

# The Suto Dance Studio's Handbook for Parents and Students



Bobby and Patty Suto  
Co-Directors

301-871-1000

# Suto Dance Studio

(A poem by: Col. E. J. Suto, Ret.)

We teach dance to one and all  
Our classes start usually in the fall.  
We dance from fall to summer too  
Dancing, Dancing, is all we do!

Ballet, Tap, Jazz, & Swing  
Sometimes we do the Hip Hop thing.  
All our students have some fun  
It really keeps them on the run.

The yearly performance is just great  
100% all our students rate.  
Costumes, they are really super  
Never will you see a blooper.

Directors are Patty & Bobby Gene  
Never, never are they mean!  
Students learn to use the barres  
All students usually become stars.

Do you want to have a ball?  
The studio is the place to call  
SDS has classes that should suit you  
In Rockville or Takoma too!



EJS  
8/05

# Suto Dance Studio

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This handbook is designed to be used along  
with the S.D.S. brochure, as they each contain  
important information regarding the school year.

Keep them together and refer to them often.

## The Philosophy of S. D. S.

Suto Dance Studio (S. D. S. ) has been offering many years of quality dance instruction to all levels since 1973 at the Takoma Park Recreation Center, and 1982 at the Rockville location. Our commitment to excellence at both schools is an ongoing process dedicated to the betterment of dance training and the high quality of its dancers.

S. D. S. has built its reputation for having a professional, well organized dance program, as well as producing spectacular annual dance performances. The importance of technique, musicality and styling is stressed to all students at any level of training. S. D. S. is proud of its fun and creative children's program, its trendy, upbeat teen/ adult classes, as well as its motivational Senior dance group. Students are encouraged to participate for the entire 32 week program and also the 2 annual dance performances.

Suto Dance Studio has a high regard for all the students to strive to be their very best, which is why good attendance, enthusiasm, classroom etiquette, and proper technique are highlighted in a friendly but professional atmosphere for all dancers to enjoy.

## A Brief History of the Schools

The Suto sisters, Bobby and Patty, are native Washingtonians who have studied extensively in Ballet, Jazz, Tap, Modern and Ballroom, throughout the Washington Metropolitan area.

After graduating from the Charles W. Woodward High School, Bobby and Patty worked as dance teachers for many of the local dance studios, City of Rockville, City of Gaithersburg, P. T. A. programs, Montgomery County Department of Recreation, and M.N.C.P.P.C. Bobby started teaching at Takoma Park Recreation Center in 1973; Patty was her assistant at the time. Takoma offered 2 dance classes, had an enrollment of 32 students, and had its first performance in the Takoma Park Community Center's Gym. They have now grown at Takoma with as many as 350 students.

After many years of freelance teaching, their mother, Barbara Suto, located the space at 4511 Bestor Drive in Rockville, MD in the summer of 1982. Their father, Gene Suto, generously provided them with financial support to purchase mirrors, a marley dance floor, and ballet barres in order to open their 2nd location in October, 1982. Their first performance was held across the hall on the small stage of the Children's Learning Center's all purpose room. In 2007, S. D. S. relocated their Rockville Studio to 6116 Roseland Drive, in the home of their father. This new location offers a large dance room and a safe and personal environment for each student.

Since their Studio's conceptions, Bobby and Patty have dedicated themselves to their careers of being quality professional directors and teachers.

## CO-DIRECTORS

### PATRICIA SUTO



is currently a principal dancer with the NATIONAL BALLET OF MARYLAND. She has toured in Dracula "The Ballet" and performed with the Arlington Dance Theatre. PATTY holds both the CECCHETTI COUNCIL of AMERICA (CCA) and ISTD MAESTRO ENRICO CECCHETTI'S DIPLOMAS and is a Fellow in the CCA. Patty is also an examiner for the CCA. She has

studied and danced with the IMPERIAL SOCIETY OF TEACHERS OF DANCING in London, England. PATTY has earned her B.A. DEGREE IN DANCE from the UNIVERSITY OF MARY LAND. She has performed such roles as Merta in "Giselle", Princess Aurora in "Sleeping Beauty" and Snow Queen and Sugar Plum in the "Nutcracker", as well as the "Sugar Rum Cherry" in the Duke Ellington version of the "Nutcracker". PATTY has taught and performed professionally since 1976.

### BOBBY GENE SUTO

is a theatre arts champion winning the 1989 and 1990 GRAND NATIONALS AND IMPERIAL BALLROOM CHAMPIONSHIPS. Bobby Gene is a Fellow in the CECCHETTI COUNCIL OF AMERICA (CCA) and holds her CCA ADVANCED TEACHER'S CERTIFICATE as well as the NADTA ASSOCIATE and MEMBER



AMERICAN STYLE BALLROOM TEACHERS' DIPLOMAS. BOBBY GENE is a graduate with a B.A. DEGREE IN DANCE from the UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND. She has appeared on the "DANCE FEVER" TV SHOW and danced one year at "LES VIOLINS" nightclub in Miami, Florida. BOBBY GENE competed in INTERNATIONAL-STYLE LATIN BALLROOM DANCING from 1982 to 1996. She has taught and performed professionally since 1972. BOBBY GENE is the Director of the studio's senior dance group, "Sophisticated Ladies." In July 2002 she was involved, with her husband, Thomas, in the filming of the Chris Rock movie "Head of State."

## Tuition and Performance Fees

Suto Dance Studio offers 32 weeks of classes to be paid by the year or by the semester (16 weeks). A single class may be paid at a higher rate for drop-in students. A late fee will be added monthly for any outstanding balances. A fee will be charged for all returned checks. There is a performance fee per student per class, and is due no later than November. Payments received after November will incur a late charge. Please note that some Jazz-Tap combo classes may require two performance fees. The fees include a professionally made costume that is sorted, assembled, labeled, bagged and provided with a hanger by S.D.S. Any additional accessories, such as hats with elastic, gloves, socks, shoe bows or hand held props may also be included with the costume. These extras are chosen by the Suto sisters and are usually purchased separately from the costumes, but are included at no extra cost to the student.

A detailed information handout is also given to every student regarding the picture day schedule and extra studio and stage rehearsals. All monies must be paid before costumes will be released. Those students who require a "special order" costume, due to size, will be billed an additional amount as needed. Prices depend upon the costume company and the extra attention that may be required.

All students will be measured before the winter break. Any alterations must be made by the individual dancer or parents. Costumes altered by S. D. S. will be charged accordingly.

All students are expected to attend all dance classes, picture days, rehearsals, dress rehearsal, and both performances. Those students who miss 1/4 of their classes during the year (8 total) and miss more than one rehearsal and the dress rehearsal may be unable to perform in the 2 annual shows. There are no refunds on tuition or performance fees, unless absence is due to illness, accompanied by a doctor's note. A payment plan is available, if necessary. Numerous handouts are given throughout the year regarding holidays, visitation days, performance information, and special notices.

## Student Guidelines

Suto Dance Studio expects proper classroom etiquette from all their students. Students should have good attendance, arrive 5 - 10 minutes before class begins, with proper dance attire. No excessive jewelry (large earrings, bracelets, necklaces, tongue piercing). Hair should be worn neatly secured away from the face, in a bun or with hair clips. No gum, food, or soda cans are allowed in the studio. Secured water containers are permissible. There should be no talking during class unless directed by the teacher. Those students who continue to talk, refuse to wear the proper dance attire, or chew gum during class, will be asked to leave the classroom. Impolite or bad language will never be tolerated.

Any student who does not respect the teachers and the studio guidelines may be dismissed from the dance program, with no refunds given.

## Parent Guidelines

Parents may drop their children off no sooner than 15 minutes before their class time and must pick them up no later than 10 minutes after class has ended. Due to parking restrictions at the new Rockville location, it is requested that the student's driver drop them off and then return to pick them up after class. The studio cannot be held responsible for unattended students or siblings left in the office or waiting area. Parents, students, siblings, etc., must execute good behavior in the office and waiting area. No loud talking, running or rude behavior will be tolerated.

Any parent wishing to discuss any questions or concerns with the directors or teachers will be asked to make an appointment other than class time. It is sometimes impossible to talk to parents before, during, or after some classes, as we need to keep on a schedule.

Please understand that Suto Dance Studio is not equipped to be a Day Care Center or a Baby Sitting Service. Please call the studio if you are to be more than 10 minutes late in picking up your child. We, of course, will never leave any student unattended once the studios are closed for the day, but excessive tardiness will result in additional fees. Phone numbers for each school are located in the S. D. S. brochure.

## The Evan How Scholarship

Each year, Suto Dance Studio awards a scholarship at both studios, in memory of our dance colleague and friend, Evan Charles How. The scholarship covers tuition for the awarded student for that year for classes at both studios, excluding performance fees. Students are reviewed and evaluated on many different guidelines.

All students are observed independently on attendance, enthusiasm, technique, style, yearly improvement, commitment, dedication and most importantly, the love of dance.



"If you've got it, flaunt it."

Evan How

## The “Sophisticated Ladies”

The “Sophisticated Ladies” is a Senior-Adult tap dancing performing group. These talented ladies have danced in numerous performances at nursing and retirement homes, speciality organizations, and the annual S.D.S. performances. They practice on a weekly basis and have a repertoire of 20 different routines, with colorful, tasteful costumes. The “Sophisticated Ladies” are an enthusiastic, mature, delightful group of women. Please call the studio for booking information. 301-871-1000



The  
“Sophisticated  
Ladies” in their  
‘April Showers’  
costumes.

## Visitation Days

The studio offers visitation days for the parents to observe the students in full action, in our dance room. Chairs are provided; cameras and videos are welcome. Please refer to S. D. S. brochure for the scheduled visitation dates. This is an excellent time for parents to view their child’s progress regarding their improvement of technique, style, and musicality in each class level. Please let us know how you enjoyed the class. Your feedback is appreciated. We would like to thank you in advance for attending this very important day for the students.

## Performances

At the end of each school year (32 weeks), S. D. S. presents 2 Dance Performances. When the schools first started this performing tradition, everyone was able to fit in the audience area for one performance. Now that the schools have grown so large, there is a need for 2 performances of the same show. This actually benefits the students because they get more stage experience and their dancing improves. The annual dance performances, due to their size and production quality, need to be held in a large auditorium. S. D. S. rents a theatre that can provide the students with adequate changing rooms and a stage large enough to facilitate the whole student body during the finales of each act. All aspects of a true stage are required and utilized during the performances to which the studios have evolved. S. D. S. is renown for its spectacular end of year performances. All the effort put forth is worth the end result.

## Stage Mothers and Dads

Any mothers interested in helping with each class, on a voluntary basis, will be needed for rehearsals and one of the 2 performances. Stage Mothers are given a Badge which permits them backstage and into the theatre at any time for both shows. A sign-up sheet will be made available after the winter break. A mandatory Stage Mother meeting, with more detailed information, will be held in April. Stage Dad volunteers will be needed at the Dress rehearsal and both Shows to secure the exit doors.

## Tickets

Tickets for the annual dance performances will be required for all persons who have come to watch. Dancers, Stage Mothers and Dads, and children 3 years and under do not need a ticket.

We hope everyone understands that the price of the ticket goes directly to pay for the rental of the school, backdrops, additional rental of lights, spot lights, fog machines, professional technical staff, purchase of music and music editing, audio equipment, plus many other expenses, all of which provide a spectacular performance for all to enjoy, and a quality experience for the students. Tickets, which are not refundable, will be available several weeks before the shows.

## DVD's & Video Tapes

The dance performance will be professionally video taped. Orders will be taken at stage rehearsals and the annual dance performances. We have been told by many parents that the annual dance performance professional video tape entertains their children for many hours. We hope it is one that you will want to treasure for years to come. Absolutely no video taping or flash pictures will be permitted during dress rehearsal and both annual dance performances.

## Photos

There will be a professional picture day at the end of the school year, where all the students will be photographed with their dance class, in their performance costume. Order information and class photo schedules will be available in the performance info. package. Attendance is mandatory, although no purchase is required. We would like to have the whole class in each photo, for our display board. We also rehearse each class after their picture is taken. To keep us on time with our tight schedule, please plan to arrive early.