



The Company, WSPA's Hip Hop Crew, under the direction of Patrick Rivera Cruz (center).



'Te Orama' WSPA's Polynesian Company performing in the San Jose Fete last July and winning the Top Overall and First Place in seven categories of the Tahitian competition.



Grace, strength and agility typify young ballerinas.

## WESTLAKE SCHOOL FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

# Driven to dance

Westlake School for the Performing Arts marks 20 years of dance, 14 years of 'The Nutcracker'

BY GINA DAHLEN  
PHOTOS COURTESY WSPA

**M**alou Rivera-Peoples' name is synonymous to dance.

When her dance company Westlake School for the Performing Arts presents a full-length production of the Nutcracker Suite at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco December 3-4, it will be the WSPA's 14th year of staging the much-loved holiday classic, and more: It rings in the school's 20th year of developing future terpsichoreans.

In 1991, the former soloist with Manila-based Cultural Center of the Philippine Dance Company or CCP Dance Co., now known as



Gold Medalist Miko Fogarty with Guest Artist Anton Pankevich as Sugar Plum Fairy and Her Cavalier in WSPA's presentation of the "Nutcracker" Dec. 3 and 4 at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco.

Ballet Philippines, co-founded Westlake School for the Performing Arts and collaborated with the City of Daly City Parks and Recreation Department to build a state-of-the-art dance studio for WSPA's first summer dance program.

From this humble beginning, WSPA grew from 35 students to a thousand in 20 years.

The school offers an array of dance disciplines to students from age 3 and up including classical ballet, tap, jazz, modern/contemporary, hip hop, musical theater, or Polynesian. A student can train from beginning through advanced levels in recreational and pre-professional programs.

See DRIVEN, B2



Malu Rivera-Peoples has nurtured the dreams of dancers of diverse genres.

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