Center Stage

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Dancers' careers are notoriously brief and catch as catch can. Add HIV to the ensemble and you have a community of artists doing some very high balancing without a bar. For more than a decade, Chicago-based **Dance for Life** has helped not just with pricey prescriptions and doctors' visits, but even phone bills and flights—with no application form and often no notice.

Four years ago, dancer-choreographer Gary Abbott, positive since 1989, was stranded in Kansas with pneumonia. "The hospital didn't know how to treat me," he says. A friend phoned Dance for Life, and when Abbott regained consciousness, he was on a private plane bound for lifesaving treatment. Abbott repaid the favor last year, when he and his company performed a benefit for the fund. "The response was overwhelming," he says. "It was a huge honor. They've done a lot for me."

On August 25, the group's annual fundraiser features **The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago** and a world premiere by choreographer **Randy Duncan** (Save the Last Dance). Call 773.388.8997 for info

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