

TOWN&COUNTRY

Billionaire Businesswoman Elaine Wynn Makes a Major Donation to Alvin Ailey

By: Sarah Bray
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A \$25 million wing in her name just opened at the company's New York City headquarters

Elaine Wynn admits she knew nothing about dance the first time she saw the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. "It made something come alive in a way for me," Wynn recalls. "I saw the extraordinary work of the brilliant Alvin Ailey and I thought, look at this unique, new, American, authentic dance form. I was inspired, and from then on I tried to find the company whenever I could."

This week, amongst students, dancers, leaders of the Ailey organization and friends from New York City's dance community, Wynn cut the ribbon for the Elaine Wynn & Family Education Wing.

The \$25 million, 10,000-square-foot expansion provides four additional dance studios, two classrooms, and added administrative office space. The new wing also allows Ailey to offer more than 500 weekly classes to meet the needs of the Ailey School's programs for young people, Ailey Extension's dance and fitness classes for the public, and rehearsals for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater—which is currently preparing for its annual season at New York City Center from November 29 to December 31.

"I know people have heard me on other occasions recount my evolution of the love affair I have with Ailey," Wynn continued. "It is the respect that Ailey dancers have for one another, the respect for the work that they do, the respect for their audiences, and their love of the community, and the importance of tearing down walls and barriers, inviting everyone in to participate and enjoy a dance—even if were not able to as well as these gorgeous dancers—we love the freedom and joy of it."

