

SARAH BASS: TEACHER BY DAY, SAINTSATION BY NIGHT

by: Lyric Church

Oak Grove High School's newest teacher splits her time between the classroom and the sidelines of the New Orleans Saints Superdome.

Sarah Bass not only teaches dance at OGHS on the weekdays but also follows her passion for dance by professionally cheering for the New Orleans Saints as a Saintsation on Sundays.

"I feel like opportunities to professionally dance after college are very sparse, and so instead of moving off to perform for a company which is what I was trained for in college, I just decided to seek other opportunities and I knew that New Orleans isn't too far, and so gave that a shot and made it," Bass said.

Because the Saintsations do not attend away games, she does not have to worry about traveling too far. Bass is able to find a way to go back and forth between Hattiesburg and New Orleans while maintaining a positive attitude.

"Our practice schedule is Tuesdays and Thursdays in New Orleans from 6:30 to 10, so as soon as I leave campus on Tuesdays and

Thursdays at 4, I head straight to New Orleans, and I get back about 11:45 or 12, and then go to bed and wake up and do it again," Bass said. "Yeah I'm sleepy sometimes but I love what I do so it doesn't hinder my ability, my energy."

While on the field, she is the one doing the learning. Most of it coming from her fellow Saintsations who hold other careers outside of cheering.

"You learn a lot of leadership qualities like public etiquette in terms of interviews and being in front of a camera and things like that, so you really get pulled out of your shell and learn a lot about yourself and other people," she said. "There's always something new to learn."

In the classroom, however, Bass is the one teaching, engaging students with a curriculum she designed herself.

"There are a lot of opportunities for dance as an art class in Alabama and Louisiana and Tennessee and other states. But Mississippi just doesn't have that, so I wanted to stay in Hattiesburg, and I wanted to bring something back to Oak Grove, and so I started writing

grants and writing curriculum for a dance program to be started at Oak Grove and it took about 4 years, but they finally created the position for me and I love it," Bass said.

Not only does she want her kids to take away a knowledge of dance, but she also wants them to know that they should always make time to chase their dreams.

"You should never just go home and feel like 'oh i'm supposed to eat dinner and do homework and go to bed now'," she said. "You need to at least give 15 to 20 minutes a day to something that you want to work for or have in the future."



Photo Courtesy of Sarah Bass



BASS JOINS HER THIRD BLOCK CLASS AS THEY DANCE THROUGH THEIR BALLET TEST.

Photo by Lauren Powe