

Meet the dancer-clients from the show:

Patricia Cody at the 26th Anniversary Jubilee

It has been almost two decades since I first walked in the door of Career Transition For Dancers. Career-wise,

those two decades have seen me through three years at New York Law School, graduating first in my class, landing my first attorney job at Sullivan & Cromwell, paying back my law school loans, and years of law firm practice predominantly as an employment and labor litigator.

One year ago, a big transition in my legal career occurred when I became General Counsel for TheraCare of New York, Inc., an education and health services

provider company to special needs children in the tri-state area.



If anyone had told me during my years as a dancer and performer that this would be the career path I would eventually take, I would have been the first one to insist that they were mistaken.

From the age of four, my life essentially revolved around dance – dance classes, recitals, dreams of performing in musical comedy theater, and of course, on Broadway.

The Triumph of Will Over Ego

by Michael Dean, Dancer-Client

I took my first dance class in college as a lark. At that time I had never seen a dance performance or even a Broadway show, but from the beginning I loved the physicality of it and the music (and the girls) and soon I was spending all my time in the studio, either taking or watching class. By the time I graduated, I was determined to give dance a try. I ended up dancing for 15 years.

I got a scholarship at the Joffrey School and made my professional debut on Broadway with the Paul Taylor Company and Rudolph Nureyev in 1974. Over the next several years I danced in the companies of May O'Donnell, Pauline Koner, Theater Dance Collection, Utah Repertory Dance Theater and the Asolo (FL) Opera, danced the original choreography of Agnes De Mille (Oklahoma), Hanya Holmes (My Fair Lady) and Peter Martins (Carousel) and worked with William Hammerstein and James Hammerstein among others. By the time I was 35, I knew it was time to think about the second half of my life. I received money from what was then called the Dancers in Transition program and

took courses at NYU in Construction Management, started working at a cabinet shop, and then enrolled in Columbia's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. Today, 25 years later, I am the Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer at Turner Construction Company.

During my time of transition I often struggled with feelings of failure, loss and confusion. But over time, I used the discipline, creativity, ability to focus and persevere against long odds that I learned as a dancer and applied it to learning a new skill set. I have now spent more time in the construction business than I spent dancing but I don't believe I could be where I am today without the training and experience I got from dance.

Today I still try to take class most Saturdays with my wife and sometimes my 3 daughters. I think of it as "the triumph of will over ego" – which might be a good way of thinking about career transition – the odds are great, the work is hard, it's sometimes embarrassing and confusing and you don't know if you will succeed. But change is inevitable and the rewards are worth it. And if you can make it as a dancer you can do anything you set your mind to. Remember – "Just keep smiling and keep moving."