

## Ballet Teacher, 75, Dances Straight Through The Retirement Years

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By Michelle Miller

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CBS News met one senior citizen, Finis Jhung, who still has a spring in his step. Five days a week, you can find Jhung doing what he does best: teaching dance at Alvin Ailey in New York City.

Jhung says of teaching, "I love it. I mean, that's -- that's my job. I've loved ballet since I was 6 years old and I still do."

Now at age 75, Jhung has been working at that love for more than 60 years. His first stage appearance was at age 11. He performed professionally for a decade in the 1960s. But he stood behind the scenes as a teacher for the last 40 years. He even trained the stars of the Broadway hit "Billy Elliot." One of them, Joseph Harrington, still studies with him.



Harrington said, "I definitely want to be like him when I grow up. Still out and about at 75. That's crazy."

While most people his age have long since retired, Jhung is moving ahead at full-speed. Along with teaching, he makes instructional DVDs for dance teachers and produces work-out stretching videos for the elderly. And there's no question that Jhung has kept up with the times: he updates Facebook page and Twitter account daily.

Jhung could be the face of the new senior as more of them work past the retirement age. Back in 1985, only 10.8 percent of Americans aged 65 and older were working. By last year, the number had jumped to 17.9 percent.

Jhung said he's very happy with his teaching. "I do enough dancing. You know, as I say I'm 75. I can't be, you know, jumping around like I used to, you know. And why should I? I don't need to."

Jhung said, when asked if the common denominator is change, said, "Definitely. ... Life is in a constant state of change. And so is it gonna change for better or for worse? Well it's up to you. It's up to you."

His students relish their master whose technique serves professionals and beginners at broad range of the age spectrum.

Student Nancy L'Heriter said, "It's definitely a way to age gracefully and that's why I'm here."

Another student, Donna Sanzone, was asked if she ever thought she would be pirouetting with the best of them at age 60. She said, "I wouldn't quite go that far, but that's my goal."

Jhung said, "My students, my adult students, are my inspiration. They can start to do these movements and they start to look like ballet dancers."

Inspiring others is one way Jhung stays a step ahead. He said, "I tell my students I only have 20 more years to teach you know."

Asked if that's it, Jhung said, "Well, I'll be 94. I should stop."

Still, it's hard to imagine he'll retire at any age.