



Kecia Lewis Evans.

apartment and recently sent me a postcard to invite me to her dance performance in the East Village.

After the teachers got their diplomas there was a performance by alumni. Rita Gardner, the original girl in the *Fantastiks*, performed a medley from the show. My classmates Ivy Austin and Joe Joubert performed together. Joe recently completed a run as conductor at *The Color Purple* and will soon go to work on *Billy Elliot*. Ivy and I both have children at LaGuardia!

Kecia Lewis Evans, also accompanied by Joe Joubert, was sensational in her rendition of *Somewhere over the Rainbow*. She graciously thanked her drama teacher Roslyn Schein saying that Ms. Schein had helped her get her first agent and subsequently her first Broadway show—*Dreamgirls*. And, that she is about to begin work on her eighth Broadway show, *Shrek the Musical*.

Several distinguished alumni, who couldn't be there, sent messages sharing their memories. Tony Award winner, Ben Vereen said, "I owe everything to those fields of dreams, to the hallowed halls and those wooden floors of Performing Arts." Dance Theatre of Harlem co-founder, Arthur Mitchell said, "if not for the School of Performing Arts, I wouldn't be the artist I am today." 2008 Tony Award Nominee Danny Burstein wrote in, "...My love for PA, my respect for the teachers and the honor of saying 'I went to the High School of Performing Arts' will live with me forever."

I had seen Priscilla Lopez in the audience and spoke to her briefly after the show. Then I saw her talking to Mr. Moody, a young drama teacher at PA who appeared in the movie *Fame*. He made the move to LaGuardia where he has been teaching since 1984. Now he's getting ready to retire. Seeing the two together, talking, I remembered that she, too, is a LaGuardia parent.



Rita Gardner.

My class, the class of 1975, is a very close group of people. We stay together through an email program and schedule dinners regularly. My favorite headshot

photographer, Bill Strong, met his wife Paula at one of our get-togethers – classmates that didn't connect in high school!!! I also recognize the tremendous effort the Directors of the Board made to have the 60th reunion be successful and free!!

If any PA alumni are out there and would like to get in touch you can do so by visiting the website www.highschoolofperformingarts.com.