

## USC TO BUILD GLORYA KAUFMAN SCHOOL OF DANCE

January 29, 2013 12:00:00 AM PST

By [Adrienne Alpert](#)

EXPOSITION PARK, LOS ANGELES -- The arts world is still abuzz with what may be one of the largest donations in the history of dance. Thanks to that gift, the University of Southern California has begun plans for its first new endowment-funded school in 40 years. The generous patron rarely grants interviews.

Glorya Kaufman is called the "dancing philanthropist" because of her lifelong love of the art.

"I was born with it," said Kaufman. "My dad loved music. We used to dance in our little apartment in Detroit, Michigan, in the kitchen."

Dancers now enrolled at the University of Southern California can only dream of the school being created here. The current program is small, and there is no dance major.

Plans are rapidly underway to replace the old health center with the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance. Kaufman won't discuss the sum, but it's believed to far exceed the \$20 million she gave to the L.A. Music Center dance program a few years ago.

She would rather focus on the result: USC will have an elite dance major that includes business and other practical classes.

"I chose 'SC because they are flexible, they're creative and we can do whatever we want. We can get teachers and students from all over the world," said Kaufman.

Thornton School of Music Dean Rob Cutietta is heading the new school's creation.

"It is so important not just for USC but for the city of Los Angeles because this is a major commitment to train dancers here, to train very, very selective high-quality dancers," said Cutietta. "We're looking at being the leading school on the Pacific Rim for dance."

Rissi Zimmerman, a sophomore theater major with a dance minor, will be graduated before the Kaufman School opens. But she is enthusiastic over what it will bring to the arts at USC.

"I think that it will just be a boost to the community, and really almost another heart and another soul of the USC school," said Zimmerman.

Coincidentally, those are the same words used by Glorya Kaufman: "And I think dance is from the heart and soul. It brings people together."

Doors are supposed to be open in just two years. Construction crews will have to be on their toes as much as the students will.