

## Washington Wins Broward County Arts Teacher of the Year for Dance



Photo by: Alex Catalano

University School's Ms. Toranika Washington was officially honored as Broward County's Dance Teacher of the Year. University School was the only private school to have an arts teacher nominated for one of the Arts Teacher of the Year awards.

Ms. Washington is a nationally-recognized dance educator who founded and directs University School's Innovations Dance Theatre, teaches dance to Middle and Upper School students, and leads the school's National Honor Society for Dance Arts.

Here is what a few of her University School students had to say:

"It is rare to find a dance teacher that promotes a dancing environment that is comfortable, challenging, and engaging. My skills are constantly developing while learning with Ms. Washington."

- Maya Rubin, grade 11

"Ms. Washington is the most talented dancer I have ever learned from. I value her opinion and continue to grow as a dancer and choreographer from her guidance."

- Kirsten Laursen, grade 11

"Ms. Washington is one of the most creative and inspiring dance teachers I've ever had. She allowed me to explore areas of dance I didn't even know existed and opened a new world of dance to me that I now love."

- Sofia Aumann, grade 11



"I joined Innovations Dance Theatre this year and I'm so glad I made the decision to audition. For the last few months, I have had the opportunity to work with Ms. Washington. She's a really sweet, calm, and creative teacher, and I love the positive atmosphere she creates in class. Congratulations Ms. Washington! You're awesome!"

- Aku Acquaye, grade 12

Both performing and fine arts are an integral part of the curriculum at University School that helps balance the academic equations and contribute to scholastic success. Dance is offered as a Lower School option starting in fourth grade. Dance is also a popular elective in Middle School and Upper School that culminates in an impressive year-end Dance Concert showcase. In addition, University School includes opportunities for students to dance in musical productions.