

# **EXPERIENCE DANCE AT KENT STATE**



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**KENT  
STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

School of  
Theatre and Dance

# WELCOME TO KENT STATE DANCE



## DANCE IS DIFFERENT AT KENT.

**Welcome!** When you enter the Roe Green Center for the Performing Arts, home of the School of Theatre and Dance, you will be embraced for who you are and surrounded by a community that supports your individual potential. Dedicated to creative excellence, we will provide opportunities that will challenge you to develop your meaningful purpose. Our comprehensive programs are rooted in a professional culture that inspires you to train for the dynamic disciplines of theatre and dance as you transform your passion into your profession.

**Our Mission:** The Dance Division combines the rigor of conservatory training with a liberal arts education, recognizing and supporting our students as individuals and artists contributing to an ever-changing world.

**Our Vision:** The Dance Division will lead as curators of learning and innovation, producing students who discover, explore, and expand the global dance field and society at large.

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# ***THE DANCE PROGRAM***







### HANNAH BARNA BLAKE

Adjunct Professor of Dance  
hblake3@kent.edu

- **M.F.A. in Contemporary Dance**, Case Western Reserve University
- **B.A. in Biology and Theater Arts with a concentration in Dance**, Case Western Reserve University
- Recipient of the Grace J. Petot Award for Excellence in Research in Dance
- Recipient of the Henry Kurth Award for Excellence in Theatrical design in 2015
- Recipient of the Lily Dreyfuss Award from Excellence in Dance in 2012
- Has performed works by Mark Morris, Jim Hanson, Karen Potter, and has been personally coached by Pascal Rioult for his duet, Black Diamond
- Presented at numerous International Association for Dance Medicine and Science (IADMS) conferences
- Adjunct faculty member at The University of Akron, CWRU, Kent State University, and Cuyahoga Community College



### JENNIFER BLACK

Assistant Professor of Dance  
jblack58@kent.edu

- **B.F.A. in Dance**, University of Akron
- Teaches Ballet, Jazz, Tap and Musical Theater Tap and Jazz
- Choreographer for Kent State Faculty Dance Concerts and Musical Productions
- Current Guest Artist and guest choreographer for Ballet Theater of Ohio
- Assistant Director and choreographer for Dance Kraze at Meneer School of Dance
- Over 25 years of teaching, Broadway and stage experience throughout the country

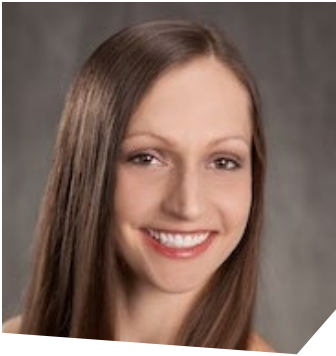


### AMBRE EMORY-MAIER

Assistant Professor of Dance  
aemoryma@kent.edu

- **M.F.A. in Choreography and Performance**, The Ohio State University
- **M.A. in Dance Reconstruction and Directing**, City University of New York
- **B.A. in Communications**, The State University of New York at Geneseo
- Teaching all levels of Ballet and Pointe
- Director of Community Engagement
- ERYT-500 Yoga Teacher, The Yoga Alliance
- Labanotation Teacher Certification. The Dance Notation Bureau
- Former Director of Education, Equity and Community Engagement; BalletMet
- Former BalletMet 2 Associate Director and Co-founder
- Research: Transmitting, staging and curating dances focused on ownership, memory and transference; Community Engagement and Education; 19th Century Dance and the Body; Dancer Wellness and Mental Health





**THERESA HOLLAND**

Adjunct Professor of Dance  
tholla15@kent.edu

- **B.A. in Dance**, Mercyhurst University
- Teaches all levels of Ballet, Pointe, and Contemporary Ballet
- Featured Choreographer for OhioDance Festival and Cleveland Dance Project
- Choreographer for Kent State Faculty Dance Concert
- Principal Dancer with North Pointe Ballet, Soloist Dancer with The Cleveland Ballet and Neos Dance Theatre
- Ballet Training Program Artistic Director, Center Stage Dance Studio
- Principal Guest Artist for Lake Erie Ballet, Ballet Theater of Ohio, Canton Ballet, and City Ballet of Cleveland
- Guest Judge for Ohio Dance Masters



**CARRIE LANGGUTH**

Adjunct Professor of Dance  
clanggut@kent.edu

- **M.F.A. in Contemporary Dance** from Case Western Reserve University
- **B.A. in Dance** and a **B.S. in Exercise Science** from Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania
- Teaches Dance as an Art Form, Kinesiology for dance and sports medicine students
- Studied Irish dance in Ireland, hula dance, the Limon technique, and with Pascal Rioult in New York.
- Teaches Ballet at Case Western Reserve University, and is acting Chairperson of the Physical Education Department at Lakeland Community College
- Group Exercise Supervisor with University Hospitals



**SAMUEL MCINTOSH**

Adjunct Professor of Dance  
samuelandrewmcintosh@gmail.com

- **B.A. in Arts Administration**, Baldwin Wallace University
- Teaches Hip Hop I & II, Jazz Styles II at Kent
- Hip Hop & Street Dance Ambassador (Focus: Popping, Boogaloo, House, and Hip Hop)
- 2020 Ohio Arts Council, Individual Excellence Award Recipient
- 2020 College of The Arts Distinguished Alumni and Faculty Awards, Arts Advocacy Award Recipient
- 2019 Cleveland Arts Prize, Verge Fellowship Recipient
- International 2020 Finalist at Kings of New York, International Street Dance Competition
- 2018 Semi-Finalist at Under Pressure: International Street Dance and Graffiti Festival
- Visit 10kmovement.org





### CATHERINE MEREDITH

Assistant Professor of Dance  
Artistic Director, Kent Dance Ensemble  
cmeredi5@kent.edu

- **M.F.A. in Dance**, Hollins University/  
American Dance Festival
- Artistic Director, Kent Dance Ensemble
- Teaches Horton, Graham, Ballet, Composition, Dance History
- 2022 Ohio Arts Council, Individual Excellence Award Recipient
- Former resident choreographer and rehearsal director for Dancing Wheels Company
- Guest dance artist with The Glue Factory, Pittsburgh
- Freelance choreographer; Artistic Director- Catherine Meredith & Artists
- Master teacher: Physically Integrated Dance Teacher Certification
- Visit [catherinemeredithdance.com](http://catherinemeredithdance.com)



### BEVERLY PETERSEN-FITTS

Adjunct Professor of Dance  
bpeterse@kent.edu

- **M.Ed. in Rehabilitation Counseling**, Kent State University
- Studied dance independently at Rhode Island College
- Opera dancer with the Ruffino Opera Company
- Owner of Cuyahoga Falls Dance Center (CFDC) in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio



### DEANN PETRUSCHKE

Adjunct Professor of Dance  
deann.petruschke@gmail.com

- Ballet Faculty
- Children's Ballet Master with Miami City Ballet
- Ballet Faculty member, all levels, for Miami City Ballet
- Ballet Faculty member, High School and College, for New World School of the Arts
- Company Ballet Teacher at Verb Ballets
- Soloist for Grand Rapids Ballet and Ballet Gamonet
- Corps de Ballet Member for Ballet Arizona, Oregon Ballet Theater and Cleveland San Jose Ballet
- Studied Ballet at the School of American Ballet, Pittsburgh Ballet Theater School and the School of Cleveland Ballet





### JEFFREY MARC ROCKLAND

Associate Professor  
jrocklan@kent.edu

- **M.F.A. in Teaching and Administration of Dance,** Chancellor’s Fellow, UC Irvine
- **Masters in Arts Management,** Concordia University, Montreal, Canada
- Founding Artistic Director and Faculty Advisor, East Meets West – Kent State
- Teaching all levels of Ballet and Dance Pedagogy
- Choreographic research focuses on Jewish Diaspora and assimilation of American Jewry
- Founding Artistic Director of Colorado Dance Theatre & Greeley Conservatory of Dance
- Soloist with Atlanta Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and Universal Ballet
- Ballet Master for Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal



### ERIN SMITH

Adjunct Professor of Dance  
Essmith@kent.edu

- **M.F.A. in Dance,** University of North Carolina-Greensboro
- Former soloist with Columbia City Ballet, South Carolina
- Teaches various levels of Ballet, Jazz, Pointe and Modern
- Choreographer for Kent State Faculty Dance Concerts
- Owner and director of Studio West Performing Arts Centre, LLC in Akron, Ohio
- Three-time recipient of the Association of Dance Competitions and Conventions (ADCC) Award of Excellence
- Head coach of the Archbishop Hoban High School Dance Team; led team to three OASSA State Championship titles in Jazz and Hip-Hop
- Teaching career spans more than 25 years

## ACCOMPANISTS

### MARK NATHANSON

Dance Accompanist

### NATASHA MUSAELYAN

Dance Accompanist  
nmusael@hotmail.com

- **Master’s degree in Performance, Pedagogy and Accompaniment,** Azerbaijan Academy of Music
- Previously taught music at Sumgait College
- Actively involved with Arts Sparks
- Accompanies classes at Kent State University and the University of Akron
- In demand as a guest accompanist for Professional Companies such as Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal, and Limón, when they are in Ohio
- Organist for a local church





### MARK SMITH

Adjunct Dance Faculty  
msmit402@kent.edu

- Former Broadway dancer and member of Lee Theodore's The American Dance Machine in New York City
- Studied with Gus Giordano, Frank Hatchet, Harold Nicholas of the Nicholas brothers and Gregory Hines to name a few
- Best known for his highly innovative and unique style of rhythmic tap choreography
- Co-owner and operator of Studio West Performing Arts Centre in Fairlawn, Ohio with his wife Erin



### BARBARA ALLEGRA VERLEZZA

School of Theatre and Dance Associate Director and Dance Division Coordinator  
bverlez1@kent.edu

- **M.F.A. in Dance**, University of Michigan
- Teaches May O'Donnell Technique, Dance History, Teaching Dance and Movement for Nontraditional Populations, Dance Composition, Freshman Seminar, Dance as an Art Form
- Faculty Artistic Director/Mentor: B.F.A. Senior Dance Concert and Student Dance Festival
- Appointed Certifier of the May O'Donnell Technique
- Teaches/Directs dance programs for diverse populations, including people with various disabilities and senior adults in Ohio and NY
- Dancer, May O'Donnell Dance Company, NY (soloist); Joyce Trisler Danscompany, NY; Sophie Maslow, NY; Norman Walker, NY; Verlezza Dance, NY/OH
- Awards include: 2017 College of the Arts Achievement in Teaching; 2013 KSU Mothers, Mentors and Muses; 2008 Inclusion Award, Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities; 2005 Dance Teacher Magazine Outstanding Dance Teacher of the Year in Higher Education; 2003 Northern Ohio Live Dance Achievement Award



### TONY HARDIN

School of Theatre and Dance Director  
ahardi14@kent.edu

- **B.F.A. in Design and Technology**, University of Kentucky
- **M.F.A. in Scenic Design**, University of Virginia
- Taught courses in scenic design, lighting design, scenic painting, introduction to theatre, and stage management
- Freelance scenic and lighting designer with work appearing in a variety of venues nationally and internationally such as Cincinnati Shakespeare Company in Ohio, Heritage Repertory Theatre in Virginia, Mount Washington Valley Theatre in New Hampshire, Greenbrier Valley Theatre in West Virginia, The Lexington Children's Theatre in Kentucky, and Operafest Internazionale in Italy
- Received the Marvin Simms Design Fellowship sponsored by the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival (KC/ACTF) in 2006
- Serves on the Board of Directors for the United States Institute for Theatre Technology



*“Do not take your current training for granted,  
whether it be technical or professional...”*

*Each and every experience has the opportunity  
to prepare you for your career as an artist. And  
the faculty remind you of this.”*

*Briggs Van Sickle*

*B.F.A., Dance Performance '19*





**AUSTIN WARREN COATS '18**  
Interdisciplinary Dance Artist

Austin Warren Coats is an interdisciplinary artist with a bachelor's degree in Dance Studies from Kent State University and a master of fine arts degree from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Originally from Reynoldsburg, Ohio, he attended Kent State University to receive formal dance training and graduated magna cum laude. He has had the honor to work with artists such as Silvana Cardell, Angela Luem, Catherine Meredith, Jess Pretty, Jamal White, and Ronald K. Brown. Through scholarships he has attended summer intensives from The Joffrey Ballet School, Ruth Page Center of the Performing Arts, and Ronald K. Brown's EVIDENCE, A Dance Company dance intensive and workshop series. Coats also has many interests in the arts including fine art, dance, and fashion design. He is a published illustrator in college publications and illustrates for various dancers' projects. His life goal is to become a choreographer and artistic director.



**MORGAN WALKER '18**  
Dancer and Choreographer

Morgan Walker is a graduate from Kent State University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Dance Performance. She has performed throughout the U.S., Italy, Dominican Republic and toured with Cardell Dance Theater in 2018. After graduating from Kent State with honors, Morgan continued her dance training on scholarship at The Ailey School in New York City. Throughout her time as a performer, she has been a part of many concerts, works, and collaborations including pieces by Ronald K. Brown, Silvana Cardell, Catherine Meredith, Dorotea Saykaly, Shumpei Nemoto, Jamal White, and Ray Mercer, where she was the featured soloist in the premiering contemporary work "Shook!" in NYC. Along with being a full-time company member, Morgan also teaches and choreographs at several dance studios in the Cleveland and Warren areas of Ohio. During her time in the university, two of her own choreographed pieces were selected to perform at the 2017 and 2018 American College Dance Association conferences. For her choreography and performances, she received the Emerging Artist Award and Kent Dance Ensemble Guest Artist Award. Morgan joined The Dancing Wheels Company in August 2020.



**SABATINO A. VERLEZZA '12**  
Dancer, Dance Educator, Fitness Trainer

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Sabatino earned a B.F.A. in Dance (Performance/Choreography), from Kent State University, graduating summa cum laude. He has an extensive background teaching formal dance technique to students of all ages and levels, including those with physical, sensory and developmental disabilities. For 8 years, he has danced professionally with RIOULT Dance NY, touring and performing internationally, including annual performances at The Joyce Theatre here in NYC. He has been teaching for M Dance & Fitness since 2012. About his Classes: Sabatino is known for his infectious enthusiasm and high energy. He is here to share his passion for dance through teaching. Occasionally (ok, frequently) he likes to break out in song and encourage his students to do the same. The hour will fly by before you know it. Sabatino teaches Zumba, PiYo Live, Dance Cardio Combo, Dance Cardio STRENGTH and Hip Hop Cardio. Certifications/Licenses: Zumba, PiYo Live, ACE Certified Group Fitness Instructor, CPR/AED Dance Training, Ballet, Modern, Hip Hop. Personal Trivia: To earn money in high school, Sabatino was a mascot for Quiznos. He was probably the most talented "Quiznos Cup" ever.



# FACILITIES

## Practice Your Art

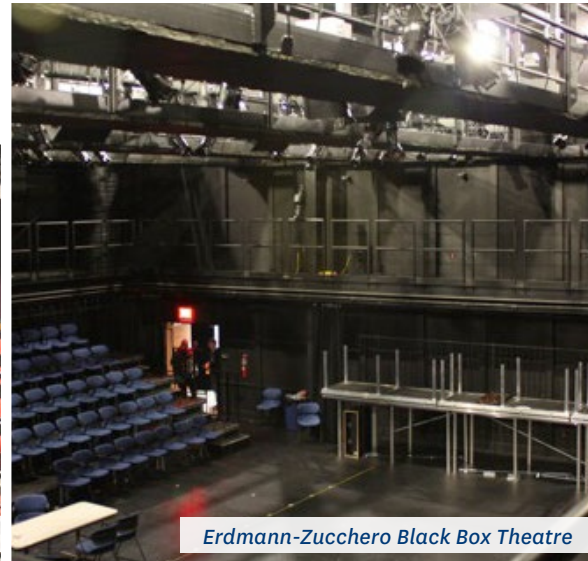
The **School of Theatre and Dance** at Kent State University is housed in the **Center for the Performing Arts** on the northeast corner of Kent State's Kent campus. The Center for the Performing Arts houses more than 70,000 square feet of performance, rehearsal, design and classroom space for theatre and dance students.



*E. Turner Stump Theatre*



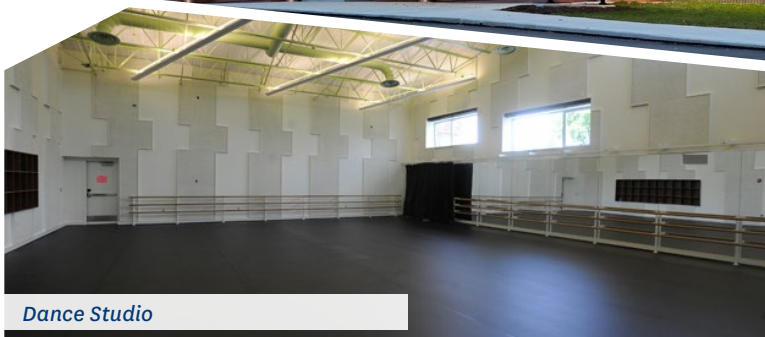
*Wright-Curtis Theatre*



*Erdmann-Zucchero Black Box Theatre*



*Center for the Performing Arts*



*Dance Studio*

# BFA AND BA PROGRAMS

## DEGREE PROGRAMS: ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

### **B.F.A. in Dance Performance**

The Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance develops technically sound, intellectually diverse and creatively expressive dance artists who can contribute significantly to the art form and society. The curriculum provides students with opportunities for strong and varied technical preparation in contemporary dance forms, including modern, ballet, jazz and improvisation. Opportunities for performance and choreography, along with dance theory courses, complete a degree focused on the artist/scholar.

### **B.A. in Dance Studies**

The Bachelor of Arts in Dance Studies allows students who have some previous dance experience and a strong interest in another subject area to combine the two into one degree option. The curriculum provides students with a solid foundation in dance techniques and dance academics while encouraging exploration of secondary areas through a double major or minor that can be combined with dance to enhance opportunities for future employment.

### **The Double Major**

Kent State University students may be able to simultaneously pursue two bachelor's degree programs through a double major.

Students interested in a double major or dual degree must consult with their advisor (and an advisor for the second major if in a different college) to determine whether the desired combination of majors is permitted. Students cannot be on academic probation and declare another major or degree. Students pursuing a double major must be admitted to the programs and complete all requirements for both in addition to the university's undergraduate and residence requirements.





# DANCE PERFORMANCES





# KENT FACULTY CONCERT





# THE KENT DANCE ENSEMBLE

## KENT'S PRE-PROFESSIONAL DANCE COMPANY

Since its inception in 1990, the Kent Dance Ensemble, Kent State's pre-professional dance company, has been introducing contemporary dance to audiences of all ages throughout Northeast Ohio.



## SHOWCASING STUDENT WORK

The B.F.A. Senior Dance Concert is the culminating capstone project featuring student choreographed works and commissioned solos. The Student Dance Festival (SDF) is a student choreographed concert curated to nurture the creativity of Kent State B.F.A. and B.A. dance majors.





# GUEST ARTISTS

## LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Kent has hosted many guest artists from a diverse array of backgrounds and cultures, including Christopher Huggins, Daniel Harder, Daphne Lee, Laura Alonso, Robert Barnett, Lauren Anderson, Garth Fagan, Jamal White, Ray Mercer, Renaldo Maurice, Ronald K. Brown, Shaness Kemp, Yoshito Sakuraba, Stephanie Martinez, Sarah Tallman and many more.



Ray Mercer



Stephanie Martinez



Garth Fagan



Sarah Tallman

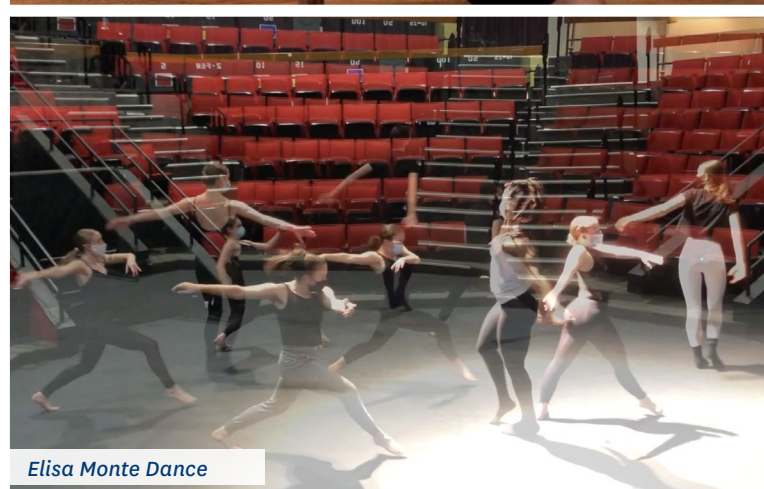
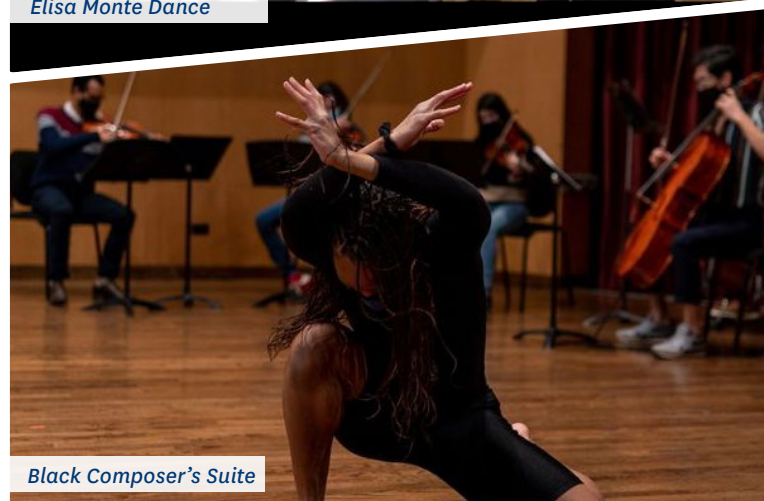
# COLLABORATIONS

## SHARING DANCE

Through collaborations students become interdisciplinary thinkers who analytically and creatively embraces new ideas. Faculty and students in the dance program have collaborated with various dance companies, arts organizations and groups, and other schools across campus. These include Elisa Monte Dance, The Nine Lives Project, The School of Music – Black Composers’ Suite, The School of Fashion, Regional Dance America, Ohio Dance, and the American College Dance Association.

### Organizations the Dance Program has and continues to work with:

- The Limón Dance Company
- National Choreography Center in Akron
- Ronald K. Brown/ Evidence
- Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre
- Elisa Monte Dance
- The O’Donnell-Green Music and Dance Foundation, Inc., NYC
- Joffrey Ballet School
- Hebrew University and the Jerusalem Academy of Music
- Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University
- Patravadi Vih Hua Hin, Thailand

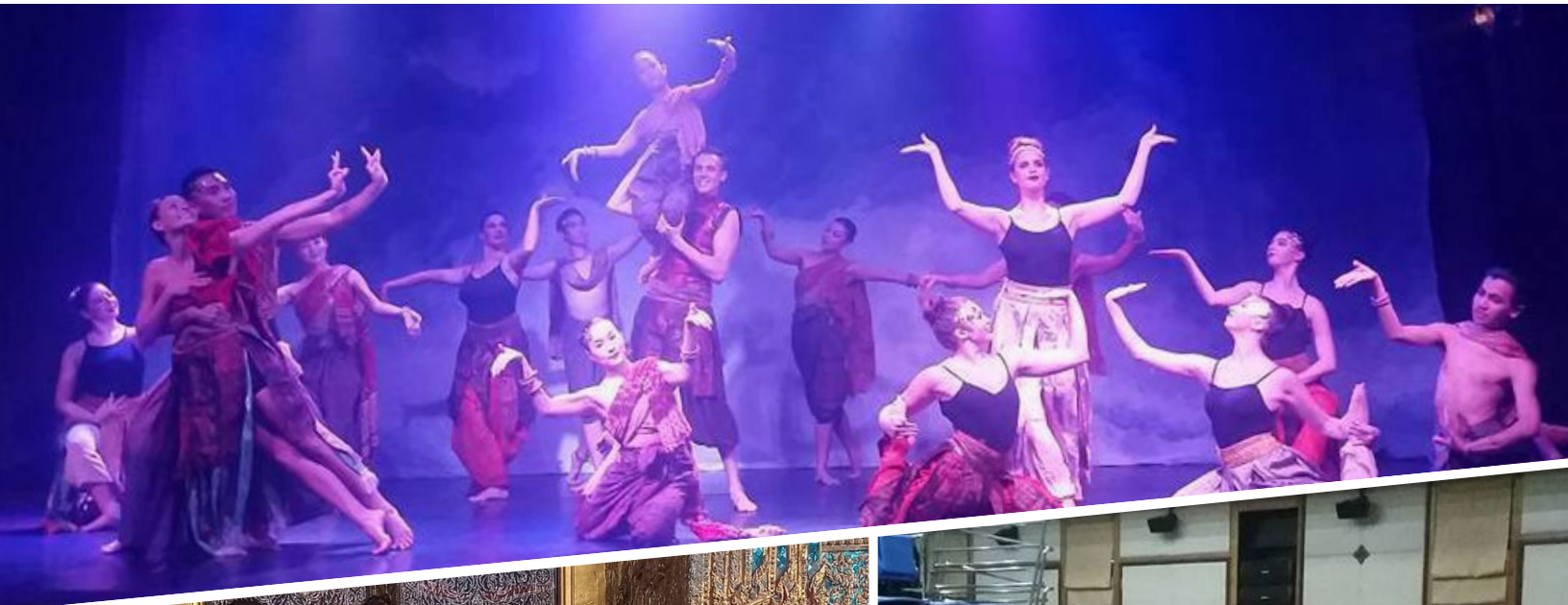




# EAST MEETS WEST

## KENT STATE DANCE IN THAILAND

East Meets West creates opportunities for artistic collaboration, engages diverse educational experiences and builds global citizens for the 21st century. The goals of East Meets West are to create opportunities for teachers and learners to share unique knowledge from their culture, and to support the research and development of new forms of artistic expression that represent diversity and promote global understanding.





# GET TO KNOW KENT STATE





### UNDENIABLY KENT STATE

From the first moment students arrive on our campus they feel welcomed and energized. It's part of why so many Kent State students say they knew right away they had made the right choice – because Kent State “feels like home.”

#### Life at KSU

Life at Kent State University is a little brighter, forward-focused and inviting. It's a place where you can be anyone or anything and pursue any goal with unconditional support. We're a family, a collaborative group of individual thinkers with unique missions. Yet we stand united in illuminating a better tomorrow.

- 350+ Student Clubs and Organizations
- 15+ On-Campus Restaurants, Dining Halls and Coffee Carts – Including One Really Awesome Food Truck. Great food is central to the Kent State experience.
- 23 Residence Halls. Welcome Home! Our housing options are the gold standard – serving as home to our students.
- 16+ Living-Learning Programs. On-campus housing-based communities of students, faculty and staff who share similar academic or special interests with the intended purpose of enhancing and enriching in-class instruction with focused out-of-class learning experiences.

#### Arts and Culture

Art is a major part of the Kent State community, and the College of the Arts provides tons of student-run exhibitions and events throughout the year. Kent State's performing and visual arts have a reach far beyond the borders of Ohio. There's always something new to experience at the many arts events held at Kent State and at off-campus locations year-round; many student-run productions, exhibitions and events.

[Click Here to Read More About Life at KSU](#)



# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

**Kent State University is committed to being an inclusive and equitable place for all who live, work and study here.**

The Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion was created in 2009 under President Lester A. Lefton and is motivated, passionate, and driven to reach new heights in diversity and inclusive excellence at Kent State University. The Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is led by Vice President Amoaba Gooden, Ph.D., who previously served as the chairperson of Kent State's department of Pan-African Studies.

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Kent State University is governed by the following values:**

- A diverse student body, faculty, staff and administration
- A student-centered university that acknowledges student success as a top priority
- The pursuit of knowledge through diverse traditions and inclusive efforts
- Accountability and action towards the success and management of diversity
- A welcoming environment that encourages diversity of thought, continuous personal growth and academic attainment for all members of the Kent State University family
- Engagement and collaboration across difference
- A focus on inclusive excellence in everything that we do

### Anti-Racism Taskforce

Kent State offers multiple opportunities for students to get involved with ongoing diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism efforts and conversations through the work done by the Anti-Racism Taskforce and its subcommittees, which hold town hall meetings and other outreach events throughout the academic year.

### Student Involvement

Students are also encouraged to engage in events through identity centers such as: the LGBTQ+ Center, Center for Adult and Veteran Student Services, Student Multicultural Center, Women's Center, International Student Affairs, and Student Accessibility Services; and to participate in student organizations within and outside of their majors such as: Undergraduate Student Government, Black Theatre Association, Latinx in Theatre, Voices of Color, Two or More Club, Spanish and Latino Student Association, Pride! Kent, Black United Students, Barefeet Dance Tribe, and more. A full list of student organizations and other resources on campus can be found on the Center for Student Involvement website at <https://www.kent.edu/csi/student-organizations>

[Click Here to Read More DEI at KSU](#)





# DOWNTOWN KENT

*Discover Beyond Campus*

## OHIO'S RISING COLLEGE TOWN

There's plenty to see and do within easy walking distance of the Kent Campus. Follow the Lefton Esplanade to experience a city renaissance of new restaurants and specialty shops that have brought a renewed energy to Kent's already vibrant downtown.

- Kent is a community that thrives on our local businesses. From yoga studios, financial institutions, auto care and more, you'll find everything you need in Kent, Ohio.
- There's always something fun happening in Kent! Live music, festivals, comedy shows, college sports & more.
- Stay connected to your faith, with several churches, synagogues, temples and mosques to choose from in and around the Kent area.

## BEYOND KENT

Kent State University is ideally situated in Northeast Ohio, home to a concentration of world-class attractions and activities that few other areas in the country can offer. World-class museums, modern sporting venues, an extensive theatre complex, parks, fairs, festivals, shopping and an international selection of dining options offer compelling answers to that most persistent of questions, "What do you want to do today?"

Cleveland, Ohio is home to the country's second largest theatre district. When you also consider all of the region's many public and community theatres, black box stages and other performance venues, it seems as if "all the world's a stage" in Northeast Ohio.

[Click Here to Read More About Kent, Ohio and Beyond](#)



# CONTACT US

## GET IN TOUCH



### **TONY HARDIN**

Director  
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Phone: 330-672-2082

### **BARBARA A. VERLEZZA**

Associate Director and  
Dance Division Coordinator  
Email: [bverlez1@kent.edu](mailto:bverlez1@kent.edu)  
Phone: 330-672-0125



LEARN MORE AND APPLY TO KENT STATE UNIVERSITY AT:

**[WWW.KENT.EDU/ADMISSIONS](http://WWW.KENT.EDU/ADMISSIONS)**