

ON FINAL EXAMS: “I studied for my Spanish II final upside-down. I lied upside-down, and just looked at the words. It helped. A bit”  
—Trevon Anderson<sup>11</sup>



1) TAKING CONTROL Joy Martins<sup>9</sup> and Korin King<sup>9</sup> race across the court in the freshman game against Kempner. The final score was 52-15. 2) DEFENSE ON POINT Diara Williams<sup>9</sup> blocks a Kempner player with Martins and Jalesia Jackson<sup>9</sup> for support. 3) CALL THE PLAY Alia Mortada<sup>9</sup> crosses with the ball with Martins nearby. Photos by Lizette Juarez

## DO YOU WANT TO WATCH A CONCERT?

GET JAZZY  
Concert Band performs season-themed pieces at the Winter Concert. “Let It Go” was my favorite, because I felt like a Disney Prince,” Andres Bazan<sup>9</sup> said. Photo by Jennifer Flores



# A CRAZY FAMILY

## AJB PREPARES FOR WINTER SHOW

The blinding, colorful lights went up onstage. Backstage, it was nearly pitch black. Dancers tried to keep hushed as they threw off dresses and tight pants, clambered into other dresses and tight pants, helped each other fix smudged makeup and slicked back stray hairs, and rushed onto the empty stage with grace.

Not even a week before, the same dancers took the little time they had in Elsie's theatre rehearsing, stopping and starting from the



top repeatedly to ensure every toe was pointed and every arm was extended. Lights went on and off, heaps of costumes were stuffed in plastic crates, and everyone was moving.

In Alief Jazz Ballet, members were passionate about what they did. And with good reason, too.

“It's always hard if you really like it,”

Tatiana Saavedra Torres<sup>10</sup> said. “It's something that I always feel. Whenever I'm sad, I dance things out.”

But sometimes it took more than passion to run a show.

“Rehearsal is about being ready to perform, not just getting the dance right,” Jasmine Rincon<sup>11</sup> said. “You practice it so much in rehearsal, but knowing that the audience is out there and that it's real this time, you feel the pressure.”

Throughout all the craziness, however, they were still a family.

“When you spend that much time with people, and working just as hard as others on the same thing you love to do, it's impossible not to love each other,” Rincon said.

BREAKING IT DOWN Cristian Sosa<sup>12</sup> shows off his breakdancing skills during a dress rehearsal. Photo by Claudia Irra



1) ATTITUDE Tatiana Saavedra Torres<sup>10</sup> strikes a pose at the end of the Spanish Dancers' piece from “The Nutcracker.” “I almost started crying when they told me I made it to the Spanish Queen,” Saavedra Torres said. “I've been here [in the United States] for three and a half years, so I thought I was not gonna make it to any special parts.” Photo by Ann Morris

2) CARE TO DANCE? Jose Gonzales<sup>11</sup> and Jasmine Rincon<sup>11</sup> meet on stage and begin their ballroom dance at the beginning of “The Nutcracker.” “Partner work is different than you doing it yourself, because you depend on your partner,” Rincon said. “If they mess up, you mess up. We had to learn to trust each other.” Photo by Ann Morris

3) STEP IT UP Erin Moore<sup>10</sup> and a dancer from another school grab hands and go through their routine for one of the show's hip-hop dances. Photo by Claudia Irra

4) TOY SOLDIERS Jose Gonzales<sup>11</sup> and an AJB member from Elsie drop down and freeze in the show's piece for Pentatonix's remix of “Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy.” “People didn't notice this, but she kept winking at me to make it silly,” Gonzales said. “We all do that, even in the actual performance, just to make each other have more fun with it.” Photo by Ann Morris