

AREA DANCE TEAMS ABLAZE!

Written by By Dee Velasco For the Sun
Friday, 27 January 2017 09:42



Bengals, Starlettes head to DTU Nationals

The Gallup High School's Bengal Girls Dance Team and the Starlette Dance Team are both headed to the Dance Team Union National Championship in Orlando, Fla., Feb. 3-5.

A big send-off was held Jan. 25 at the GHS gym.

"We had a send-off performance last night and we hopefully raised all the money we needed for the trip out to Florida," Bengals Dance Team spokesperson Elinor Romero said. "All of the girls are going to perform, and all are pretty excited."

This was the last fundraising event in which \$500 is needed for each girl to cover flight and hotel accommodations. The Bengal Girls Dance Team also held other fund raising events, from selling enchiladas to discount cards for local restaurants since August 2016.

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The GHS dance team along with the Starlette Dance Team were invited by DTU to perform in Florida.

“The GHS girls were asked because of previous dance competitions they were at, and this was on how well they have done,” Romero said. “A total of 21 girls will be going, ranging from eighth to twelfth grades. The girls are really excited and for most this will be their first trip to Orlando, Florida.”

Each girl has been practicing, putting in a lot of dance hours, according to Romero.

“They have been practicing six days a week; they’ve put in their hours to be ready to perform three routines,” Romero said.

She explained that practice consists of one to two hours at the most.

Each team performs three routines, and GHS Dance Coach Kristy Tiley choreographs most of the routines for the Bengal girls and the Starlettes, even sometimes hiring a choreographer

The routines consist of: pom routine (holding pompoms, dance style), Jazz routine (Jazz music style), and Hip-Hop routine (Hip-Hop music dance style). The Bengal girls will also do a kick routine, well, which involves a lot of kicking. This past summer the girls went to a kick camp to learn how to kick properly.

According to Romero, the judging is based on several categories.

“The dance teams are judged on: costumes and appearance, formation, and cleanliness and skill of their dancing,” she said. “There is a judge for each category too. Awards consist of trophies and medals, depending on the competition.”

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There will be three competition teams from the Starlettes, ages 3 to 14. They will be competing against other teams from all over the United States.

“Girls who are in the dance team not only learn how to dance, but exemplify responsibility, self-esteem, and getting good grades,” Romero said. “Tiley is very strict on this, and checks on the girls every week and if not every two weeks.”

Parent involvement is also high says Romero.

“The parents are awesome in participating, in fact, Tiley has a great support system with her dance parents,” she said.

GHS Bengal Girls Dance Team goes to state every year and has to compete in three competitions per season. Next month they will head to Farmington and Santa Fe for more competitions.

“The last (national) competition that the GHS Bengal Girls have competed in has been over 10 years, so they are definitely ready to perform.” Romero said.

Girls wanting to try-out for the Bengal Girls Dance Team must reside in the GHS district, tryouts are held in the end of April each year. They can start while in the eighth grade.

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