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# 2012

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# Raising the Bar



HIGH-FLYING FUN IN GILBERT PROVIDES AN OUTLET FOR THRILL SEEKERS

BY VIRGINIA CHAVEZ

Tina Gaylord graces the blue skies at Trapeze U

**WHETHER YOU'RE AN ADVENTURE** enthusiast or have aspirations of joining The Greatest Show on Earth, reaching higher ground is merely at arm's length. Thanks to the big dreams of professional trapeze artist Dylan Phillips, East Valley residents can learn how to fly high at Trapeze U in Gilbert.

After 11 years of traveling the world performing for a variety of audiences including live shows, corporate events and teaching trapeze, Phillips was inspired to fulfill his ultimate goal of opening his very own Institute of "Higher" Learning. Phillips partnered with co-founder, and Dean of Student Activities, Brian Lazarus to bring Trapeze U to the Valley in March 2008. Together, they have seen steady growth and continue to grow in popularity across the Valley.

With a love for more than just performing, Phillips recognized early on that teaching was his passion. "While working at a resort, I learned how much you can teach people by simply giving them the confidence," says Phillips. "I always enjoyed teaching."

Trapeze U places focus on taking the fear out of flying and keeping the emphasis on fun. "Our staff is very prepared to walk each student through the process step-by-step," says Phillips. "At the end, it is an unbelievable feeling to see a student break through and conquer fear."

In addition to employing a highly experienced staff, Phillips and his team do everything possible to ensure safety. All students are fitted for safety belts and are harnessed to a pulley system. Looking down, a large net is there to catch your fall. The team also ensures thorough daily inspections of the equipment as well as the facility.

If you think only the pros can perform such high-risk moves, think again. "If you're healthy and ready to try something different, that's all you need," says Phillips. Enthusiasts of all ages and training levels are encouraged to try a class. "We've had students as young as four years old, while our oldest student was in his 70s," says Phillips.

Novice flyers need not fear, the professional staff at Trapeze U is trained to ensure your success. Each session begins by teaching students basic positions and slowly tailoring the training by gauging individual skill levels. The highly trained instructors will surely have you up in the air by day one, and advancing from there is up to you.

The sky's the limit at Trapeze U. Whether you simply enjoy a thrill or want to take your skills to the next level, the Institute of Higher Learning will get you wherever your dreams desire. "People typically sign up for a challenge or to try something different but some do go on to do this professionally. In fact, most of our employees began by taking a class and loved it so much that they went on to further their training," says Phillips. "In the end, it's all about having fun." 202

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