

Help send these dancers to Scotland

By Barry Shifrin
for The Brooklyn Paper

Park Slope's own teenage dance troupe is one high-step closer to strutting its stuff on the world stage.

The 16 dancing teenagers of Dancewave, the Fourth Avenue-based instructional studio, have been selected to perform at the Aberdeen International Youth Festival in Scotland next June — but the group still needs to raise roughly \$29,000 to get them across the pond.

"We applied and when got accepted, we thought, 'We'll find some way to do this,'" said Princeton Spicer, 17, the troupe's sole male.

This week, Dancewave just might have found that way. Nick Kotsonis, the owner of Park Slope Health and Fitness, stepped forward with a pledge to match up to \$10,000 in donations.

The group has been receiving financial aid in smaller ways, too.

"We got a small donation from someone we didn't even know," said Sarah Bernbaum, 15. A Rhode Island man who heard about the group's selection to the prestigious dance event and donated \$10.

"He said that his wife was a dancer and she had recently passed away," said Bernbaum. "It was really sweet. ... He said he hung our picture in his office."

The kids have been contributing to the tab in their own way as well, from donating their babysitting money to hosting a "Holiday Fiesta," where the group performed and sold baked goods.

"We're doing whatever it takes," said Patrice Alyssa Roth, 17. "We're really looking forward to the trip."

Dancewave Executive Director Diane Jacobowitz said she's ecstatic about the idea of the kids going to Scotland.

"There'll be theater groups from all over Europe ... drum groups from Ghana, painters from Japan," she said. "The kids all get housed together at the University of Aberdeen. They'll get to share their culture and learn others' cultures."

As the only American group selected, Dancewave would represent not only Brooklyn, but the entire United States.

To donate, visit www.dancewave.org.



Dance students (from left) Sara DeBerry, Patrice Alyssa Roth, Princeton Spicer, Brittney Dunbar, and Kelly Rodriguez are hoping to go to Scotland to teach those kilt-wearing yahoos how to get down.