

FALL WORKSHOP

faculty biographies



Hailing from Chicago, **Pause Eddie** began dancing at the age of 15 and has not looked back. Out of options with nowhere to turn and eager to avoid the violence that plagued his neighborhood, Pause picked up dance as a creative outlet. What began as a hobby, Pause quickly turned into a full-fledged career teaching all over the US in studios such as Broadway Dance Center, Debbie Reynolds, Millennium Dance Complex, Kreativmndz and Hubbard Street. Pause has performed on some of the biggest stages including Dancing With The Stars, VMAS w/Missy Elliot, MTV's ABDC, America's Got Talent, World of Dance, Apollo, Mamby On The Beach, PitchFork, Lollapalooza, NBA & WNBA, and Chance The Rapper's Magnificent Coloring Day tour.

Always remembering his roots, he gives back to the community by training dancers through his company, Creation. Pause donates his time to different local programs such as After School Matters, as well as teaches in low-income/project areas to help encourage youth to better their lives. His unwavering drive to keep pushing his art is motivated by his peers, friends, family, and the tragic death of his brother Kendall. He is a leader, motivator, hard worker, and grinder. Representing Peace, Love, Respect, and Positivity.



Annie Jo Fischer is a Chicago-based teaching artist, choreographer, and actor. She has choreographed over 100 musicals in the Midwest, most recently Paramount Theatre's "Rock of Ages" alongside Amber Mak. As a member of Actor's Equity, Annie Jo has performed with the Marriott, Paramount, Drury Lane, Ordway, and Fireside theatres. She specializes in tap and musical theatre, teaching master classes and workshops at colleges, studios, and high schools nationwide.

Currently, Annie Jo is on faculty at Columbia College Chicago, Visceral, Lincolnshire Academy of Dance, Extensions, and Dance Images, and performs as a Honey Tap any chance she gets.



Vernard J Gilmore, a choreographer, teacher, and dancer, believes in and strives for the tenacity of commitment to the responsibility of our individual life. Mr. Gilmore, a member of the Alvin Ailey Company and organization for the past twenty-five years has enlightened our future generations through extensive outreach in teaching and speaking of the art of dance and its importance to a forever evolving culture. He is a Chicago native, founder of La Verdad a male concept, co-founder and producer of Dance of Light (premiere 2005, 2015), and Floor Barre certified and mentor with Zena Rommett.

Vernard has choreographed for Opus Dance Theatre, Jazz Foundation of America, Fire Island Dance Festival (Dancers Responding to Aids), The Ailey School, Chicago Academy of the Arts, and was featured with Summerstage 2005, Harlem Arts Festival 2011, and Nimbus Dance Works in 2018 which premiered at BAM Fisher. His work "Manifesto Por Moi" debuted last spring on the Contemporary West Dance Theater. He was awarded the Jersey City Dance Artist Relief Fund Grant Award from Nimbus Arts Center in 2021. He was a member of the inaugural Diversity Equity Inclusion committee for the Ailey Organization. Vernard is currently performing with the Ailey company.



Sterling Harris, a Chicago native, fell in love with tap at the age of seven and hasn't stopped dancing. He began training in tap under Lee Howard and Martin "Tre" Dumas at age 11 and studying jazz theory and improvisation at age 14. While attending Northwestern University, he joined the campus' premier tap company, Tonik Tap, and went on to lead as the Artistic Director his senior year.

Sterling began dancing professionally immediately after undergrad and joined Chicago Tap Theatre, where he is currently the Artistic Associate as well as a Company Member. Sterling is also a Company Member with M.A.D.D. Rhythms (Making a Difference Dancing Rhythms) and is an alumnus of the Tap Program at The School at Jacob's Pillow.



Skyler Newcom embarked on his journey through dance in his hometown of Lawrenceville, GA under the guidance of Jeff Boss and Jamie Wardrop. After many years in the southeast competition circuits, he fostered extensive training in ballet, tap, jazz, modern, and hip-hop. In 2015, Skyler continued his training at the University of Arizona.

Skyler has performed works by Autumn Eckman, Nacho Duato, Jessica Lang, George Balanchine, Michael Williams, Sam Watson, James Clouser, Tamara Dyke-Compton, and Amy Ernst among others. Upon graduating with a B.F.A. in dance, Skyler moved to Chicago to become part of the Giordano Family. He joined the second company as a Junior Performing Associate in 2019. Skyler is now stepping into the role of a main company member for Giordano Dance Chicago.

His goal is to enlighten and inspire audiences by evoking real-world issues through movement. He plans to build a community of light and love with an emphasis on the importance and beauty of artistic education. He aims to grow and mature as an artist, performer, and role model as he aims even higher. "Higher than the Heavens"



Cesar G. Salinas is the Associate Artistic Director for Giordano Dance Chicago. He began his formal studies in dance at Zohar School of Dance in Palo Alto, CA, where he was introduced to the classic jazz styles of Gus Giordano, Luigi, and Matt Mattox. He moved to Oregon and studied at Willamette Ballet Academy under Deborah Higginbotham. Cesar graduated with a BFA in Dance from the University at Buffalo.

Cesar joined Giordano Dance Chicago as a full company member from 2006 to 2011 performing throughout the United States and Europe. He also toured the world with Royal Caribbean cruise lines as a performer in the Broadway production of Saturday Night Fever as well as an aerialist.

Cesar is a certified teacher in the Giordano Technique. He currently teaches master classes and workshops, as well as choreographs for universities and studios across the country.



Suavé is the Founder of the Hip Hop ConnXion Family Nationwide. The Hip Hop ConnXion professional dance company is a non-profit with the mission, "Our Future Is Here Today", aimed at inspiring our youth and giving opportunities to those less privileged.

Suavé has appeared in various music videos and movies. He was the dance coordinator at the B96 Summer B-bash. He is a performance coach to movie stars, actors, and recording artists.

Suavé guest choreographs at numerous schools and universities and teaches hip hop master classes and workshops in the US, Norway, Colombia, Ireland, and England. He is the owner of his own In-Studio convention called The ConnXion Experience which travels around the country educating students on the history of Hip Hop and Street dance along with convention-style classes

As a major advocate for inspiring troubled and underprivileged youth, he is also a regular guest speaker/presenter at many schools and colleges and has worked with the DARE and DEA Youth after-school dance programs around the country stressing the importance of staying drug-free, not giving in to peer pressure and making positive choices.



Kaitlin Webster is a Chicago-based choreographer, teacher, dancer, and new studio owner! She founded Incite Dance Center less than a year ago with her wife Kayla Ginsburg and currently boasts 200+ students with seven of the best faculty around. Kaitlin holds a BFA in Performance and Choreography from Cornish College of the Arts where she performed works by Robert Battle and Merce Cunningham. Highlights of her professional career include assisting commercial classes in LA, seven years as a Company Member for Chicago Dance Crash (Rehearsal Director for the last two), and touring internationally in Kobe, Japan.

She is now a director of Boulder Dance Workshop and continues to choreograph for Chicago companies. Her vast experience in the dance world has helped develop her athletic, powerful, and distinctive style. As a dance educator for over 10 years, Kaitlin teaches her students to have deep respect for the history of dance, themselves, and each other. She is passionate about training the next generation of dancers to change the world!



Jeff Wolfe received his training through the Academy of Ballet Arts in St. Petersburg, Florida followed by the Houston Ballet Academy, which he attended for two years on scholarship and was accepted into Houston Ballet's second company. He spent the following four seasons dancing with BalletMet in Columbus, Ohio.

Wolfe joined River North Dance Chicago the next season. Wolfe spent seven years freelancing around the United States and Canada, dancing with many companies including Montgomery Ballet (soloist), Eugene Ballet Company (principal), River North Dance Chicago, Ron De Jesus Dance, Owen/Cox dance group, and Terpsicorps Theatre of Dance. Wolfe has also been a dancer and aerialist on the cruise ship Oasis of the Seas. He has performed original works by renowned choreographers including Stanton Welch, Harrison McEldowney, Edgar Zendejas, K.T. Nelson, Penny Saunders, Lauri Stallings, and Randy Duncan.

Jeff has been teaching around the country as a master ballet educator for over a decade. Jeff and his husband Seth Robinson now co-own and run The Hive Studios and The Colony, a youth elite competitive dance program both located in Chicago, IL.