



Young People's Ballet Theatre Open House & "Kick Off" Shoe Collection Event

By Jennifer Wiley
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Young People's Ballet Theatre is kicking off a shoe collection drive on Saturday, August 10, 2013 from 3-7 p.m. to raise funds that support their mission of dance education in the Flint community, while also benefiting microenterprise ventures in developing nations and keeping old shoes out of local landfills.

Individuals can help by donating shoes as well as visit the studio, meet the faculty, register for classes, enjoy activities and refreshments when they come to YPBT's Open House & Kick-Off Shoe Collection Event.

In the US alone, approximately 650 million pairs of shoes are thrown away per year. The materials used to manufacture a pair of shoes are created from chemical compounds, the kind that will create health hazards if left to disintegrate openly or in landfills. By donating old shoes to Young People's Ballet Theatre, what would have gone into landfills will be given a second chance to make a difference. All donated shoes will be redistributed through microenterprise partners and used in developing nations for impoverished people to start, maintain and grow an enterprise to feed, clothe and house their families.

"We are very excited to be conducting this shoe drive in Flint," notes Jennifer Wiley. "Ballet shoes and pointe shoes are important to protect

dancer's feet. Our dancers go through many many shoes each year; YPBT can easily empathize with recycling our shoes. By us recycling our shoes we can help others have healthier feet to dance around the world. The additional advantages of diverting shoes from the waste stream and creating commerce and sustaining peoples' lives make this a win-win for everyone," said Wiley. "YPBT is offering an incentive for one full month of free dance classes to the person who brings the most shoes to the August 10th "Kick Off" event. Our goal is to collect 7,500 pairs and the only way we can do this is if people "step" up and help, so I am calling on everyone in our community to gather up their unwanted shoes and bring them to us."

Shoe donations can be made at "The Pavilion," home of Young People's Ballet Theatre, 5251 Commerce Rd, Flint. While gently worn shoes are preferred, shoes will be accepted in all conditions. Individuals, businesses and organizations who would like to participate in the shoe drive or host a collection box may contact Jennifer Wiley by phone at (810) 230-1355 or email at jwiley@ypbt.org.



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