WELCOME
To Kent State Dance

Dance at Kent is Different

Welcome. When you enter the Roe Green Center for 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.
THE DANCE PROGRAM

KENT.EDU/THEATREDANCE
BARBARA ALLEGRA VERLEZZA
Associate Professor of Dance
bverlez1@kent.edu

- **MFA in Dance**, University of Michigan
- Teaches May O’Donnell Technique, Dance History, Teaching Dance and Movement for Nontraditional Populations, Dance Composition, Freshman Seminar, Professional Aspects in Dance, Dance as an Art Form
- Faculty Artistic Director/Mentor: BFA 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
- **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

CATHERINE MEREDITH
Assistant Professor of Dance
cmeredi5@kent.edu

- **MFA in Dance**, Hollins University/American Dance Festival
- Teaches Horton, Graham, Ballet, Composition, Dance History
- 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

ERIN SMITH
Adjunct Professor of Dance
Essmith@kent.edu

- **MFA 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
FACULTY

**GREGORY KING**
Associate Professor of Dance
Artistic Director, Kent Dance Ensemble
gking16@kent.edu

- **MFA in Choreographic Practice and Theory**, Southern Methodist University
- Teaches Horton, Dance Composition, Professional Aspect
- **Artistic Director**, Kent Dance Ensemble
- Provost Faculty Associate 2019 - 2020
- **Dance writer** for Dance Magazine, thINKing Dance, See Chicago Dance

- 2017 Governor’s Award for the Arts in Ohio nominee
- 2018 Creative Contribution Award winner
- **Performance credits**: Disney’s The Lion King on Broadway, The Metropolitan Opera, Donald Byrd/The Group
- Visit gregoryaking.com

**JEFFREY MARC ROCKLAND**
Associate Professor and Dance Division Coordinator
jrocklan@kent.edu

- **MFA 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

**JENNIFER BLACK**
Assistant Professor of Dance
jblack58@kent.edu

- **BFA 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
SAMUEL MCINTOSH
Adjunct Professor of Dance
samuelandrewmcintosh@gmail.com

- BA 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 1okmovement.org

THERESA HOLLAND
Adjunct Professor of Dance
tholla15@kent.edu

- BA in Dance, Mercyhurst University
- Graduate Student in the Educational Psychology Master’s Program, Kent State
- Freelance Dancer, Choreographer, and Teacher
- Featured Choreographer for OhioDance Festival and Cleveland Dance Project
- Choreographer for Kent State Faculty Dance Concert
- Teaches all levels of Ballet, Pointe, and Contemporary Ballet
- 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

“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
BFA, 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 and Choreographer

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Sabatino earned a BFA 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 TrainingBallet, 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.
THE BFA AND BA PROGRAMS

Endless Possibilities

THE BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS

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.

THE BACHELOR OF ARTS

The Bachelor of Arts degree in Dance Studies allows students who have previous dance experience and a strong interest in another subject area, within or outside of the arts, the opportunity to combine the two into one plan of study. The curriculum provides students with a solid foundation in dance techniques and dance academics while allowing flexibility to incorporate another area or minor. The B.A. degree program encourages exploration of areas 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 associate or bachelor’s degree programs through either a double major or a dual degree. A double major combines two majors within the same degree (e.g., Dance and Theatre majors in the B.F.A. degree). A dual degree combines two majors within different degrees (e.g., Dance Studies major in the B.A. degree and Nursing major in the B.S. N. degree).

Certain major combinations are not permitted by the colleges. 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 at either the associate or bachelor’s level.

Students pursuing a double major or dual degree concurrently or subsequently must be officially admitted to the programs and complete all requirements for both in addition to the university’s undergraduate and residence requirements.
DANCE PERFORMANCES
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 modern dance to audiences of all ages throughout Northeast Ohio.
Showcasing Student Work

The BFA Senior Dance Concert/Student Dance Festival (BFA/SDF) is a student choreographed concert curated to nurture the creativity of Kent State dance majors.
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, Dusty Button, Lauren Anderson, Garth Fagan, Jamal White, Ray Mercer, Renaldo Maurice, Ronald K. Brown, Shaness Kemp, Yoshito Sakuraba, and more.
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, and The School of Fashion.

Organizations the Dance Program has and continues to work with:

- The Limon 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
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. Click here for more information.
GET TO KNOW KENT STATE
Undeniably Kent State

At Kent State University, people hail from every corner of the globe to do work that paves the way for a brighter tomorrow. Here, you’ll find world-class faculty serving as researchers and mentors. Alumni leaders in business, healthcare, education and beyond, and students unafraid to break the mold and push boundaries. Our family is true blue and gold.

A LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR LIFE

Kent State is so much more than a college education. We prepare our students for a lifetime of success. Ninety-two percent of our recent graduates are employed or continuing their education full time six months after graduation, and they accept career opportunities in Ohio, across the country and around the world. Kent State graduates are leading innovation and making lives better every day. They join our more than 250,000 alumni who are already making their impact on the world.

WHERE DIVERSITY IS EMBRACED

Kent State is dedicated to increasing diverse representation at the university, creating and sustaining equality of opportunity and intentionally fostering an inclusive and equitable environment. We work diligently to ensure we cultivate a safe, diverse community at Kent State and harness its power for change.
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion was created in 2009 under President Lester A. Lefton. The leadership of the University Diversity Action Council, committed individuals like Rev. Ronald Fowler and a growing understanding of the importance of inclusion led the university to make a stronger commitment to diversity in the Strategic Plan, creating a Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Under the leadership of former Vice President Alfreda Brown, the division was built to support diversity initiatives throughout the university and endeavored to infuse a value for equity and inclusion in all decision making. The division continues to lead the university’s efforts to increase diverse representation, create and sustain equity of opportunity, and intentionally foster an inclusive environment.

Beginning in 2012, the division led the creation and implementation of the five-year Equity Action Plan (EAP), which articulated goals and created institutionalized, sustainable efforts to ensure that the university was moving toward truly inclusive excellence. The university also completed an extensive Climate Study process which will continue to guide our work toward enhancing the climate that our students, faculty and staff experience.

Kent State has been honored numerous times, including as a Diversity Champion and with five consecutive HEED awards, for its ongoing work. With the conclusion of the EAP in 2017, the work of advancing diversity at Kent State is far from over. The University Diversity Action Council, the staff of DEI and, indeed, all students, faculty and staff have a role to play in the next steps. The university’s 12th President Beverly Warren’s Strategic Roadmap envisions an inclusive environment where diversity is key to the achievement of our goals as a community.
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.
CONTACT US
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