



THE LEHIGH
UNIVERSITY

DANCE TEAM

By Lexi Berliner

BONDED BY *PASSION*



From left: Sam Ryan '19, Rhena Zhu '19 and dance team Captain Alannah Noonan '17 practice their leaps for their newest dance routine at Taylor Gym on Sept. 18, 2016. The team is working hard to prepare new dances for their upcoming events at Lehigh University. (Lexi Berliner/ B&W staff)

Exam time is beginning at Lehigh University, and while most students will be locked in the library for hours on end, the dancers on the Lehigh University dance team can be found rehearsing in the studio.

The Dance team this year is composed of 13 women. Every dance is created from original choreography and the team is entirely student-run. The dance routines are usually hip-hop or jazz style and are performed at many different events around campus.

The team practices Monday and Wednesday nights in the hallway of Zoellner Arena and on Thursday and Sunday nights in the 4th floor studio of Taylor Gym. Practices

started in September and will continue through late April.

One of their biggest events is performing every year at the First-Year rally, an event for all first year students to attend before classes start.

They perform at home basketball games, wrestling matches, some football games, talent shows and other charity events at Lehigh.

The parent's weekend football game, dance marathon, and dance fest are also some of the events that the team performs at.

A common love for dance and for each other bonds the team together.

While it can be a struggle to balance school and sports, the girls on the team are

passionate about dance and love to be surrounded by each other to escape the academic stresses.

"It's a fun break from studying," said co captain Rhena Zhu '19, "even when I have three exams and a paper, I want to go to practice because I won't have to think about my paper for an hour and a half."

Many dancers on the team have danced their entire life, while others have only been dancing for a short time.

Senior captain Alannah Noonan has been dancing since she was two years old. She started dancing competitively in fourth grade and continued dancing through her high school years

“I love being able to take a break from school work and life here at Lehigh and do what I love,” Noonan explained.

Many memorable performances and experiences have made a lasting impact on the dancers.

The 150th Lehigh Lafayette rivalry was a hallmark for the team. The dancers performed at Yankee stadium for thousands of people.

Noonan said that performing at the 150th Lehigh Lafayette game at Yankee Stadium

was one of her favorite dance team memories. “That was a really special experience,” she said, “we had a backstage scene to all of it and just being in a different perspective for the game was really cool.”



The Lehigh University Dance Team gets ready for their practice at Zoellner Arts Center on Sept. 21, 2016. The team practices four times a week to perfect their routines. (Lexi Berliner/B&W Staff)

The dancers are not only united on the dance floor, but behind the scenes as well. The girls socialize through team bonding events outside of dance related activities.

Dani Cooperman '19 has been dancing her entire life. "My favorite part of being on the dance team is being with a group of girls who are great and super sweet and a great time to be with," she said.

Noonan said that the best part about the dance team is the relationships she's formed. She met some of her best friends through dance.

Peyton Stein '19 said that it is a tradition every year that the team goes out for a team dinner on the first night back at school.

She also said that they have team brunches, they usually take a team trip to New York each year, they have a holiday gift exchange and have a dance team formal in the spring.

Hours of practice each week prepare the team for their biggest events of the

year. Basketball season is their busiest time, where they perform routines at half-time and during timeouts on the court.

"I love dancing at the basketball games," said Cooperman, "they're amazing, the crowd is huge, everyone is cheering you on and it's so much fun."

Stein hopes that Lehigh students and faculty come out this upcoming season to support the dancers and the basketball team at home games. She said that the dancers and the players love when the arena is filled.

The girls aim for their dances to look clean and energized during their performances.

As this year's dance season has begun, Noonan is optimistic and hopeful for the team for her senior year. "My hopes for the team are to bond with each other," she said, "to get a lot closer and just have great performances in all different aspects of the campus."



Lehigh University Dance Team dancers Sam Ryan '19, front, and Mari Marques, back, '20 practice at Zoellner Arts Center on Sept. 21, 2016. The girls on the team originally choreograph every dance. (Lexi Berliner/ B&W staff)



Mari Marques '20 rehearses a new routine for the Lehigh University Dance Team on Sept. 21, 2016. The dancers practice four times a week to ensure that they have successful performances. (Lexi Berliner/B&W staff)