Countdown to Riverside City College’s 100th Anniversary

“Celebrate Dance 2012” was presented May 3-5, 2012 in The Landis Performing Arts Center. One of the past graduates of the RCC Dance program was honored the previous week. On April 26, 2012 at the Riverside Community College District’s Annual Recognition Awards & Arts Gala held in the Raincross Ballroom of the Riverside Convention Center, professional dancer/ choreographer Ryan Daniel Beck was formally honored as Riverside City College’s 2012 Young Alumnus of the Year. Beck graduated from RCC in 2001. He has performed professionally in commercials and promotions for ESPN, MTV, Fuse TV, Mini Cooper, Givenchy, Microsoft, FedEx, Sandals Resort and Mercedes Benz. Recently, he danced for the Samsung Times Square Launch with the Black Eyed Peas, and in Beyonce’s C&A Campaign.

An accomplished choreographer as well as a dancer, Beck has choreographed numbers for Central Florida Ballet and Ballet South of Orlando under the direction of Russell Sultzbach of Joffrey Ballet. He has done work for Choreographers Ball in Los Angeles and New York City and done industrials in Miami, Las Vegas, Paris, New York and Atlanta. Beck also teaches dance and has worked with students at BDC and Capezio Peridance (NYC), Histon Ballet (Vasto, Italy), The Village (Sydney, Australia), O-School (Singapore), Studio B (Tel Aviv, Israel), La Luna Dance Center (Ancona, Italy) and Castro Dance (Vigo, Spain). Despite his busy schedule, Beck still finds time to return annually to RCC to conduct workshops for student dancers.

Rita Chenoweth (RCC Associate Professor, Dance 1992 to date) had this to say about Beck:
“One of my fondest memories of Ryan was during his early training - he had such drive and determination but a body that wasn’t cooperating. It takes time to bring everything together in a cohesive fashion - by the time he was cast as the Lifeguard in Mark Haines’ piece "Tidal", we knew he was finally putting the pieces together: he was turning into confident mover with solid technique under his belt, and with great comic timing, he was the star of the piece! I hold Ryan in a special place in my heart - seeing him grow as a dancer, choreographer, now teacher and entrepreneur - he is truly an RCC Dance success story and a wonderful human being.”

In the photo below (reproduced from an RCC Dance brochure of the time) Ryan Beck can be seen in his role as “The Lifeguard”.

In a recent interview, Ryan Beck had this to say about his days as an RCC Dance student:

“My experience at RCC still brings smile to my face. The atmosphere was always very welcoming, it was never judgmental. It was very clear to me that the faculty really cared about the students and wanted to see them succeed and be the best possible artists and dancers that they could be. That was definitely a touchstone point in my life.”

Below are photos of Beck performing at RCC. These photos and all others (except the recent photo of Beck) are courtesy of Mark Haines (RCC Associate Professor, Dance 2000 to date).
It is 3 years and 44 weeks until RCC’s 100th Anniversary on March 13, 2016.

Special thanks to Rita Chenoweth and Mark Haines for their contributions to this week’s “Countdown”.

The Riverside City College Instructional Media Center is bringing you this five year countdown to RCC’s 100th Anniversary. Our intention is to give everyone a weekly glance at the many people and events that have been a part of the college.

Our thanks go to the RCC Digital Library Archives and the District’s Office of Strategic Communications and Relations for allowing us to use their photo and newspaper collections. Thanks as well to all of the RCC students and Faculty Advisors that were a part of the yearbook and newspaper staffs. Thanks also to Tom Johnson and Gilbert Jimenez who wrote “the book” about RCC’s history. “Riverside City College 1916-1981- A 65 Year History” is available in the RCC Digital Library.

For copyright purposes, all images originating from Riverside City College publications and the District’s Office of Strategic Communications and Relations are the property of the Riverside Community College District.