

## Dance Medicine Symposium: Continuing to Provide A Unique Forum

By Melanie Ort

Regrettably, too many dancers and medical professionals still subscribe to a mindset in which there is a distinct separation between artistry and science. On Sunday, October 13, Goucher College students and members of the community were able to explore the interdisciplinary field of dance medicine.

This year's eleventh annual Dance Medicine Symposium brought to the Goucher College campus an opportunity for health professionals and the dance community to exchange information, with a program focusing on both injuries to the lower extremities and trunk stabilization.

Dr. Lew C. Schon, the founder and director of the symposium, is an attending orthopedic surgeon and associate director of the Foot and Ankle Services in the Department of Orthopedics at Union Memorial Hospital. Schon presented an overview of common foot and ankle injuries that set the stage for him to address the less common acute injuries with which he also works. He also briefly discussed an innovative surgical technique that he developed to facilitate greater movement potential in amputees, and then introduced featured guest speaker Danielle Williams.

Williams, a dancer and a patient of Dr. Schon's, offered one of the most fascinating and inspiring stories of the day. In January of 2001, Williams was involved in an accident that resulted in the amputation of her right foot below the knee. She presented a unique perspective on physical movement before and after injury, offering eye-opening insight as a dancer working with the realities of amputation.

Concluding this year's symposium were three presentations on trunk stabilization by Glenna

Blessing '98, Assistant Professor of dance at Goucher College; Alden LaPaglia '03, a dance major working as a certified Pilates® instructor; and Andrea DiStefano Neal, national director of HealthSouth's Dance Medicine Program and coordinator of the Dance Medicine Symposium. Blessing first presented her thesis on dynamic equilibrium, completed as a part of her masters degree from the University of Oregon. LaPaglia spoke on the Pilates® Method of Body Conditioning and its effectiveness in strengthening the trunk stabilizing muscles. Neal finished by showing how the physio-ball, a rehabilitative tool, can be used in trunk stabilization exercises.

Students who attended the symposium were impressed with the material presented and were drawn into each of the topics.

Amy Ruggiero '05 noted that she was particularly struck by the experiences of Danielle Williams: "Danielle's reflections on her current ability as an amputee to communicate with an audience made me think about how I can better express myself as a performer."

Cora Latham '03 also was moved by Williams' story: "I found it fascinating to hear of Dr. Schon's cutting-edge surgical techniques, and then to see an example of how they have helped one dancer to continue in her art after such a serious accident. Danielle's attitude was truly inspiring."

Overall, the Dance Medicine Symposium gave dance students and members of the medical community the chance to come together on common ground and communicate on issues that are becoming increasingly important to the dance world.

Amy Marshall...  
continued from page 1

Marshall and her company have big plans for the rest of the year, including their first major tour through North and South Carolina and New Hampshire. Additionally, in March, Marshall will be performing and adjudicating at the New England American College Dance Festival along with last spring's artist-in-residence Miguel Gutierrez. Still, Marshall's short time at Goucher in August provided one of the most rewarding experiences.

"As an alumna, I'm really proud to come back and work with dancers who are in the same situation I was in—to help to inspire them to continue on their paths," Marshall commented. "It's been a fun experience."

## News Briefs

By Kathryn Holmes

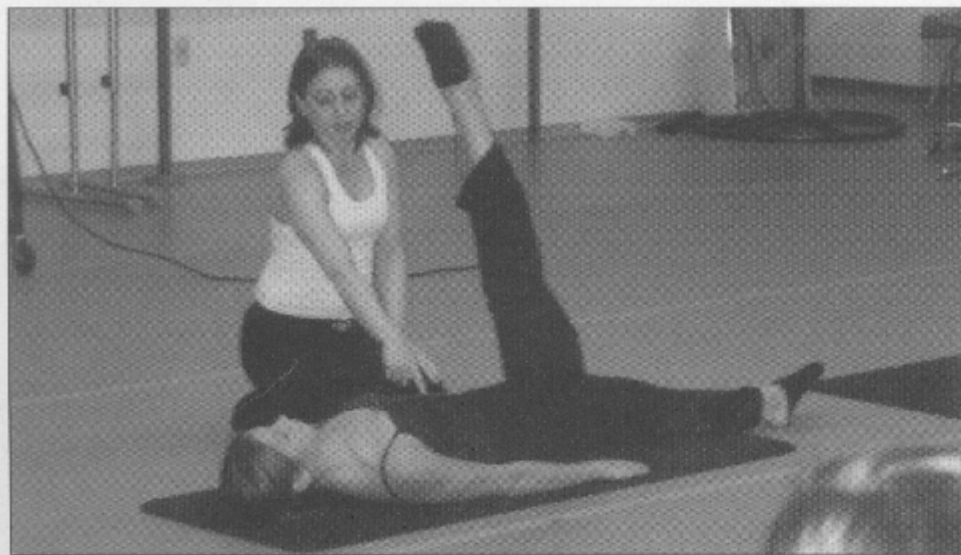
### Students Go On Tour Through Virginia

On November 6-8, 2002, 22 members of the dance department experienced the rigors of touring during a short trip through Virginia. Students and faculty traveled to the Governor's School for the Arts in Norfolk, Virginia, and Virginia School for the Arts in Lynchburg, Virginia, performing the three concert works created by guest artists Amy Marshall, Kevin Iega Jeff, and Christopher d'Amboise. Faculty members Elizabeth Ahearn and Amanda Thom Woodson taught master classes at both of these institutions, and the students participated in these classes in addition to performing. Goucher's dancers also fielded questions from students at the Governor's School and Virginia School for the Arts, in order to garner interest for the college and assist with recruitment. Woodson noted that above all, the tour provided students with "an opportunity to perform in an outside venue, which is exciting."

### Dance Department Holds External Review

Every few years, each department on campus undergoes a self-study to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the program and the direction in which the faculty would like to see the department move. Over this past summer, dance faculty members put together a large document noting their own ideas on the status and potential focus of Goucher's Dance Department invited two well-known dance professionals to visit and offer an outside opinion on the program. Gus Solomons, Jr., from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, and Anya Peterson Royce, a dance anthropologist from Indiana University, spent two days on campus at the end of October. They observed lecture and studio dance courses and spoke with a number of groups, including a student panel, to get a sense of the Dance Department's role at Goucher. After reading the faculty-prepared document,

continued on page 7



Alden LaPaglia points out the correct way to perform a Pilates® exercise at the Dance Medicine Symposium, while Alexandra Buss demonstrates the movement. Photo by Kathryn Holmes.