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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

North Suburban YMCA Honors Joni Goldstein for 50 Years of Dance Leadership

More than 100 attendees celebrate beloved instructor's lasting legacy

Northbrook, IL – November 2025 – The North Suburban YMCA (NSYMCA) hosted a heartfelt celebration honoring longtime dance instructor **Joni Goldstein** for her **50 years of dance leadership** at the North Suburban School of Dance (NSSOD). More than 100 guests, ranging from 5 to 80 years old and gathered to celebrate the beloved instructor whose passion, commitment, and artistry have shaped generations of dancers.

The event featured light appetizers and cocktails, a display of historic photos from Joni's decades-long career, a selfie booth with her portrait, and a show-stopping cake and pink cupcake display adorned with images of Joni throughout the years. Alumni, current students, families, and community members filled the room with love and appreciation.

Speakers included **Lizzie Leopold**, a former student of Joni; **Val Lober**, Performing Arts Director of the NSSOD; **Leslie Brockley**, NSSOD Dance Instructor; **Kathy Fielding**, CEO of the NSYMCA; **Howard Schultz**, former CEO of the NSYMCA; and Joni's daughter **Dori Rothchild** along with two of Joni's grandchildren, Remi and Livi.

In a special tribute to her extraordinary impact, the YMCA announced that the **ABC Dance Studio** at the North Suburban YMCA has been named **in recognition of Joni Goldstein**. A new plaque was unveiled, reading:

**"In recognition of Joni Goldstein
50 Years of Dedication & Passion
Sharing the Joy of Dance at the Y"**

A fixture in Northbrook for more than 50 years, Joni lives in the community with her partner Peter Meyers. She has been a vital force within the North Suburban School of Dance, inspiring thousands of young people and adults who have passed through the studio's doors.

Joni began her formal dance training as a young girl, securing her first professional role at age eight in *The Nutcracker* with the New York City Ballet at the Civic Opera House in Chicago. By sixteen, she was touring the United States and Canada with a variety of productions, later continuing her dance career at the University of Illinois. When her first of three children was born, she transitioned to teaching, both at the YMCA and in her home studio, launching decades of instruction, mentorship, and artistic influence. Her daughter Dori and grandchildren have followed in her footsteps, as have many of her students who now perform professionally around the world.

“Joni, built a dance program at the Y but also a community. Her energy, kindness, and signature sparkle have made the Y a brighter, happier place for everyone lucky enough to know her,” said **Kathy Fielding**, CEO of the NSYMCA. “We were thrilled to see so many past and present dancers, friends and family return to celebrate such a remarkable woman.”

During her remarks, Joni reflected on the meaning of the milestone:

“When you love what you do, time doesn’t stand still—it dances. So tonight, I not only celebrate myself, but I celebrate the dancers, the dreamers, and the doers who have come through these doors and made the Y studio what it is today—this is my happy place.”

“Joni’s legacy continues to thrive here at NSSOD through her work as both an instructor and a mentor,” said Val Lober, Performing Arts Director of the NSSOD. “Her influence shines in every dancer she guides, shaping their technique while helping them grow into valued and confident members of our community,” continued Lober. “She set the ‘barre’ high, and it continues to rise!”

The **North Suburban School of Dance (NSSOD)** offers a wide variety of performing arts classes for preschoolers through adults, including ballet, pointe, contemporary modern, jazz, tap, poms, musical theatre, hip hop, adult tap, adult ballet, and more. For more information, please visit nsymca.org or contact Val Lober, Performing Arts Director, at vlober@nsymca.org

[About the North Suburban YMCA](#)

The North Suburban YMCA serves Northbrook and 14 surrounding communities with programs that help residents become healthier, more connected, and more confident. The Y ensures that everyone—regardless of age, income, or background—has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. With a focus on Youth Development, Healthy Living, and Social Responsibility, the NSYMCA is a charitable, inclusive organization committed to welcoming all.



Caption: Joni Goldstein with daughter Dori Rothchild and her two grandchildren, Remi and Livi Rothchild, was honored for her 50 years of dance leadership at the North Suburban YMCA on November 8th.



Caption: Joni Goldstein with her current dance students during her celebration party at the North Suburban YMCA on November 8th



Caption: (Left to right) Jo Seiden and Joni Goldstein pose at the “Selfie Booth” at her celebration at the North Suburban YMCA on November 8th



Caption: (Left to right) Leslie Brockley, Caroline Walsh-Kuhl, Randy Duncan, Joni Goldstein, Val Lober, Christine Wellner & Lizzie Leopold (Current instructors and past dancers/instructors) celebrating Joni for her 50 year milestone at the North Suburban YMCA on November 8th.



Caption: Joni Goldstein makes a heartfelt speech to her students and family where she was honored for 50 years of dance at the North Suburban YMCA on November 8th



Caption: A young Joni Goldstein in a photo for her role in "The Nutcracker," one of the many photos displayed at the Joni Goldstein 50 year Milestone Party at the NSYMCA on November 8th.