chores and help out around the house and at their grandparent's farm. Things got even tougher when Allan's father George sadly passed away in a car accident on his way to Sydney in 1961, but with some help from friends, and the strength of family, they managed. Allan and his brothers would pick up some extra chores and work to make money to keep the family going.

A few years later, Rita would remarry to Lawrence Toney, "Dada Lawrence" Allan would call him. Lawrence and Rita would have 5 children: Gerard, John David, Ruben, Frank, and Claudine, bringing the family total to 10 children – 5 on the Jeddore side and 5 on the Toney side. Allan has a deep respect for his Dada Lawrence, who always treated Allan and the others as his own, with kindness and love no different from his own biological children.

It was this upbringing that gave Allan the strong, loving family values that he cherishes to this day and passes on to his children and grandchildren. To be respectful, loving, and helpful are of paramount importance to Allan.

Role Model (continued)

As a young man, Allan enjoyed playing sports, reaching high levels in Baseball and Hockey, but he missed quite a few years of play in his youth because he was diagnosed with a tumor in his head and couldn't risk the high impact of the sports. Helmet technology just wasn't what it is today. Allan even recalls writing a letter to CCM requesting a protective visor so that he could continue playing, and lo and behold, years later, they started putting protective face shields on all minor hockey helmets. He was scheduled for surgery for his tumor when his grandmother burst into the operating room, opting to treat him herself. His grandmother Jessie Jeddore was a well-known medicine woman, and sure enough, through the powers of traditional medicine, Allan's tumor had disappeared. "Oh man, did that medicine ever stink", he said, recalling that he had to wear his medicine pouch to school, "no one wanted to come near me".

His grandmother's influence, along with influence from Dada Lawrence, gave Allan an interest in traditional medicines and healing methods. Allan quit smoking 21 years ago, but had developed COPD, which he treats daily with medicinal tea. He also learned how to treat migraines and fevers, which are teachings that he uses, but he claims that he is still learning.



Allan has been a Councilor in Eskasoni since he was 24 years old, except for a brief four-year period, so he has been helping the community in many ways for over 35 years. He takes pride in many of the projects that the council currently has on the go, including a seniors' home, a new high school building, and paving many of the side roads, such as Beach Road "that should help save our buses, anyway!"

Allan has been working as a bus driver with the Eskasoni School Board for the past 27 years, and worked as a bus driver for the Eskasoni Band Council since even before that. He also used to work at the fishery oyster farm, where he learned a lot about our Bras D'Or Lakes and taught many students about the patterns of shellfish in the Lakes.

Allan used to volunteer with Vincent (Frenchie) Bernard to take youth to Sydney to play hockey and would act as a coach and mentor, drawing from his own sports experience as a young man. It was always important to let the kids have an opportunity to play. Through his teaching and volunteer coaching, and at the encouragement of his mother, Allan always valued education. His advice to youth is always to stay in school. "You won't regret it. It's just a hurdle to jump over. Keep studying, and if you have a dream, follow it. Make goals and try to reach them."

Role Model (continued)

To this day, sport and fitness are important to Allan. He still occasionally plays hockey, and since he's gone to refereeing school, will referee local hockey as well. He stopped going to the gym recently to avoid putting too much stress on his body, but as recently as ten years ago he could bench press 225lbs for 10 repetitions. Nowadays, he works out from home, opting to do pushups over bench press, and he walks 2 laps every day at Goat Island with Vivian instead of using the treadmill or a bike. Leading a healthy, active lifestyle is important to Allan.

So active, what does he do to relax? He loves to spend time with his family at home, mostly watching TV. He also loves to visit extended family as well and help out where ever he can. Driving to town with his wife is another way Allan likes to enjoy his free time. Always having a great sense of humor, Allan loves to laugh. He recalled pranks that his coworkers used to pull at the oyster farm, where the boys would fill a bag with mussels and hide it in someone's car, making an awful stink that was hard to find. Prayer is another thing that he finds very relaxing. Allan was bestowed the honor of being a carrier of St. Ann during mission time in Potlotek, an honor he doesn't see himself giving up soon "I'm still healthy and fit enough to do it, so I'll keep doing it".

The values of family, respect, kindness, love, and helpfulness are only some of the reasons that ABMHS has chosen Allan as their Role Model. We hope that we all can live up to these values in the way that you have. Congratulations Allan Jeddore Sr., ABMHS' Role Model for 2019.



Annual First Nation Help Desk Video Conference Concert

The annual First Nation Help Desk/ Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey Video Conference Concert, hosted by Alwyn Jeddore and Blaire Gould was held on the morning of December 9th. Many First Nation schools across Atlantic Canada took part in the event. Those who were unable to participate submitted videos of their songs ahead of time and were shared with the group. The event was also live streamed and the link was shared through social media so everyone was able to watch.

All schools who participated will receive an iPad in the new year. It was wonderful to see so many schools performing songs and hearing their fellow students perform as well. Great job everyone!



Department Highlights (continued)

Atlantic Canada First Nation Help Desk

The Atlantic Canada First Nation Help Desk held a contest in the month of December inviting students to submit their artwork for our Christmas Card. We had many entries from across the province and the artwork was all so beautiful! It was an extremely tough decision to choose our winners and we would like to thank all students who entered. The following students have been selected as the winners for the contest:

K-2: Sophia Jeddore - Se't A'newey Kina'matino'kuom - Miawpukek, NL

3-5: Jacen Marshall - Mi'kmawey School - Potlotek, NS

6-8: Uapukan Rich - Sheshatshiu Innu School - Sheshatshiu, NL

9-12: Tayler Stevens - Allison Bernard Memorial High School - Eskasoni, NS



MK Christmas Card - Tayler Stevens

FNHD Christmas Card - Uapukan Rich



Department Highlights

Mi'kmaw Language and Culture

Our Mentor Apprentice groups had a gathering in Millbrook this month at the half-way point of their program. They had an opportunity to share their successes and challenges so far in their language learning journey.

The Mi'kmaw Language Advisory group met on December 18th in Dartmouth. Cecelia Kabatay and Bella Gould provided a workshop on making wooden stars. The group was also gifted with a group photo of their original Advisory group. The children of Elizabeth Paul and Rosemary Marshall were invited join the group for the day and everyone enjoyed sharing stories in memory of their moms.

A challenge was issued by Bubblo Jeddore for our MK staff to use Mi'kmaw every day. There were different tasks to do each day for the 30 day challenge. At the end of the month, all those who completed the challenge were entered into a draw. Justine Paul was the lucky winner. Congrats!



Red Road Project

Red Road Project recently did a drum making workshop with about 10 Paqtnkek Students at East Antigonish School. The drum they made will be kept in the school for the students to use.



Department Highlights (continued)

Post-Secondary

Approximately 20 students from Adult Learning Programs from Eskasoni and We'koqma'q were given the opportunity to attend the Trades Fair during the month of December. They spent the day at the Trades Hall and explored trades that they might be interested in taking in the future.



Treaty Education

On Friday December 13th, a Treaty Education speakers bureau gathering was held in Millbrook where the group shared best practices and needs. There will be a call in the new year for more people interested in becoming speakers who will be trained and added to the list.

The Antle series of treaty education for p-3 has been soft launched to provincial schools and teachers are being in-services on the books and teacher resource that is in development.

There are many new projects in the works for the new year that we are very excited about!



Student Services

Yoga Teacher training is in full swing again this year. Teachers are dedicating a full weekend each month towards learning to become yoga teachers.



School News!

We'koqma'q

We'koqma'q school held their Elder's Tea on December 5th. Parents, grandparents and community elders were invited to the school to spend some time playing games, doing crafts, and enjoying some delicious snacks with the students. Christmas spirit was definitely in the air during this wonderful annual event!



School News!

Maupeltuewey Kina'matno'kuom

CBU Skating Program: November 2019

In the Skating Program, students got the opportunity to learn how to skate and how to eat healthy. CBU teacher's in training, helped to teach the students basic skating techniques. The students were able to not only learn how to skate, but were able to have fun with their classmates and teachers. By: Ashley Paul

" I was so excited to see and help my friends and classmates skate" -Ashley Paul

" I am very grateful they took the time to help teach the other kids how to skate" -Jali Christmas

" When I got there, I thought i wouldn't be able to skate but a guy helped me and the next day I could skate very well" -Maddox Paul

" It was very fun and I got to learn how to skate better" -Cheyenne Sappier



The Eagles Soar Into Maupeltuewey Kina'matno'kuom!

On December 3, 2019 the Eagles came to Maupeltuewey Kina'matno'kuom and had a blast! Students were able to ask the players questions, were given tips to help them with hockey, and how to have live a healthy and happy life. The Membertou middle school and school hockey team got to play against the Eagles in a floor hockey match. By: Ashley Paul, Grade 8 student.

" It was cool that the eagles took the time to come to our school to talk about living a healthy life and play hockey with us" -Danikah Stevens

" I think that it's wonderful that we got the opportunity to meet the Eagles" -Reagan Paul

" The eagles coming to our school was very meaningful and helpful to me" -Ayson Francis

" I glad that the school gave me the opportunity to met and play hockey with them" -Kingston Laporte



School News!

Potlotek

The annual Elder's Christmas dinner was held in Potlotek on December 16th. Mi'kmawey School teachers served a wonderful turkey dinner to Elders and students from both schools. Lori Doucette did an amazing job, as always and cooked up a feast! After lunch was over, students surprised the elders with gifts. It was a great day!

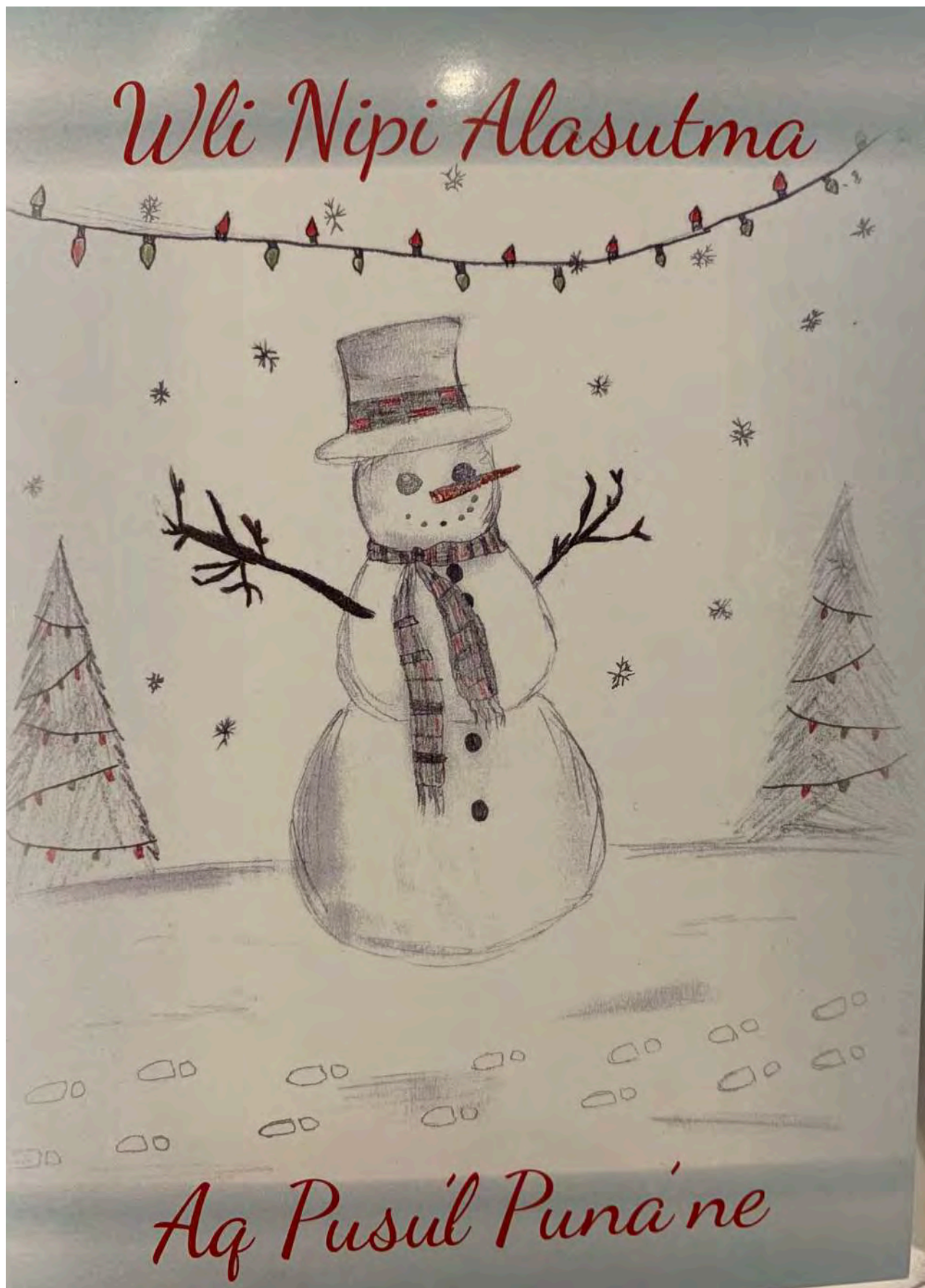


Christmas Concerts

One of the best times of the year is concert time! Our children are dressed so nicely and proud parents and families gather to hear them sing. It truly is the most wonderful time of the year!







Have an event or story idea you'd like to see in the January newsletter? Contact Shara at shara@kinu.ca or 567-0336 ext.5603