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A One of a Kind Identity

Dance has always been a form of communication with my audience. Whether they are my peers, my friends, my family, or just random passerby, I feel a deeper connection with them, as their eyes are filled with admiration and fascination. It's a speechless communication, powerful emotions expressed by the elegance of a combination of delicate movements. Chinese Folk dance is my favorite method of expression and represents the spirit and magnificence in me.

“Can you attempt a cartwheel?”

I was 5 years old, when one of my dance teachers, Donna, asked me this question. I didn't know what I was doing, let alone the fact that I was a clumsy kid with absolutely no gracefulness in my steps. Yet, years later, I had mastered the ability to wheel myself across the ground effortlessly. The amount that I had changed and learned from AATF (Asian Arts Talent Foundation) during these 10 years is massive and will never stop increasing.

Looking back at the girl I was, I feel gratitude towards my parents for their continuous support and encouragement along my journey with AATF. Unknowingly, Chinese Folk dance has become one of my greatest prides. It connects my past, present, and future ambitions by teaching me many crucial character values that define me as an individual, especially when it comes to my perseverance, confidence, and joy.

Despite the extensive practices and spontaneous performances, my attitude towards my perseverance has changed for the better. Although the crazy schedules often make me sore and tired, nothing is as satisfying as pulling off a performance and being acknowledged by the smiling audience. However, it came to my knowledge that at the end of the day, the hard work is just as valuable as the outcome.

I never really thought about it before, but I now realize my dance peers and teachers are no longer simply known to me under those titles. They became the people I can gratefully call my second family. We have spent countless hours together, sharing struggles to be solved and celebrations never to be forgotten. They've encouraged me to become a much stronger being and show how everything and anything can be achieved, as long as you remain persistent and don't become discouraged. Without Chinese Folk dance, I would've never met these amazing and influential people. We have fun effortlessly and they always manage to keep a smile on my face. As an optimistic bunch, we never cease to find the goods in every situation.

I am proud to say that I am a representation of the spirit in Chinese culture. Over the years, I realized how much Chinese Folk dance mimicked the art of storytelling. It is truly one of a kind, weaving into one with its dancer. Every single routine requires much thought and precision to bring out its true beauty. However, I also believe that dance is unique because of its flexibility. Depending on the dancer, the emotion can be carried out in various movements. In a way, it taught me how everything can be different yet similar. There are multiple paths to a single destination, each carrying devotion, strength, and diversity. This lesson guides me through everyday life when I become lost in my ambitions. It reminds me to be confident in my

ideas, because whether the outcome is successful or failed, I've gained knowledge in the process.

My life is Chinese Folk dance. I cannot find a better way to express who I am as a person. Not only has it become my way of living, it allowed me to discover who I was as a person. Chinese Folk dance molded me into the confident and daring girl that can stand proudly before the audience she was once afraid of. It also incorporated my culture and passion to spread the beauty of Asian arts. There is only a small percentage of people who can say that Chinese Folk dance defines them as a person, and being one of them, makes me one of a kind.