

## Dancing Philanthropist Gives \$6 Million to Alvin Ailey Troupe

By Patrick Cole

May 21 (Bloomberg) -- Gloria Kaufman tangos in Buenos Aires and Paris and has a ballroom in her Los Angeles home, where she practices her moves with friends.

"I live, eat and sleep dance," the 78-year-old philanthropist said in an interview. "Dance is and always will be a part of my life."

Kaufman wants dance to become part of other people's lives, especially children. She has pledged \$6 million to [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's](#) educational programs and is set to be honored today at the troupe's Manhattan headquarters, where the fifth-floor lobby is being named after her.

Her pledge, to be paid over 10 years, will fund the AileyCamp program for inner-city kids; the Ailey School, which trains young people to become professional dancers; and scholarships for an Ailey program at Fordham University.

It's her first gift to [Alvin Ailey](#) but not to dance. Kaufman donated \$18 million to renovate the dance building at the University of California, Los Angeles, after it was damaged in the 1994 earthquake. It is now named Gloria Kaufman Hall. She has given \$3.5 million to the [Juilliard School](#) in New York to fund the new Gloria Kaufman Dance Studio, which is scheduled to open next year. The glass-enclosed studio just above street level will allow passersby to catch glimpses of students rehearsing.



Alvin Ailey American Dance executives, from left, Bruce S. Gordon, vice chairman, Joan H. Weill, chairman, philanthropist Gloria Kaufman, Sharon Gersten Luckman, executive director, and Tawana Tibbs, community service committee member, stand for a photo in New York on March 25, 2008. Kaufman pledged \$6 million to support the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's education programs in New York. Photographer: Kendal Hart/Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater via Bloomberg News

Making a Difference : "I hope I make a difference," Kaufman said. "I hope dance becomes something more important in this world. It's one of the most important and least coveted of arts."

Kaufman created the Gloria Kaufman Dance Foundation in 2006 as an offshoot of the nonprofit she started a year after her husband, Donald Bruce Kaufman, died in a plane crash in 1983. He and billionaire [Eli Broad](#), also a patron of the arts, founded homebuilder Kaufman & Broad Home Corp.

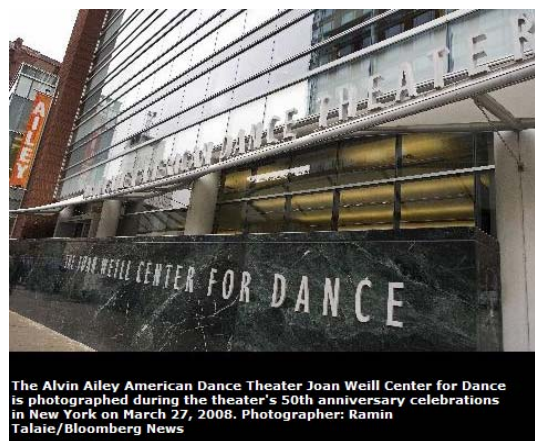
A native of Detroit, Kaufman said her fondest childhood memories are dancing on the toes of her father, Sam Pinkis.

Her mother, Eva, was a seamstress in a factory and a volunteer for seven charitable groups. Her mother's practice of saving money to give to the less fortunate was "the model for my own life," she said.

After her husband's death, Kaufman turned her focus to the more than 40 charities they had supported. To memorialize him, Kaufman donated \$1.5 million to expand a [public library](#) branch in West Los Angeles, now called the Donald Bruce Kaufman Brentwood Library.

A painter in her spare time, Kaufman is a founding member of the [Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art](#), a patron of the [Los Angeles County Museum of Art](#) and a board member of the [Geffen Playhouse](#) in Los Angeles. She said she also gives money to New York's [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#) and the [Smithsonian Institution](#) in Washington.

Kaufman said she is impressed with Alvin Ailey's repertoire, especially the classic "Revelations," but it was the educational programs that prompted her gift. "They allow dancers to pursue their dreams," she said.



The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Joan Weill Center for Dance is photographed during the theater's 50th anniversary celebrations in New York on March 27, 2008. Photographer: Ramin Talaie/Bloomberg News



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater students practice in a studio at the Joan Weill Center for Dance in New York on March 27, 2008. Photographer: Ramin Talaie/Bloomberg News