

Corporate Champion Circle Member: Thomas Performing Arts Center

United Way of the Tri-Valley Area launched its Corporate Champion Circle in the summer of 2018. Circle members partner with United Way for one year, support their community, and receive unique marketing benefits. Corporate Champion Circle members contribute at one of three giving levels - Platinum (\$5,000), Gold (\$3,000), and Silver (\$1,500). To recognize Corporate Champion Circle members, and to get to know those who are passionate about United Way, we have started a series that profiles these dedicated businesses. Please welcome Thomas Performing Arts Center located in Farmington and newly located in Belfast Maine as well.

Lauryn and Jessica Thomas own and founded Thomas Performing Arts Center approximately 8 years ago. Ms. Lauryn grew up in the area and after extensive national dance opportunities (including Disney and others) returned home. Ms. Jess was born and raised in Belfast and was very excited to fulfill a personal dream of hers to expand the studio to her hometown. Thomas Performing Arts decided it was time to join United Way's Corporate Champion Circle after witnessing first hand the value of the work. United Way funded several of their dance students through the Hope Fund. Offering the art of dance to anyone who wants to do it is such a personal mission of theirs that they also have their own TPAC Scholarship fund. As many find, the need outweighs the funds, and they were more and more grateful that other dancers could join because of United Way's Hope Fund.

Thomas Performing Arts serves students and families from all over Great Franklin County, from Rangeley down through Livermore Falls. They pride themselves on promoting the arts through dance to anyone...of any size, shape, gender, or orientation. They see so many benefits to students – building confidence, staying active, meeting new friends, following dreams, and so much more. They recently added a Nutcracker recital to their annual schedule this past December and are hoping to grow that into a local holiday tradition and include the entire community. With a competitive dance team and a range of classes including ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop and pointe, they have a busy schedule. They offer classes from 3 years old through adults and love every minute of it, in fact, will be doubling the space for their pre-school age level. The studio is also looking to add an acro/tumbling teacher and currently partner with Sat Manav Yoga Ashram on Wednesdays.

When asked about becoming a CCC member, they replied, “we are pleased to partner with United Way of the Tri-Valley Area as an opportunity to give back to our community that we live and work in. We first heard about United Way through their support of the Hope Fund to many of our students”.

Jessica and Lauryn live in Farmington with their children (some of whom are in college) and their pups. They love to travel, take in the arts (shows, Broadway and more) and spend time with family.