

Arts4All Florida Student of the Month January, 2019

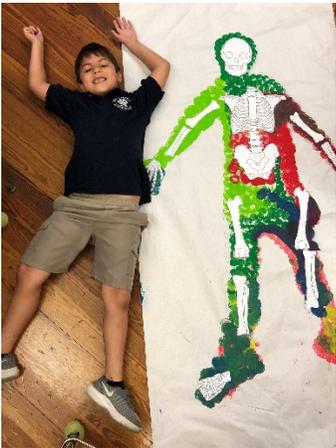


19-year-old **Caleb Emery** was nominated by Nicole Warren, co-founder of Chance 2 Dance, (C2D) in Casselberry, FL, an inclusive and accommodating dance company specializing in dance classes for varying exceptionalities.

Under the tutelage of Ms. Warren, Caleb is training to be a dance instructor. While having a strong background in singing and playing the piano, his passion is dance, taking weekly ballet, acrobatics and tap lessons as well as participating on the C2D competitive performance team. He lives the life of a dancer and strives to have a career in the industry and to serve as an inspiration to others that live with a disability. Caleb wears digital hear aids because he has profound hearing loss has autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Ms. Warren writes, “[Caleb] has natural leadership qualities that allow his peers the comfort and confidence in trusting and following him due to his outstanding model behavior, work ethic and commitment to the art; the morals and values he believes in.” Enthusiastically, she writes of Caleb’s strength, perseverance and strong dedication to not only dance but to sharing his personal story while inspiring others to dream big.

Caleb is a 3rd degree black belt and has trained in the art of Tae Kwon Do for over 7 years and volunteers at his church as an instructor. He has participated in Special Olympics for many years in cheerleading and gymnastics and works with his charity of choice, Jeep Beach.



7-year-old **Graham Peakin** was nominated by Laura Hobby, his art teacher at Mitchell Elementary School in Tampa, FL. Ms. Hobby has seen first-hand through her student Graham, who has autism spectrum disorder (ASD), how the arts have transformed a disruptive schoolboy while watching him develop into a classroom hero of sorts.

Graham is in second grade and attends inclusion-based classes throughout the week and Exceptional Student Education (ESE) art class once a week at his Hillsborough County School. Ms. Hobby shares that her nominated student demonstrates “exemplary leadership” while in her class that includes primarily non-verbal students. Graham welcomes everyone to class each session and wants to wait for everyone to arrive, even slower friends that need extra time due to their challenging gross motor skills. He assists his classmates, passes out supplies and gives recognition in the form of “shout outs” to cheer everyone on. Graham interacts by saying, “Let me help you”; “Do you need a paintbrush?” or “You are my friend”.

Graham was recently named Mitchell Elementary School’s October 2018 Art Student of the Month. He participates in piano classes after school, is involved in the martial arts as a yellow belt and enjoys sports that include soccer and swimming.