

Danielle Zaruba

Albert Schweitzer once said, “Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It’s the only thing.” Many people have influenced my life, and for them I am grateful. By following the examples of others I feel as if I have grown as a person. The person that has influenced me the most by their actions is one of my dance teachers.

A few years ago my dance teacher was dancing in a major dance company. While with this company she noticed that on some occasions she would go dance and when she was finished she would pass out. She learned that she was passing out because she had a heart disease that caused her heart rate to get high quickly. Because of this disease she had to quit dancing and move back to Virginia.

She was very sad once she had to move back home, but there was no way that she could quit dancing altogether. At Chesterfield School of Ballet she teaches two jazz classes and a ballet class. Not only does she teach at someone else’s school, but she owns her own company called Perceptions Dance Company.

My dance teacher has influenced my life in the two years that I have known her. I look up to her because not only was she dancing professionally, but now she is still doing what she loves—dancing. She has also showed me that there can be life after a dance career. This spring she is going to graduate from VCU where she is training to be a physical therapist. Before I met her I was worried about what would happen to me if I got injured and couldn’t dance anymore. She showed me that even if there is something that has to stop you from dancing, you can live your life to the fullest and still do what you love.