

For Immediate Release

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WHAT CAN CHARLOTTE CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES DO?

PERFORM IN WASHINGTON, D.C. ON THE NATIONAL MALL FOR THE NATION'S JULY 4th CELEBRATION

Children also to visit soldiers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center

Charlotte, NC - A group of remarkable children with disabilities has danced twice at the White House. What can they do for an encore?

They can perform for the nation's Independence Day celebration in Washington, D.C., on the National Mall, for an anticipated crowd of 500,000.

Fourteen children with disabilities from the Allegro Foundation in Charlotte will dance at 7 pm as part of the Independence Day celebration in our nation's capitol. The performance, on a stage 60 feet from the Washington Monument, will feature favorite pop songs from the '40s, including "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" and "Rosie the Riveter."

The children will be making two other appearances during their Washington trip:

* On **Monday, July 3rd at 4 pm**, they will visit with soldiers receiving care at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. The following day, the soldiers who are able will come to see the children perform on the Mall.

* **On Tuesday, July 4th at 4 pm**, Allegro teachers will present an interactive workshop for Washington-area children with disabilities in the Sylvan Theatre, near the Washington Monument. Children will be invited on stage to learn how to do a dance and perform it for the audience.

The non-profit Allegro Foundation works in public schools and community outreach programs in Charlotte, offering free movement education classes for children with disabilities. The classes combine movement instruction with educational and medical expertise. In 2004, Allegro made history as the first group of children with disabilities to ever perform at The White House.

Allegro serves children with mental retardation, Down syndrome, orthopedic challenges (wheelchairs and walkers), spina bifida, cerebral palsy, learning disabilities, muscular dystrophy, visual and hearing impairments, cancer, and children at risk.

As a core innovation, Allegro pairs each child with a peer mentor or adult assistant. These relationships help break down barriers for the children and lead to higher self-esteem and acceptance.

Classes are free to participants. Funding comes from private donations and grants. For more on Allegro, see www.allegrofoundation.net.