



DEVON CARNEY
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

2019-2020
GRATITUDE
REPORT



MISSION

To Inspire and Engage Through the Beauty, Power & Passion of Dance

VISION

Outstanding Dance Experiences Accessible to All

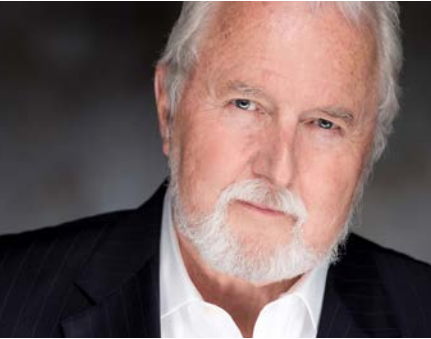


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Front Cover and Inside | Kansas City Ballet Dancers Kaleena Burks and Liang Fu in Devon Carney's Swan Lake. Dancers Kaleena Burks and Lamin Pereira in Helen Pickett's Petal. All photography by Brett Pruitt & East Market Studios unless otherwise noted.

THANK YOU FROM OUR EXECUTIVE & ARTISTIC DIRECTORS



Dear Patron,

Thank you for your friendship and support. Kansas City Ballet certainly would not be the same without you.

To say that this has been an unusual year for the Ballet is truly an understatement. The pandemic has brought cancellations and changes to the entire dance field that I never thought I would see. As I write, the Ballet is still struggling to bring back our dancers so that they can safely rehearse together and perform for you.

The Ballet also continues to work to be a place that represents our entire community whether it is our artists on stage, the artistic choices we make, the accessibility of our training or those we hire for the Ballet. We strive to be more inclusive, diverse and equitable.

Thank you for all you continue to do for us. With you, Kansas City Ballet will be back to performing on stage, training in our school and engaging all segments of our community.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Bentley'.

Jeffrey J. Bentley
Executive Director



Greetings!

Kansas City Ballet's 62nd Season was a great success! Even though our season was cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the company had many stellar moments – and you were there with us.

The Fall Season opened with the glorious *Carmina Burana*, reimagined by the talented Adam Hougland, featuring four outstanding soloists along with a full chorus and Kansas City Symphony. Helen Pickett's *Petal* and Anabelle Lopez Ochoa's *Tulips and Lobster* added vibrancy and whimsy to a stunning season opener.

Our highly entertaining *The Nutcracker* returned with so many new milestones to mark the way towards tremendous artistic improvement of our spectacular dancers. It is such a thrill to annually bring such joy to so many during the holidays for you, our KC community.

Swan Lake once again enthralled audiences and provided three of our ballerinas the platform to move their artistry to the next level. And who can forget the Swan corps! They were mesmerizing.

I wish I could reminisce with you about the rest of the season, but in mid-March we all went home. Not the season we had envisioned, but we made the best of it with online presentations of some of our most interesting work from the recent past. I hope you were able to join us.

In closing, I look forward to that wonderful day when we are all able to return to the theatre and present new invigorating works for your enjoyment. As always, thank you for the role you play in making this the wonderful company it is.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Devon Carney'.

Devon Carney



BOARD PRESIDENT JACK ROWE REFLECTS

Kansas City Ballet Board President Jack Rowe has built his life rising to meet challenges. This year is no exception.

"I've been honored and proud this past year to lead this board which oversees a wonderful organization from top to bottom—an organization with not only excellent executive and artistic leadership and staff but also professional artistic performers who are dedicated to their craft," he says. This 2019-2020 season was on track to be another successful year in the history of the Ballet.

"Our fall show, *Carmina Burana*, was well received and *The Nutcracker* brought in eager and excited audiences, as it does each year. The beautiful *Swan Lake* followed with bonus performances and great reviews. All seemed to be on target for another great year when tragedy unexpectedly struck with the COVID-19 pandemic. It has had a particular effect on the performing arts. And our Ballet is no exception," Jack admits.

When asked about how the Ballet's Board is responding to this challenge, Jack maintains: "They are grasping this, understand the seriousness of it, and are not running away. I haven't had anyone wanting to resign from this board. Instead they are asking, 'What can we do?'" I think, eventually, we'll come

out of this and the board will feel really good about this too."

"I'm also so proud of our organization's immediate professional response at all levels which has been directed toward the preservation of this 60+ year organization for the time to come. More importantly I'm proud of the emphasis on the safety of our staff, company, audience and students."

Jack knows this pandemic and its effects will continue to be a challenge going forward and will call upon the organization, the supporters in the community, and the board in particular, to see this through together.

"I always thought Kansas City Ballet's longtime goal to become 'a destination for dance' was a pretty good one. Our plan has been to attract the best performers and to perform the best works and expand within our community," Jack says. "Based on a very glorious past and a solid foundation, I am very confident in our future."

After all, he says:

"I was born in KC. I've grown up here in KC. I'm not planning on going anywhere. And neither is the Ballet."



2019-2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

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Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation

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Lathrop GPM LLP

Kathy Stepp, Immediate Past President
Stepp & Rothwell, Inc.

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Kirsten A. Byrd, J.D., Vice-President
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Tico Productions LLC / Tico Sports

Kent Stallard, J.D., Treasurer
Stinson LLP

Susan Lordi Marker, Secretary
Artist

Jeffrey J. Bentley, Executive Director
Kansas City Ballet

Devon Carney, Artistic Director
Kansas City Ballet

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SoLVE

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Belger Cartage Service, Inc.

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Hallmark Cards, Inc., Retired

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Creative Planning, Inc.

Tom Curran PhD, FRS
Children's Mercy Hospital

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Matt C. Johnson
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Cindy Mahoney
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Google Fiber Kansas City

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Thryv

Suzanne Shank, J.D.
Community Leader

Barbara Storm
Community Leader

Angela Walker
Community Leader

John Walker
*Community Leader
(President, Kansas City
Ballet Guild)*

Jacquie Ward
*UMB Bank
(President, BARRE KC)*

Thomas F. Whittaker
*J.E. Dunn Construction
Company*



2019-2020 COMPANY DANCERS

Hometown | Years with KCB

FRONT ROW

Naomi Tanioka
Sapporo, Japan | 1 year

Gavin Abercrombie
Acton, CA | 2 years
+2 years - Second Company

Zachary Boresow*
Kansas City, MO | 1 year

Amanda DeVenuta
Carmel, NY | 6 years

Whitney Huell
Irmo, SC | 6 years

Lilliana Hagerman
Pordenone, Italy | 5 years
+1 year - Second Company

Marisa DeEtte Whiteman*
Stony Brook, NY | 2 years
+4 years - Second Company

Taryn Mejia
Independence, MO | 8 years

Kaleena Burks
Ft. Lauderdale, FL | 10 years

Courtney Nitting
Lafayette, NJ | 2 years

Sidney Haefs*
Los Angeles, CA | 1 year
+1 year - Second Company

MIDDLE ROW

Christopher Costantini
Milan, Italy | 6 years

Kelsey Hellebuyck
San Francisco, CA | 4 years

Craig Wasserman
New City, NY | 1 year

Heather Nichols
Richmond, VA | 1 year





Amaya Rodriguez
Havana, Cuba | 4 years

Liang Fu
Qingdao, China | 6 years

Danielle Bausinger
Ridgewood, NJ | 6 years

Lamin Pereira
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil | 6 years
2019-2020 Sally and Thomas J.
Wood Senior Dancer

Joshua Bodden
Miami, FL | 6 years

Emily Mistretta
Upland, CA | 4 years

Enrico Hipolito
Seattle, WA | 3 years

Goldie Walberg
Sherman Oaks, CA | 3 years
+2 years - Second Company

BACK ROW

Humberto Rivera Blanco
Havana, Cuba | 4 years

Javier Morales
Havana, Cuba | 3 years

Cameron Thomas
Rochester, NY | 3 years
+1 year - Second Company

Angelín Carrant*
Paris, France | 2 years
+1 year - Second Company

James Kirby Rogers
San Francisco, CA | 4 years

Kevin Wilson
Durango, CO | 4 years

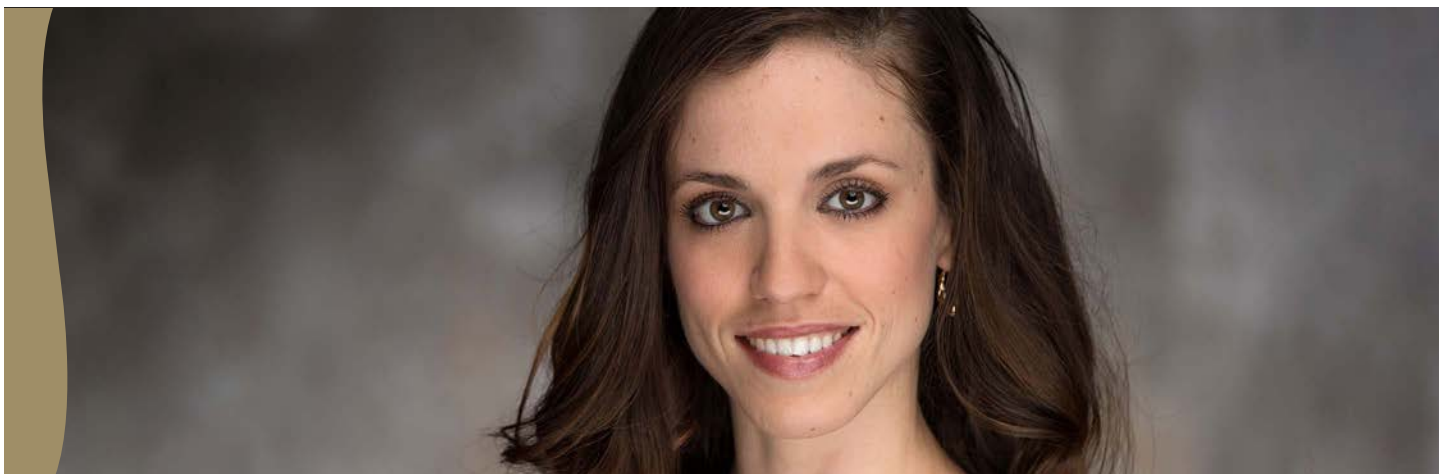
Dillon Malinski
Carbondale, IL | 6 years

* apprentice

35 weeks
Length of Dancer
contracts

54,450
people attended KCB
repertory performances

90,584
people reached through
social media



AMAYA RODRIGUEZ CONNECTS WITH THE AUDIENCE DURING SWAN LAKE

Dancing the role of Odette/Odile in Swan Lake is every little ballerina's dream. It's one that Kansas City Ballet Dancer [Amaya Rodriguez](#) had very early on growing up in Cuba.

"At around 7 years old, my dad asked me to see *Swan Lake* with him. When I saw that ballet, I knew I had to become a ballerina."

Amaya started ballet at age 9. However, when Amaya was just 15 years old, her father passed away—before she became a professional dancer. That's one reason performing *Swan Lake* was so special.

"*Swan Lake* reminds me of him. When I take the stage, I'm always thinking about him and why I became a dancer. He is everywhere with me and watching me dance," Amaya reveals.

Amaya danced with National Ballet of Cuba under Artistic Director Alicia Alonso for 12 years before coming to the U.S. to join Kansas City Ballet in 2016.

"I am going to live here for the rest of my life," she gushed. "I love my company and my amazing director. They are part of my family. I love this city, and I'm part of this community."

Amaya and her husband Enrique welcomed a son, Lucas, in May 2019. As excited as she was to become a new mom, she knew it

would be a challenge to get back in tip-top condition in time to dance one of the most important roles of her career.

She pushed through the pain of training and it got a little better each day. Her hard work paid off. Audiences jumped to their feet to applaud her performances. In fact, at the final performance curtain call, not only were the main roles, like Amaya's, celebrated with applause and flowers, but each of the swans from the corps was presented a rose to recognize the incredible physical and mental stamina they'd achieved together.

"I felt like, Wow! They recognize how hard we are working every day. I started crying. It was one of my favorite nights in my career. During *Swan Lake*, the audiences reminded me of home. For a few minutes I felt like I was with my Cuban audience who had followed my career so closely and had watched me grow up. Now, after these performances, this Kansas City audience truly knows me and what I'm capable of and that feels very good. It was a very special season and especially as a new mom," Amaya admits.

Amaya is grateful, not only to the audience, but to everyone who supports Kansas City Ballet with donations and ticket purchases.

"I think our heroes are everything for us. They are special. We are forever grateful. Thank you so much to each of you."



2019-2020 SECOND COMPANY



CHRISTOPHER RUUD
JOINED KCB IN JULY
2019 AS THE SECOND
COMPANY MANAGER
AND BALLET MASTER.

FRONT ROW

Lauren Vogel, *Trainee*
Callahan Akmajian-
Porter, *Trainee*
Ethan Ahuero, *KCB II*
Grace Reed, *Trainee*
Jessica Ousterhout,
Trainee

MIDDLE ROW

Timothy T.V. Cao, *Trainee*
Priyana Acharya, *Trainee*
Fiona Lee, *KCB II*
Talia Lebowitz, *Trainee*
Joshua Kiesel, *KCB II*
Bernard DuBois II, *KCB II*
Georgia Fuller, *KCB II*

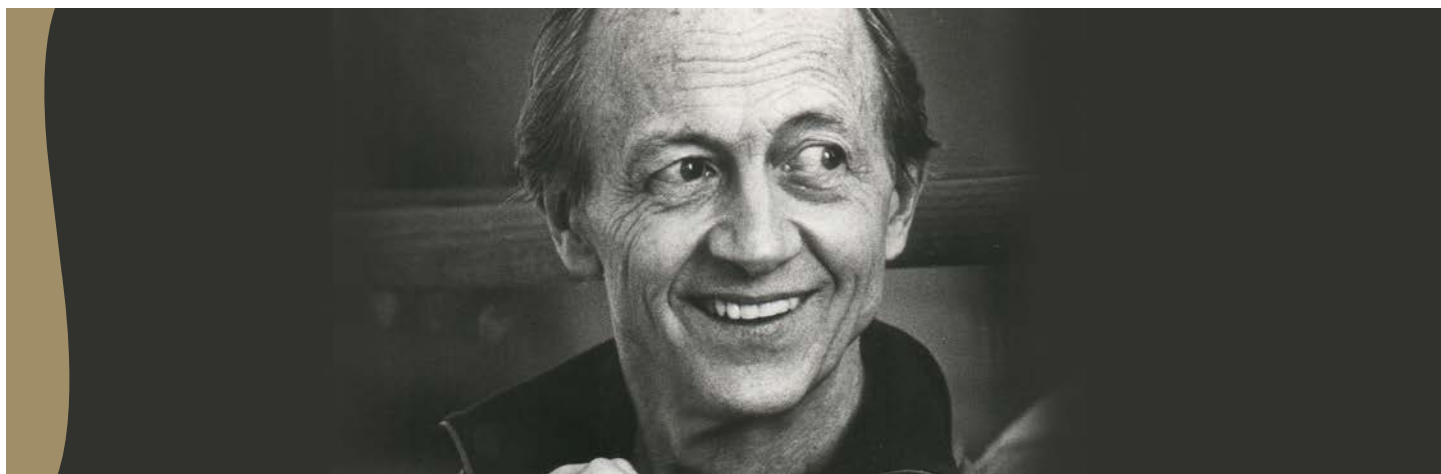
BACK ROW

Sophie Hod, *Trainee*
Jasmine Wheeler, *Trainee*
Katy Schwarzweller,
Trainee
Roma Catania, *KCB II*
Colleen McKenzie, *Trainee*
Juliana Kuhn, *Trainee*
Emma Pennell, *Trainee*

KCB Second Company
presented **15 performances**
in community venues

4 Second Company dancers
received apprentice contracts
with Companies following
the 19-20 season

KCB Second Company appeared at
the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art,
the Country Club Plaza Tree Lighting
Ceremony, Crossroads Hotel,
and Union Station.



THE BOLENDER SOCIETY

The Bolender Society was named for the beloved Artistic Director Emeritus [Todd Bolender](#), who transformed Kansas City Ballet with his artistry and vision. The Bolender Society is Kansas City Ballet's premiere philanthropic group. Members generously make a monthly gift of \$200 or an annual gift of \$2,500 or more.

Society members learn more about Kansas City Ballet and the world of dance through lectures by guest artists, excursions to dance events and special social gatherings to meet the dancers.

The Bolender Society members believe that a great city deserves great art. The dedication of The Bolender Society allows the Ballet to bring dance of the highest quality, community education for all ages, and excellence in dance training to the entire community.

2019-2020 BOLENDER SOCIETY COMMITTEE

Angela Walker, *Chair*

Carolyn Parkerson,
Vice Chair

Anna Allen

Gay Dannelly

Susan Hangauer

Zack Hangauer

Richard Jensen

Siobhan McLaughlin Lesley

Susan Lordi Marker

G. Mark Sappington

Suzanne Shank

John Walker

Jean-Paul Wong



Chans Dykes, Adam Benfer, Julie Anderson, and Board member Vince Clark at the Opening Night Party held at The Westin prior to the world premiere of Carmina Burana. Photo by Don Ipock.



Bill and Crystal O'Dea, Board member Barbara Storm, and Chris and Lisa Sirridge at the Evening with Ramona event held at the Hallbrook Country Club in January. Music Director Ramona Pansegrau shared personal stories and insights about the cherished music of *Swan Lake*. Photo by Larry F. Levenson

174 total

Bolender Society member households in 2019-2020

Bolender Society members contributed **\$334,379** to the Ballet's 2019-2020 season

17

new households joined the Bolender Society this year



ZACK AND SUSAN HANGAUER FEED THEIR SOULS WITH DANCE

When Zack and Susan Hangauer moved to Kansas City from San Francisco, they also began a whole new love affair with ballet and the performing arts.

The couple also thinks that had they stayed in San Francisco; they might never have become the avid arts attendees they are now. “Kansas City arts are just so affordable and accessible,” Zack says. “It only takes 20 minutes to get to the Kauffman Center from south Overland Park. That’s a breeze.”

Susan agrees, “It’s a joy! We’re delighted all of the arts are of such high quality...and the Kauffman Center! We’ve got it all.”

Zack and Susan also raised their children, four boys and a girl, to appreciate the arts. And now attending arts events is expanding to the next generation. The Hangauers have taken their grandchildren to *The Nutcracker* and the open rehearsals at the Bolender Center. A delightful experience for the whole family!

Several years ago, after receiving a call from The Bolender Society President Susan Lordi Marker, the Hangauers took the opportunity to join Kansas City Ballet’s Bolender Society. The couple took a trip to Cuba with many members of the group. They raved about the experience and do credit these types

of shared experiences with deepening their connections to the Ballet and other Bolender Society members.

Zack says, “There’s a definite camaraderie and family feeling. It’s that kind of connection you don’t get everywhere.”

Susan agrees a lot of good has come out of their membership: donating to a cause they believe in, really getting to know other members as people, and having unique shared experiences. “I really love these people because I know them,” she says.

Looking down the road, there are a lot of unknowns for the future of arts organizations. Thankfully, the Ballet has friends like Zack and Susan who are passionate about supporting the arts.

Susan says,

“We want these art forms to continue and get better and better. If you go and enjoy them, you have a responsibility to help support them.”

Susan also encourages everyone to get exposure to the arts and to get involved.

“Give it a try! It’s another way to feed your soul. We need that more than ever.”



ADVOCATES & ENTHUSIASTS: THE KANSAS CITY BALLET GUILD

The Kansas City Ballet Guild is a group of 170+ members who advocate for dance and ballet in the Kansas City community. Guild members support the Ballet financially by organizing the Annual Ballet Ball, the Nutcracker Boutique, and other special events. The Guild allows members to connect over their shared passion for dance and ballet and to deepen understanding of the art form through special presentations, book clubs, and movie nights. KCB thanks members of the Guild for their passion and enthusiasm for the art form that we all love!

2019-2020 GUILD BOARD

John Walker
President

Juliette Singer
President-Elect

Peggy Beal
*Vice President &
Gala Vice President 2019*

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Vice President*

Jo Anne Dondlinger
*Social Activities
Vice President*

Lisa Hickok
Archives Vice President

Susan Meehan-Mizer
Immediate Past President

Angela Bedell
Governance Chairman

Edie Downing &
Gail Van Way
Gala Vice Presidents 2020

Karen Yungmeyer &
Tempe Ostergren Elsberry
Gala Vice Presidents 2021



Andrew Beal, Ball Chairman Peggy Beal and Honorary Chairmen Sandra and Roger Jackson at the Nutcracker Ball held at the InterContinental Hotel on November 23, 2019.



Sue Ann Fagerberg, pictured with Richard Fagerberg, received the Pirouette Award honor at the Nutcracker Ball.



Julia Steinburg, Craig Sole, Karen Yungmeyer, and Carolyn Price at the Fall Guild Luncheon.

100 hours volunteered by
Guild members in the
Kansas City Ballet Archives

More than **170 members**
participate in the Ballet Guild

772 hours volunteered by Guild
members and **\$58,475** raised
through Nutcracker Boutique



2019-2020 GUILD PRESIDENT JOHN WALKER JUMPS RIGHT IN

In 2015, after 20+ years of active duty military service and another 20 years working as Department of Defense civilians in the Washington, D.C. area, John Walker and his wife Angela moved to Kansas City, Missouri to retire for good - or so they thought!

The couple, avid ballet fans, looked for ways to get involved with Kansas City Ballet. One of the first things on their list was to join the Ballet Guild. They started attending meetings and events and making connections. When there were opportunities to volunteer, they stepped up.

Given their background, it wasn't so surprising perhaps that they quickly found themselves in leadership roles. John was a little startled to be asked to be Guild president for the 2019-2020 season, but he readily agreed to lead the 170+ member organization.

"My leadership style was always to find quality people who knew what they were doing, make sure they had whatever they needed to succeed, then stay out of their way and let them make us all look good. In the Guild this was easy."

John worked hard to keep the members engaged and informed through emails, social media postings and speaking at Guild social events. On the side, he volunteered with other Guild members to work in the Ballet's Archives, helping to organize and process material into the (ever growing) collection.

After lots of planning over the summer in 2019, John was happy to attend the Guild's season Kick-Off Party in August at Lidia's with Guild members, guests, KCB staff and dancers. The Guild's largest annual fundraiser, the Nutcracker Ball, was held in November.

This was followed by the Guild's other major annual fundraiser, the Nutcracker Boutique, which ran through all of December during the Ballet's *Nutcracker* performances at the Kauffman Center. Guild members plan, organize, and execute these activities every year. John agreed that this year had its special challenges. COVID-19 hit KC in March and, like other groups, the Guild moved to alternate/virtual channels for the remainder of their meetings and events.

As he ended his term this past spring, John focused on what could be done, even in unconventional ways:

"The future of performing arts, to include the Ballet, is uncertain. There are so many unknowns --- it is just hard to plan. But having served in the military, I know the right thing to do is plan for multiple contingencies, remain flexible and then be ready to jump in and help when the time is right."

And when that time comes, that is what the Ballet Guild will do, as it always has. And the Ballet is grateful.



BARRE KC YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

BARRE KC members go behind-the-scenes and share their love of ballet with other young people at a wide variety of social, educational, and networking events year-round. Members can further their involvement and impact on the KC community through BARRE KC leadership opportunities and fundraising events that benefit the R.O.A.D. Scholarship Program!

2019-2020 BARRE KC BOARD

Jacquie Ward, *President*
UMB Bank

Paula Klasek, *Vice President*
(Incoming President 20-21)
Cerner

John Springer, *Soiree Chair*
AssuredPartners, Inc.

Katherine N. Del Signore
UMKC Foundation

Brenda Fernandez
Girl Scouts of NE KS &
NW MO

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Thrive Pilates & Movement
Studio

Kristen Thorpe
USDA - Compliance (US
Dept. of Agriculture)

Joseph Willis
Dahmer Contracting Group



Group photo on the top of the Crossroads Hotel at the BARRE KC Streetcar Pub Crawl. Photo by Karen Badgett



Hannah Litwiller, Tom Martin, Hope Gantner, Christine Salyer, Paula Klasek, Garrett Streck at a BARRE KC Happy Hour. Photo by Karen Badgett

Kansas City Ballet thanks the following sponsors:

2019-2020 BARRE KC SPONSORS

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[Boulevard Brewing Company](#)
Presenting Sponsor

[The Leslie Company](#)

[Lidia's](#)

[Misson Taco Joint](#)

[One East Urban Bar & Kitchen](#)

More than **75 members**
in BARRE KC

4 special events hosted by
BARRE KC in 2019-2020

\$6,695 raised by BARRE KC to
support the Reach Out And
Dance community program



BARRE KC BOARD PRESIDENT, JACQUIE WARD IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

Outgoing BARRE KC President Jacquie Ward grew up dancing. For her it has always been one of the ultimate forms of expression.

She and her husband Kyle have been longtime supporters of Kansas City's arts scene and season ticket holders for the Kansas City Symphony and Kansas City Ballet.

"Honestly, I think people sometimes don't expect us to have the caliber of ballet that we do in KC," Jacquie explains. "If they've never been to a performance or aren't sure what to expect, I tell them they are going to be pleasantly shocked with what they see. I've attended ballets in a lot of cities, and I think KCB does a really great job."

About five years ago, a friend approached Jacquie about joining KC Ballet's BARRE KC group for young professionals.

"My friend mentioned they had a board spot open," Jacquie remembers. "So, I met the group, and I really liked what they were doing. I'd always had a fantastic time at shows, but it was really neat to have that with young professionals, too. It added a really fun social component."

She appreciates how board service allows her to keep developing professionally while making a difference for organizations in her community.

"Arts are how I get a lot of joy out of life, and I want to do my part to make sure someone else gets that same chance," she says.

"When I took over as president last year, the two ways I measured myself were around membership and the Black & White Soirée fundraiser," Jacquie admits. "My biggest accomplishment was membership. We ended last year with around 35 members and

we ended this year with about 75. I think that a lot of that was due to continued outreach by the whole board. I'm really happy that we were able to get to that number."

The annual Black & White Soirée was supposed to take place in April, which was in the thick of stay at home orders due to COVID-19.

"The unwinding of the Soirée was an unexpected challenge," Jacquie affirms. "And, it's something that is never easy to do, especially in an economy where a lot of people were having to do it. So, having the right conversations with sponsors and working with vendors was important."

In the end, most of them either donated their sponsorship or rolled it into next year's event. Because of this, BARRE still raised nearly \$7,000 for the Ballet's [Reach Out and Dance \(R.O.A.D.\) Program](#).

"The whole board was great, but there are two people specifically that I'd want to mention," Jacquie says. "John Springer was our first-year Soirée chair who jumped in full force on planning. It wasn't easy to plan or unplan and he did a really good job. Also, Katherine N. Del Signore was membership chair and a lot of the growth and outreach came from her putting processes into place. She scheduled a couple of membership socials that were really important."

When asked what she hopes for the future of BARRE KC, Jacquie said: "It's really tough because we don't know what next year looks like, not just for the Ballet, but for a lot of people personally. We need to find ways to continue to find value for members. And the biggest goal, I think, would be to continue to grow membership and the Soirée. We did great this year with the challenges we had. I just hope both of these continue to grow."



THE BUSINESS COUNCIL

Corporate partners with Kansas City Ballet enjoy increased marketing visibility, exclusive benefits, and strengthened community and employee engagement. The Business Leadership Council is comprised of dedicated business leaders who are passionate about creating a thriving business and arts community in Kansas City. The Leadership Council seeks to establish connections between the Ballet's performance, School, and community programs and local businesses.



"Lockton is a proud supporter of Kansas City Ballet. It's more important than ever that we provide outstanding dance experiences to all. The Reach Out And Dance (R.O.A.D.) program is one of the many integral pieces to this vision. We are so fortunate to experience ballet accompanied by live music. It is something we should not take for granted."

-Tracy Musolf, Kansas City Ballet Business Council Chair, Lockton

2019-2020 BALLET BUSINESS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Tracy Musolf, *Council Chair*
[Lockton](#)

Nathan Benjamin,
[Burns & McDonnell](#)

Consuelo Cruz,
Community Volunteer

Kendra Gage,
[Performance Rehab](#)

Matt Johnson,
[CommunityAmerica](#)
[Credit Union](#)

Molly Kerr,
[BOK Financial](#)

Linda Lenza,
[Bank of America](#)

Rachel Merlo,
[Google Fiber](#)

CiCi Rojas,
[Tico Productions LLC](#)

Bridget Romero,
[Lathrop GPM](#)

Chris Teddy,
[JE Dunn Construction](#)



Emma Bland, Adam Fichman, Todd Smidt, and their colleagues from [Lifted Logic](#) attend a 2019 performance of Devon Carney's *The Nutcracker*. Kansas City Ballet thanks Lifted Logic for donating their time and expertise to create a fresh look for the Ballet's website this year.



Board member Aviva Ajmera and Wayne Strickland at a 2019-2020 KCB performance at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. The Ballet is grateful to Ajmera and her company, [SolveKC](#), for their extensive strategic planning work with KCB Board members and staff this season.



A STRONG PARTNERSHIP

BANK OF AMERICA

[Bank of America](#) has been an exceptional partner with Kansas City Ballet for more than two decades.

As Presenting Sponsor of *The Nutcracker* since 2010, Bank of America has helped enable Kansas City Ballet to present nearly 250 performances of the holiday tradition. And while the pandemic has made live performance impossible this year, Bank of America continues its support helping to ensure the company's financial sustainability.

Bank of America's investment in *The Nutcracker* helps produce an annual economic impact on our community of more than \$1.1 million and each year helps to attract more than 25,000 people from outside of the area to Kansas City.

Bank of America has invested in the Ballet's home, the Todd Bolender Center for Dance & Creativity and supported the Artistic Director search that brought the remarkable Devon Carney to Kansas City. The annual Ballet Ball and The Sugar Plum Fairy Children's Ball have also benefited from BofA's support.

Linda Lenza, Senior Vice President and Market Manager, is integral to Bank of America's relationship with Kansas City Ballet. As a member of the Board of Directors for 10 years, she has provided time, leadership and personal support to the Ballet.

Thank you to Bank of America for helping to keep Kansas City Ballet strong and continuing to serve our community.



Bank of America Senior Vice President Tony Twyman and Michelle Twyman with daughters Taylor and Aubrey at the 2019 Sugar Plum Fairy Children's Ball sponsored by Bank of America. Photo by Larry F. Levenson



Two young attendees enjoying the 2019 Sugar Plum Fairy Children's Ball. Photo by Larry F. Levenson



THE EMERITUS COUNCIL

The Ballet has a long history of strong governance. The Emeritus Council provides the opportunity for past members of the Board of Directors to connect with one another and with the Ballet.

During the Emeritus Annual Luncheon on November 4, 2019, **Principal & KCYB Director and former KCB dancer Kimberly Cowen** spoke about her memories growing up dancing and her experiences that brought her to Kansas City Ballet. She began her delightful tales with how, at the age of 12, she met Todd Bolender. Kimberly shared the influence various artistic directors had made on her career and how she emulates their professionalism while teaching children in the School. Audience members were overcome with emotion and good-humored laughter.

On January 29, 2020, Emeritus members, gathered on a conference call to hear Executive Director Jeffrey Bentley share Kansas City Ballet's mid-year report. Jeff shared his knowledge about other dance organizations, highlighting the Ballet's successes and hopes for the future. Attendees asked questions and reconnected to the service they had provided while on the Board.



Principal & KCYB Director Kimberly Cowen and Artistic Director Devon Carney at the Emeritus Council Luncheon held at the Bolender Center. Cowen shared about her personal experiences throughout her tenure at Kansas City Ballet. Photo by Elizabeth Stehling

Emeritus Council Chair Dr. John D. Hunkeler, Executive Director Jeffrey Bentley, Board Chairman Julia Irene Kauffman, Board President Jack Rowe, and Artistic Director Devon Carney at the annual Emeritus Council luncheon held at the Bolender Center. Photo by Elizabeth Stehling.

Jean-Paul Wong and Susan Meehan-Mizer were welcomed as the newest members of the Emeritus Council at a pinning ceremony during the November luncheon. Other new Emeritus Council members not pictured include Mike Bray, Siobhan McLaughlin Lesley, and Linda Shoare. Photo by Elizabeth Stehling.



GRANT AND MIMI VACATION IN KC TO SUPPORT THE BALLET

In 2014, Kansas City Ballet performed Michael Pink's [Dracula](#). It inspired Grant Lamascus and Mimi Montoya to drive to KC from Arkansas.

Mimi had long loved ballet, having taken classes as a child, but Grant was new to the art form.

Grant and Mimi became mesmerized not only with the production, but with the whole organization. On the way home, Grant decided they should become members of the Ballet Guild after seeing an ad in the program.

Living only three hours away, the couple also became subscribers and made their routine travels to Kansas City delightful journeys by booking unique bed and breakfasts and other lodgings around town.

"It's extraordinary that there's a world class ballet company that is so close," Mimi says. "We don't have to go to New York or San Francisco or somewhere so far away."

It wasn't long before the two wanted to see what else they could do to get involved with the ballet. They discovered volunteering and were intrigued to be invited by John Walker to help with the Ballet Archives projects.

"It's rare to find a group of people that you can connect with that feel like friends and neighbors. I feel that with the Kansas City Ballet group,"

Grant said. "That's not always the case. And being able to assist in interesting projects and do some good work is phenomenal."

Mimi and Grant spent two weeks of their vacation time in Kansas City assisting the Ballet's archival expert and committee with some special projects in addition to other days like the Nutcracker Pricing Party.

"The staff made us feel so welcome and we want to continue and do more and more," Mimi added.

Part of that "more" includes donating to the Ballet. They wanted to increase their philanthropic support and connectivity to the Ballet so they joined The Bolender Society. Also, Grant's employer offers quarterly funding through their Volunteerism Always Pays program on behalf of Grant's volunteer hours with the Ballet.

Grant and Mimi have firmly claimed a home in the Kansas City Ballet family of supporters. They encourage others to do the same.

"The Ballet is such an intricate work of art. I'm simply honored to be part of it and to be able to assist," Grant said.

"It feels amazing to be a part of something that is so awe-inspiring. If someone desires to do more, just step up. I have no doubt your contribution would be welcomed," Mimi added.

More than **2,600 volunteers** gave of their time and talents in the 2019-2020 season.

12,847 hours of donated volunteer time in 2019-2020



Johnson County Community College's New Dance Partners featured four world premiere contemporary works performed by four companies: Kansas City Ballet, Owen/Cox Dance Group, Störling Dance Theatre, and Wylliams/Henry Contemporary Dance Company.

Dancers Kaleena Burks and James Kirby Rogers.

NEW DANCE PARTNERS • SEPTEMBER 27-28, 2019 • JOHNSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Kansas City Ballet performed Myles Thatcher's *Umbra*. Thatcher visited Kansas City from San Francisco Ballet to choreograph the world premiere.



Kansas City Ballet Dancers. Photos by Mike Strong



WHITNEY HUELL REFLECTS ON THE JOYS OF THE SEASON

The 2019-2020 season was an unprecedented whirlwind. Rather than let it get her down, Company dancer [Whitney Huell](#) chooses to reflect on the joys it provided and to look ahead with hope for what is to come.

"In last fall's performance, I was in the first cast of Helen Pickett's *Petal*, the second cast of Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's *Tulips and Lobster*, and Adam Hougland's *Carmina Burana*. I enjoyed how vastly different each piece was. *Petal* required an intense connection to story and an involved interaction with the other dancers in the work. *Tulips and Lobster* was lighthearted, fun and witty and *Carmina* evoked a more stoic presentation and angular movements," Whitney recalls.

In *Petal*, which was visually stunning as the stage is filled with intense color, Whitney could be sassy. Audiences really responded to some of the more jaw-dropping moves like when Whitney was tossed into the air by two dancers.

"So many moments in the ballet made me feel as if I could fly," she gushes. "In the finale I had the freedom to jump as far and as high as I could."

The Nutcracker followed in December and was again filled with intense roles for Whitney,

including a reprisal of the Sugar Plum Fairy role she had earned in 2018.

However, in February, she had no idea that *Swan Lake* would be the last performances of the season.

"I definitely think the 2020 performance of *Swan Lake* was an accomplishment for the entire company, especially the female dancers. *Swan Lake* was a marathon that we finished strong," Whitney asserts.

Since the pandemic began, her apartment has become her studio, equipped with a subfloor and Marley to safely dance at home. Yoga, Pilates and modified ballet classes have kept her physically and mentally healthy.

Whitney appreciates those who donate to Kansas City Ballet, especially right now. "Donors are heroes. They make it possible for dancers to preserve the integrity, evolution and beauty of our art form," she says.

As for the future, Whitney has no doubts that dance will return stronger than ever.

"The future of dance is for everyone to enjoy," Whitney says. "And, I'm hopeful we will be performing again soon."



KCB's season-opening performance featured three works:

- The world premiere of Adam Houglan's [*Carmina Burana*](#); Music: Carl Orff
- Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's [*Tulips & Lobster*](#); Music: Purcell, Albinoni, Lambert, and Vivaldi
- Helen Pickett's [*Petal*](#); Music: Philip Glass and Thomas Montgomery Newman

The performance was accompanied by the Kansas City Symphony and the Kansas City Symphony Chorus.

*Dancers Whitney Huell and Cameron Thomas in Helen Pickett's [*Petal*](#).*

CARMINA BURANA • OCTOBER 11-20, 2019 • KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

“With the addition of the Kansas City Symphony Chorus..., the end result was a full and sumptuous production. The whole thing was frankly amazing, and we were very pleased to be able to see its premiere.”

– Kelly Luck, BroadwayWorld review of Carmina Burana

*Kansas City Ballet Dancer Gavin Abercrombie with Company Dancers in Adam Houglan's [*Carmina Burana*](#).*





GAVIN ABERCROMBIE LANDS LEADING ROLE IN *CARMINA BURANA*

Gavin Abercrombie came up through the ranks at Kansas City Ballet. Starting off as a member of KCB II, part of the Second Company, he was invited to join the Company as an apprentice before being promoted to a full company member.

For the fall 2019 season opening performance, he debuted the lead role in Adam Hougland's world premiere of *Carmina Burana*. It was an experience he will never forget.

"It was my first lead role as a professional dancer, and it came in the very beginning of my first professional season," Gavin recalls. "Throughout the choreographic process Adam was so supportive. He worked with me through all of the details so I could best portray his ideas for the piece through my own artistic expression. By the time the shows came along, the nerves were gone, and I felt ready to give it my all on stage."

The first time he performed his final solo in front of an audience is etched into Gavin's memory. "My character is incredibly emotionally vulnerable during that solo, alone on stage and stripped down to almost nothing. This was the moment I was supposed to pour everything I had into making the audience relate to me. The first time I performed it in front of a live audience, I remember feeling like I was able to reach

an emotional level that I hadn't been able to tap into performing it in front of a mirror or out to an empty theater. Being alone out there, giving everything I had left to the audience, is a moment that I know I'll never forget."

While the season ended just after the performances of *Swan Lake*, Gavin has been doing his best to stay fit on his own with virtual ballet classes. He's also spent a good amount of time at home with his family in California and has been hiking and biking on the many trails in the mountains near his home.

Gavin chooses to look forward with optimism: "I constantly remind myself that although things may seem bad now, there will be a day when I will be back performing in front of the Kansas City audience I hold dear. I plan to be in good shape for when that moment arrives."

Recognizing those who donate to help support Kansas City Ballet are true KCB heroes, Gavin says,

"They are really making a difference and showcasing themselves as true heroes in my eyes. They are not only donating to help me do what I love, but also to help me and my fellow coworkers continue to inspire and lift up our Kansas City community through ballet."



The Nutcracker is a cherished holiday tradition in Kansas City. KCB presented 23 performances and 3 student matinee performances of Devon Carney's *The Nutcracker*, set to Peter I. Tchaikovsky's iconic score. More than 36,000 people attended KCB's productions in 2019.

Dancer Lamin Pereira.

THE NUTCRACKER • DECEMBER 5-24, 2019 • KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

The 25th Annual Sugar Plum Fairy Children's Ball, hosted by co-chairs Lisa Sirridge and Regina Klepikow, on December 7th transformed the Muehlebach Tower of the Kansas City Marriott Downtown into a Sugar Plum Fairy experience. Guests enjoyed Kansas City Youth Ballet's performance and an elegant 3-course luncheon. Emcee Christa Dubill honored DeVette Ashley for her vision of this event 25 years ago. At the end of the feast, everyone was whisked away to the matinee of *The Nutcracker* presented by Kansas City Ballet and sponsored by Bank of America.



Clara played by KC Ballet School Student Elise Pickert, Lisa Sirridge, DeVette Ashley, Regina Klepikow and Fritz played by KC Ballet School Student Collin Brooks. Photo by Larry F. Levenson



STUDENT MATINEES CREATE THE AUDIENCE OF THE FUTURE

Kansas City Ballet annually presents educational performances of select story ballets at the Kauffman Center. These unique performances provide elementary through high school students from around the metro with an engaging introduction to ballet, along with a behind-the-scenes look at what it takes to stage a ballet performance.

April Berry, Kansas City Ballet's Director of Community Engagement & Education, says, "Studies show that there are a range of benefits from exposing a student to cultural experiences including: increasing tolerance, empathy, compassion, and the ability to understand life in another time and place." Full-length performances for schools and students can even enhance interdisciplinary learning by integrating dance with English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Music.

Tickets are at a significantly reduced price and include online multimedia performance study guides and classroom visits in advance to prepare students for the experience.

For many students who may not see the performing arts, this may be their first

opportunity to see live ballet, hear a live symphony orchestra, and visit the renowned Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. During the 2019-2020 season alone, 5,526 students and teacher chaperones attended four matinee performances of *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*.

Kansas City Ballet Company Dancer Joshua Boddien agrees:

"For me, growing up in the inner city of Miami, ballet and the arts were not on my radar or even a thing I considered until I saw that student matinee of The Nutcracker. That was the jumping off point that really changed my life and pointed me in a direction I didn't even know was possible for a life or career. Supporting and funding student matinees literally can be life-changing for a child. I am living proof."

Children are our audience of the future. The impact of sending a child to a matinee performance is far beyond the gift given this year. Thank you for making the Ballet relevant for generations.

Kansas City Ballet thanks an anonymous donor for a matching gift of **\$10,000** to the Student Matinee Campaign!

\$32,453
was raised from
136 households

826 students were able to attend matinees because of the gifts donated to this campaign.

\$329,580
is the total cost of production for four student matinees



“On opening night, the company looked uniformly ‘in command’ of this...most beloved of all full-length ballets, with leads who danced with consistent polish and with an ever-improving corps... Rarely have we seen this company dance with such care for details; with such attention to minutiae and to what one can only call ‘passion.’”

- Paul Horsley, The Independent

Dancers Kaleena Burks and Liang Fu.

SWAN LAKE • FEBRUARY 14-23, 2020 • KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Artistic Director Devon Carney honored the members of the corps de ballet by giving each dancer a rose at the final performance of *Swan Lake*.

“The Swans of the Corps de Ballet are the collective body of the ballet bringing the very breath, heart and soul of Swan Lake to life. They work like trojans pursuing the epitome of unified perfection of synchronized movement. They must essentially breathe as one. It is a very physically and emotionally demanding experience in every sense since they are on stage for almost the entire performance as either a member of the swan corps or through quick changes into other character roles. Even the lead role of Odette, the Swan Queen, is dependent on the corps to carry her along and give her the energy that she needs to bring this story fully to life. They are stars in their own right and a vital driving force of Swan Lake. And when it all comes together, witnessing the KCB Swans is a once in a life time breathtaking experience to behold.”

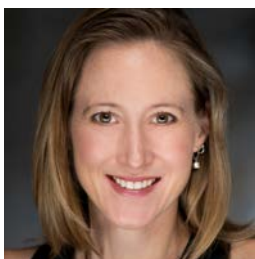
-Devon Carney, Artistic Director

Dancers Naomi Tanioka, Emily Mistretta, Amanda DeVenuta and Taryn Mejia.





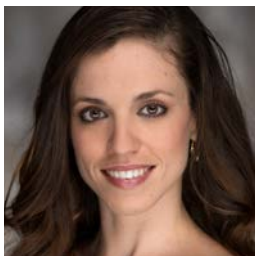
STAGING SWAN LAKE



KRISTI CAPPS, BALLET MASTER

"Although I have always been inspired by, astonished of, and proud of the women of KCB, I perhaps have not felt this more than with their hard work in our last production of *Swan Lake*. To "become" a swan with un-human physical characteristics takes time, self-reflection and attentiveness; yet, to become a stage full of 24+ swans moving together with precision as one unit and one breath takes trust, understanding and strength. The women of KCB have all of this and more and grew not only as individuals but as a company. What our wonderful audiences were fortunate to witness was a result of their conscious and extraordinary efforts. They transported us to another time and space, we found ourselves gasping and sighing at the beautiful formations and pictures they created, and they allowed us all to experience different emotions through to the ballet's finale scene. They gave us hope that good will always conquer evil and absolute love will certainly win over all."

BECOMING ODETTE/ODILE



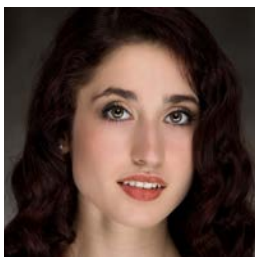
AMAYA RODRIGUEZ

"Performing Odette/Odile under the direction of Devon Carney has been one of the greatest experiences of my career. Devon gave me the opportunity to play Odette after having my baby which was very challenging but wonderful. His rendition was technically more difficult than what I had previously done. I enjoyed every second of rehearsal. *Swan Lake* is a very strong ballet for women but at the same time it is one of the ballets that every dancer strives to perform. No matter how tired you may be, every second on stage playing Odette is a privilege that you will never forget."



KALEENA BURKS

"Odette/Odile is a representation of the pinnacle of a ballerina's career, but I didn't realize how much I was going to grow as an artist as well as strengthen my own perseverance to succeed. I was pushed artistically with having to master the transformation from the tender, vulnerable Odette to the strong seductress that is Odile in the course of one performance but bringing those two characters alive on stage is a feeling that will stay with me always. The challenges I faced and overcame with the support of Devon Carney and the whole Kansas City Ballet team has made me a stronger, more generous person and performer."



AMANDA DEVENUTA

"Odette/Odile was an experience like no other. To dance such a supple, delicate white swan to then transform into this dark queen of manipulation was so fun for me! I was able to explore both roles so genuinely within myself to then find it was truly a rewarding, beautiful journey. By the fourth act I had truly surrendered myself to my love for Siegfried and for the ballet and story as a whole. I wouldn't trade those moments on stage of pure freedom for anything else in the world."



RELIEF & RECOVERY CAMPAIGN

On the brink of the New Moves performances at the Bolender Center in mid-March 2020, the City of Kansas City instituted a 'stay at home' order, and Kansas City Ballet cancelled the rest of the season's productions. This meant no New Moves or *Celts*.

The Ballet immediately went into action to address the Company's greatly altered financial situation. In April, the Ballet launched its Keep the Ballet On Its Toes [Relief & Recovery Campaign](#). Our goal was to raise \$1 million to assist the Ballet through this time.

We asked you to help. And you responded! Your generosity has so far enabled us to fulfill our dancers' contracts through the end of the 2019-2020 season and prepare for the 2020-2021 Season.

Everyone at the Ballet is deeply grateful to the 1,098 individuals, companies, organizations, and schools who have given to the campaign between March 14 and June 30, 2020. You are our hero!

[Kansas City Ballet thanks its Heroes](#)

However, the challenges have just begun, and Kansas City Ballet is doing all it can to sustain the organization. While we are currently unable to perform at the Kauffman Center, our dancers will be coming back to the studios in the 2020-2021 season. Your ongoing support is allowing the Ballet to move forward. You will sustain us until we are on stage again.

The work is not done yet. But we know that you can lift us up!

KCBALLET @HOME

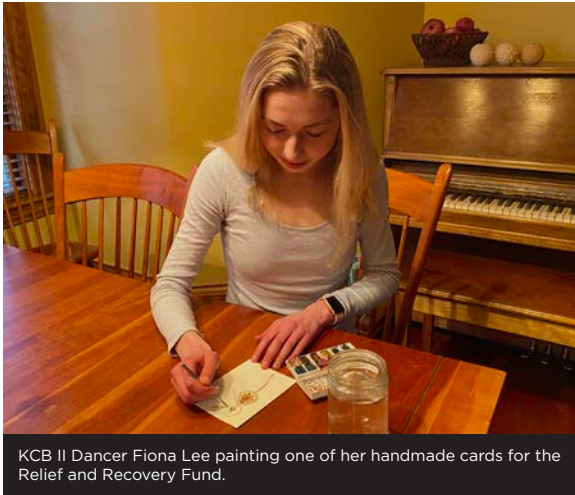
After responding with immediate attention to the safety of its artists, staff, students, and patrons, KC Ballet reimagined its work and launched the initiative, KCBallet@Home. This allowed patrons to enjoy the Ballet in new ways, including:

- Weekly livestreaming of Company Class on Facebook
- Three limited runs of past KCB performances on Facebook live and our website, including *The Uneven*, *Umbra*, and *Klein Perspectives*.
- Music Moves, a weekly audio program of ballet music hosted by Music Director Ramona Pansegrau
- Instagram story takeovers by KCB Dancers
- Weekly Happy Hours for The Bolender Society and KCB personnel



PAINTING FOR RELIEF & RECOVERY FUND

Kansas City Ballet Second Company Dancer, [Fiona Lee](#), was devastated to learn the remainder of the company's 2019-2020 season had been canceled due to COVID-19.



KCB II Dancer Fiona Lee painting one of her handmade cards for the Relief and Recovery Fund.

After the announcement, she headed back home to be with her family in Livingston, Montana.

During this unscheduled sabbatical from her routine, Fiona leaned into a hobby she'd had for years: painting ballerinas.

"I was able to turn to painting. It has been an incredibly creative outlet for me while I

am unable to train and rehearse with Kansas City Ballet as normal," she says. "And, because many of my friends and mentors are often inspirations for my creations, painting can make me feel more connected to them."

"I came up with the idea to sell my work on Etsy and donate to the KCB Relief and Recovery Fund. The small but hopefully meaningful difference these cards are able to make, both for KCB's Relief and Recovery Fund and to the people who receive them, gives me a little more hope for how we can protect what we value the most," Fiona says.

When asked about her feelings towards those purchasing her artwork and those donating to KC Ballet's Fund, Fiona says:

"I would like to say that not only are you supporting ballet in Kansas City, but your donation is affirming the importance of dance across the nation. The fact that you believe in Kansas City Ballet's mission enough to give something (large or small!) means that dance is significant to you. By donating to the relief fund, you are helping others to eventually discover what dance means to them through KCB's continued operation!"

RELIEF & RECOVERY CAMPAIGN

KANSAS CITY BALLET THANKS ITS HEROES

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McGuinness and
Nathan Benjamin
Mr. and Mrs. Matt Benson
Sarah Bent and Craig
Thompson

"Dance is one of the things that sets us apart and makes us human. My son has loved dancing since he was tiny. If it hadn't been for the Ballet's R.O.A.D. program, he may never have had an opportunity to pursue his interest in dance. It has made him feel valued and special. Everything Kansas City Ballet does has value and should be preserved, especially during this difficult time."

—David Bryan, R.O.A.D. parent

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-Father Paul Turner, Pastor at Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

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\$315,059 total gifts, ticket donations, and tuition donations received from individuals between March 17 and June 30, 2020.

837 households donated their tickets back to KCB, totaling **\$92,978**

253 households donated their School tuition back to KCB, totaling **\$46,108**



KANSAS CITY BALLET SCHOOL

The Kansas City Ballet School offers a wide-range of excellent training programs, including the Academy, the Daytime Program, Kansas City Youth Ballet, Summer Intensive, Adaptive Dance, Studio Classes, as well as the Second Company to a diverse body of students. Under the leadership of School Director Grace Holmes, the School is recognized as one of the top ballet training institutions in the United States.

Many students have used the focus, creativity, and dedication ballet has taught them to pursue and make their long-term goals come true, whatever they may be. Others have gone on to dance in prestigious college programs and with professional companies. For all, Kansas City Ballet School strives to foster a supportive environment and to provide superior instruction that makes a positive impact on its students of all ages, interests and backgrounds.

KANSAS CITY BALLET SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

- From July 2019 to mid-March 2020, the Academy had **618 total students** in the Children's Division, Preparatory Division, Pre-Professional Division, and Professional Division (Second Company).
- **37 students** enrolled in the School's Daytime Program, which offers **25 hours** of dance instruction per week in five days of classes.
- KCB School received the "Outstanding School" award for the fourth consecutive year at the Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP) competition, known as the "Olympics" of dance for aspiring dancers. **16 other KCB School ensemble and solo performers also placed in the YAGP competition.**
- **29 dancers**, ages 13-18, participated in Kansas City Youth Ballet. KCBYB performed one program of three performances to an audience of 150 people.
- KCB School awarded **\$160,500** in merit scholarships and financial aid to young dancers in 2019-2020.



Jordan Noblett & Charles Cronenwett in Emily Mistretta's 'Wu li Livin' in Kansas City Ballet Youth's Fall 2019 performance.



Daytime Students' Jazz Ensemble in the 2019 School Showcase.



KANSAS CITY BALLET SCHOOL 2020 SENIORS

KCB is proud of the talented individuals who graduated from the School in 2020. Their next steps are listed below, if known. Congratulations, seniors!

Iyonna Barris

Lauryn Brown

Grace Campbell
Kansas City Ballet Trainee

Charles Cronenwett
Kansas City Ballet Trainee

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*Wichita State University,
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Minnesota Ballet Apprentice



OLIVIA DENSON SELECTED FOR A DREAM ROLE IN SWAN LAKE

Olivia Denson's dream of becoming a professional ballet dancer started years ago at a Kansas City Ballet performance. "I love watching the professional company shows. And once I saw Miss Kim [Kimberly Cowen] dance, I knew that's what I wanted to do," Olivia remembers.

Olivia started dance classes at age 2 ½. At age 7 it was clear she was smitten, so her parents decided to send her to Kansas City Ballet School's Johnson County campus. "Coming here was amazing! It was a BIG change," says Olivia.

When asked why she felt drawn to ballet, Olivia admits, "I love the discipline. I love structure and repetition—it's meditative in a way."

As a student at Kansas City Ballet School, Olivia had the opportunity to dance in Company productions which included *The Nutcracker*, among others. Olivia has shined over the years in earning roles in productions as a student that would typically have gone to Second Company dancers.

In 2017, she danced in the 'Garland Waltz' in *The Sleeping Beauty*. Then she danced corps roles in *The Nutcracker* in 'Waltz of the Flowers' and in 'Snow Scene' for the last two years. And in 2020, she was awarded a corps role in *Swan Lake*, an incredibly beautiful and difficult assignment for any dancer.

"Dancing in *Swan Lake* was one of the best experiences so far for me as a dancer. The energy from everyone during performances felt magical," Olivia remembers.

"My favorite memory was the moment when the final curtain closed and all the swans experienced overwhelming feelings of accomplishment. It was a bittersweet moment. The show was so physically and emotionally demanding, but also it is a production I deeply miss."

She admits *Swan Lake* was a challenge. She had to learn the choreography while dancing on the side of the rehearsal studio, rather than learning it in her assigned spot during rehearsals--valuable experience for an aspiring professional dancer. The corps work that goes into making a beautiful production like *Swan Lake* helps to develop skills that are essential in a ballet career.

Olivia has been selected to be part of Kansas City Ballet's Second Company for the 2020-2021 Season. The Second Company is made up of two groups, KCB II dancers and Trainees. As a Trainee, Olivia is looking forward to continuing her ballet training and participating in performances and programs that reach out to the KC community.

While the coming year is full of unknowns, one thing is certain. Olivia's future looks bright.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION

KC Ballet's Community Engagement and Education (CE&E) Department shares the joy of dance by engaging children and adults through affordable, accessible programs, making a significant positive impact around the Greater KC community for generations to come.

This year, CE&E Director April Berry created a CE&E Council in order to bring together diverse community representatives to encourage more community visibility in the work that KCB is doing in this area. The goals of the Council are to advocate for and provide support to Kansas City Ballet's community programming, to enhance program visibility, and to provide external feedback.

KANSAS CITY BALLET THANKS THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR WORK ON THE CE&E COUNCIL!

Chandra Clark
*Big Brothers Big Sisters of
Greater Kansas City*

Derald Davis
Kansas City Public Schools

Joy Engel
*Turner Unified School
District 202*

Lee Hartman
Harriman-Jewell Series

Deanna Munoz
Latino Arts Foundation

Rhonda Nolen
United Inner City Services

Brianne Pegg
United Inner City Services

Julie Phillips
*Girl Scouts of NE Kansas
& NW Missouri*

Nicole Jacobs-Silvey
Connection Coach KC

Amy Washington
Allen Village School

Angela and John Walker
*Kansas City Ballet Board
Members & Community
Leaders*

Kansas City Ballet thanks Louise Meyers, owner of Pryde's Old Westport, who in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic is donating proceeds from Swan Candle sales directly to the Ballet's Reach Out And Dance (R.O.A.D.) Scholarship program. [Read more here.](#)



"I love and support the Ballet! The arts have been particularly hit hard during COVID-19 and their presence of grace and beauty are sorely missed in Kansas City. The Reach Out And Dance program makes a distinct impression, offering the gift of dance to many children in our community." –Louise Meyers, owner of Pryde's



THE IMPACT OF THE R.O.A.D. RESIDENCY PROGRAM

Three years ago when Ashley Lindemann's daughter Evie attended 3rd grade at Border Star Montessori, she was a student in the inaugural Reach Out and Dance (R.O.A.D.) Residency Program in her school.

The R.O.A.D. Residency has an established curriculum taught by KC Ballet teaching artists to live music, introducing 3rd and 4th-grade students to the fundamentals of dance: space, time, effort, self-discipline, and cooperative learning. Thematic lessons integrate STEAM curriculum and are based on National and State Education Standards.

Evie enjoyed the program and was surprised at the end of it to find out she was selected to receive continued dance training through the R.O.A.D. Scholarship Program the following semester. These select students were bussed to KC Ballet's Bolender Center weekly to attend Ballet and World Dance classes. They also received dancewear and ballet slippers courtesy of Dance Shoppe, Inc., the R.O.A.D. Scholarship Program Uniform Provider.

When it was younger sister Genny's turn to begin the residency program at Border Star, she knew she would need to buckle down and participate to earn a place in the coveted scholarship program. That was a bigger challenge when you consider that in addition to being an extrovert, Genny has ADD and some sensory issues.

Ashley explained, "Ballet classes help her with self-discipline and to continue learning and trying harder to keep moving with the class and try new things. Getting in the zone, knowing the expectations and being able to express herself

physically has been wonderful. People with ADD really thrive in group activities that include body mirroring. It can be very soothing and calming. Everyone working together and learning at the same time has been beneficial for brain development and self-control. It's been awesome for me to see her thriving in that environment."

Ashley believes the arts are a way for us to connect to other people, understand different points of view, and through stories, build stronger communities.

At school and in the R.O.A.D. Scholarship Program, Genny is part of a really diverse class.

"That's massively important to us," Ashley said. "Genny is white, but she is included in a class that is so intentionally diverse. That will carry forward throughout her life. She'll know that arts and dance should be accessible for everyone."

Ashley appreciated the R.O.A.D. Program and the effects it was having on her community and her daughters so much, she decided to become a donor.

"I wanted to donate because I think the ballet is doing a wonderful job of being so intentional with creating that diversity with this program," she said. "My giving philosophy is to give a little bit (so that I can afford it), and to give it consistently every single month for all the organizations in KC that make life wonderful and great. If a lot of people did that, the arts would be flush with cash to do even more for our community."

5,569 students attended Student Matinee performances in 2019-2020

24 elementary schools participate in the Reach Out and Dance Residency program, sharing the joy of dance with **1,100 students**

18,823 people reached through 2019-2020 programs



MOVING INTO THE FUTURE ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN

A major strategic focus of the Ballet's Board and staff in 2019-2020 was the [*Moving Into the Future Endowment Campaign*](#). Under the leadership of Honorary Chair Dr. John D. Hunkeler and Chairs Mike and Vicki Bray, the Ballet surpassed 25 percent of its Campaign goal! The Ballet is grateful to the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation for generously matching current contributions to the Campaign, which continues to double the impact of all gifts of cash to the Endowment.

This year, the following individuals displayed leadership and dedication to both the present and future of Kansas City Ballet as members of the Endowment Cabinet.

2019-2020 ENDOWMENT CABINET

Michael and Vicki Bray
*Moving Into the Future
Campaign Chairs*

Stephen Doyal
*Hallmark Cards, Inc., Retired,
Board member*

Kathy Stepp
*Stepp & Rothwell, Inc., Board
Past-President*

Dr. John D. Hunkeler
Honorary Chair

Siobhan McLaughlin Lesley
Gilda's Club Kansas City

Barbara Storm
Community Leader

Claire Brand
*Hallmark Cards, Inc., Retired,
Board member*

Jack D. Rowe, J.D.
Lathrop GPM, Board President

KANSAS CITY BALLET THANKS THE FOLLOWING DONORS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED THE MOVING INTO THE FUTURE ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN

Joseph Appelt
ARRM Co.
Richard Belger and
Evelyn Craft Belger
Jeffrey J. Bentley
Brand Family Fund
Mike and Vicki Bray
Brownstone Construction
The Stanley J. Bushman
and Ann Canfield Fund
for the Reach Out And
Dance (R.O.A.D.)
Scholarship Program
Vince and Julie Clark
Ally, Dr. Jessie Ng, and
Dr. Tom Curran Fund
Don and Pat Dagenais
DGC Capital Contracting
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Dave and Dee Dillon
Family Fund
Cathy and Steve Doyal
Ms. Dana Dunaway
Joseph and Diana Eisenach
Elsberry Family Foundation
Sue Ann & Richard E.
Fagerberg Ballet
Performance
Enhancement Fund

Sally Firestone
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Henry and Mary Beth
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Dr. and Mrs. Edward and
Kimbrough Higgins
Joan J. Horan Fund
The John Hunkeler Senior
Dancer Endowment Fund
ILCO Painting Corp.
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Jackson
Ms. Sandy Jennings
Gay Dannelly and
Richard Jensen Fund
Stratus Group/Courtney &
Peggy Jones
Muriel I. Kauffman
Endowment Fund
George Hodges
Langworthy, Jr., David
Evans Langworthy, and
George Hodges
Langworthy, Sr. Fund
Linda Lighton and
Lynn Adkins

Lockton Companies, Inc.
Colette and James Majerle
Mr. G. Dale Mathey
P. Alan McDermott
Siobhan McLaughlin Lesley
Rachel and Matt Merlo
Miller Family Fund in
memory of Alan McMillan
Dr. Linda E. Mitchell
Dr. Robert and Barbara
Clarke Nash Fund
OCS Builders/Mike
Nikolai, in honor of
Marisa Whiteman
George and Suzy Pagels
Carolyn and Bill Parkerson
Wendy and George Powell
Family Fund
Nan Ray
Retail Project Management
of NY, Inc.
Robert S. Fers, Inc.
Fred and Cindy Rock
Gigi and Gary Rose
Howard Rothwell and
Kathy Stepp Rothwell
Operations Fund
Rowe Family (Jack and
Paula Rowe)

G. Mark Sappington
Bill and Ginny Shackelford
III Fund
Derek and Linda Shoare
Christopher and
Lisa Sirridge
Gary A. and Kay M.
Smith Fund
Suzanne Shank and
Martin Smoler
Greg and Barbara Storm
Endowed Dancer Chair
The Estate of James
E. Taylor
The Thomas and Sally
Wood Family Foundation
The John and Angela
Walker Fund for
Live Music
Jennifer and Bryan
Wampler
Shirley Weaver Trust
Chris and DeEtte L.
Whiteman
Thomas F. and Loren
Whittaker
Patricia Martin and
Brian Woolley
Rebecca and Ken Zandarski



HER PASSION IS WOVEN INTO KANSAS CITY BALLET HISTORY

Wendy Powell grew up dancing. Her mother loved ballet and introduced Wendy to the art form as a very young child. She married her husband George Powell III and moved to Kansas City. Theirs was a marriage that was extremely complimentary. While Wendy's love of ballet is deeply seeded, George feels equally strong about symphonic music. The two not only married each other, but their strong passions for the arts as well.

Shortly after moving to KC, Wendy began taking ballet classes from Tatiana Dokoudovska, the founder of Kansas City Ballet (Civic Ballet of Kansas City as it was then known). And in 1975, Former Civic Ballet Board Chair Trula Hunt encouraged Wendy to join the Ballet's Board.

In 1978 as the Board Chair herself, Wendy was tasked with helping the civic company transition to a professional company. "I was on the board when we brought Todd Bolender to Kansas City to serve as Artistic Director," Wendy remembers.

Todd began by building up the company of dancers. He also would routinely invite famous guest artists or legendary former dancers to town to build excitement for ballet. "In the early 80s, as a protégé of George Balanchine, Todd was able to present his Firebird and Maria Tall Chief came in for the opening night and a dinner afterwards," Wendy recalls. "And the audience was in awe of her presence. She was amazing!"

Through it all, Wendy continued on the Board. "I also chaired the search committee for Todd's replacement: William Whitener," she says. "Bill was the perfect person at that time to follow Todd and to broaden our list of choreographers. He was very familiar with Balanchine, but he'd also worked with Jerome Robbins, Twyla

Tharp, Margot Sappington and other great contemporary choreographers."

Wendy was off of the Board before Devon Carney's arrival. As a member of the Emeritus Council, she appreciates the annual gatherings and updates from Devon and Jeff Bentley, Executive Director, about the ballet.

"When I think back to the Civic Ballet days and the freestanding, small building that had been converted into a dance studio on 61st and Troost, and then the Westport Allen Center morphing into the Bolender Center - I realize we have come such a long way," Wendy reminisces. "We went from the Lyric Theatre's small stage to the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts and it's night and day from where we were to where we are now."

"The Kansas City community has been very good to us and our family and we feel it's important to give back to it," Wendy says. "George and I are committed to ensuring Kansas City is a very livable city. George's grandfather, George Powell, Sr., was so grateful for the business success he had that he set the bar high for his family's philanthropic endeavors."

Wendy and George Powell III's passion for the ballet resonates from early experiences with contemporary choreographers, and they have established an Endowment Fund to ensure the Ballet can always support newly commissioned works as well as work from legendary choreographers like George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins.

For all of Wendy's time and hard work, and for the generosity of the Powell's, Kansas City Ballet is grateful. Their Legacy will forever be a part of its history.



THE TATIANA DOKOUDOVSKA LEGACY SOCIETY

Miss Tania dedicated her life and resources to create Kansas City Ballet. We honor those who wish to continue her vision by leaving their own legacy as a member of [The Tatiana Dokoudovska Legacy Society](#).

The following acknowledges those who have submitted a legacy intention to Kansas City Ballet.

Anonymous (2)	J. Scott Francis	Jack and Paula Rowe
Jeffrey J. Bentley	Dr. and Mrs. Michael Frost	G. Mark Sappington
Brand Family Fund	John and Mary Hunkeler	Estate of Shirley Weaver
Mike and Vicki Bray	Dr. Richard Jensen and Ms. Gay Dannelly	Angela and John Walker
Don and Pat Dagenais	Hazel Deana McClure	Thomas F. and Loren Whittaker
Ann Darke	P. Alan McDermott	Rebecca Zandarski
Estate of James E. Taylor	Estate of Marilyn Pierson Patterson	
Estate of Lothar P. Krause	Wendy and George Powell, III	
Dr. Fred D. Fowler		

SHIRLEY WEAVER - FOUNDATIONAL TO THE BALLET



Dancer and instructor Shirley Weaver. Kansas City Ballet honors Weaver as a member of the Legacy Society.

In 1967, Tatiana Dokoudovska brought Shirley Weaver into Kansas City Ballet. Tatiana had met Shirley (who is from Kansas City) in New York when they were both dancing at Radio City Music Hall Ballet. Weaver was a seasoned performer, having danced for many years with Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and other companies. Miss Shirley, as she was known to her students, became indispensable to Tatiana - performing with KCB, choreographing and working to build the ballet program at the UMKC Conservatory.

Miss Shirley spent decades teaching - nurturing and training her students. She was still teaching classes until just a few months before her death in 2014, and her students were still in awe of her grace and beauty.

Recently, Kansas City Ballet received a gift from her estate. To honor her, an endowed scholarship fund was established in her name. The Shirley Weaver Scholarship will continue to nurture and support ballet students for years to come.



FINANCIALS

**Kansas City Ballet
Operating Statement of Activities
for the year ending June 30, 2020**

**YTD
Actual**

Earned Income

Ticket Sales	\$3,311,507
School	\$906,529
KCB II	\$3,200
Summer School	\$482,865
Community Education & Engagement	\$36,794
Endowment	\$20,000
Rental, Other	\$115,817

Total Earned Income **\$4,876,712**

Contributed Income

Individual	\$579,282
Board	\$147,330
Corporate	\$254,374
Foundations	\$1,381,850
Government	\$148,812
Guild	\$300,000
Events/Misc. Contribution Income	\$82,147
In-kind Donations	\$55,777

Total Contributed Income **\$2,949,572**

Total Revenue **\$7,826,284**

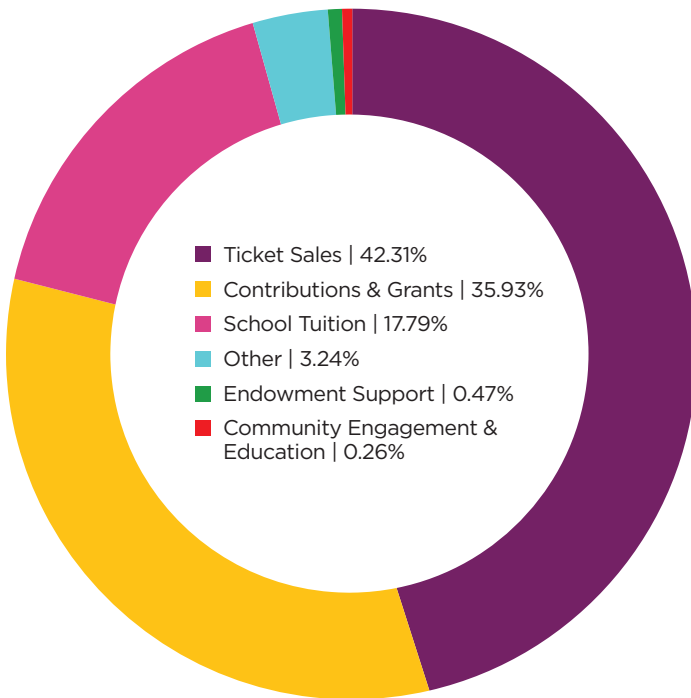
Expenses

Production	\$3,566,855
School (Academy, Studio)	\$1,189,593
KCB II	\$123,206
School (Summer Program)	\$283,858
Community Engagement & Education	\$178,474
Building Expenses	\$499,604
General and Administrative	\$961,317
Marketing	\$1,076,419
Box Office	\$123,919
Development	\$711,273

Total Expenses **\$8,714,518**

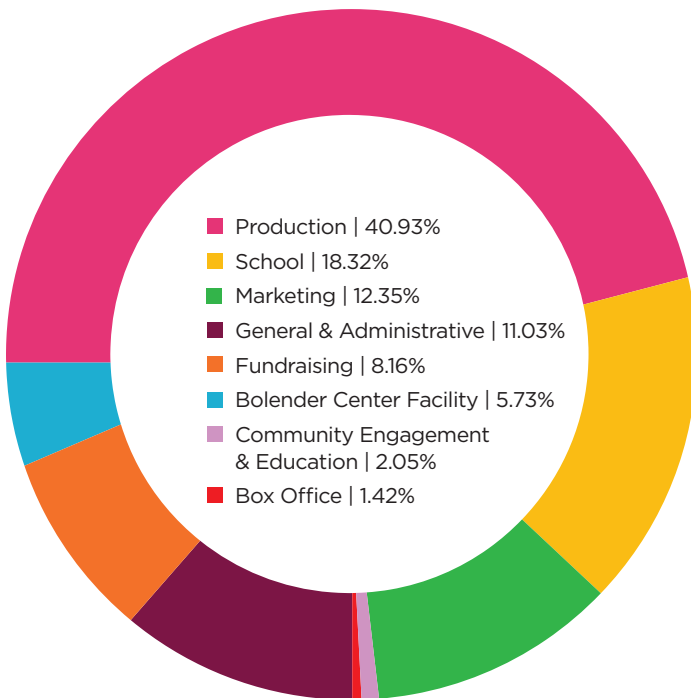
Revenues Under Expenses **(\$888,234)**

The 2019-2020 Season was abbreviated due to COVID-19 pandemic closures.



2019-2020 REVENUE

Ticket Sales	\$3,311,507
Contributions & Grants	\$2,811,648
School Tuition	\$1,392,594
Other	\$253,741
Community Engagement & Education	\$36,794
Endowment Support	\$20,000
Total Revenue	\$7,826,284



2019-2020 EXPENSES

Production	
School	\$3,566,855
Marketing	\$1,596,657
General & Administrative	\$1,076,419
Fundraising	\$961,317
Bolender Center Facility	\$711,273
Community Engagement & Education	\$499,604
Box Office	\$178,474
Total Expenses	\$8,714,518

2019-2020 KANSAS CITY BALLET STAFF

ARTISTIC

Devon Carney
Artistic Director

Kristi Capps
Ballet Master

Parrish Maynard
Ballet Master

Christopher Ruud
Second Company Manager
& Ballet Master

Ramona Pansegrau
Music Director & Conductor

ADMINISTRATIVE

Jeffrey J. Bentley
Executive Director

Kevin Amey
Chief Operations Officer

George Hans
Chief Financial Officer

Gregg Markowski
Director of Finance

Mary Allen
Office Manager/Executive
Assistant

Kenneth Madlock
Building Maintenance
Supervisor

Katie Pilgreen
Receptionist

DEVELOPMENT

Jennifer J.E. Wampler, MBA, CFRE
Chief Development Officer

Rebecca Zandarksi, CFRE, CSPG
Director of Gift Planning

Brent Kimmi
Director of Individual Giving

Karen Massman VanAsdale
Director of Corporate Relations

Julia C. Craig, MPA
Manager, Donor Relations
& Stewardship

Grace Lewis
Manager, Events &
Development

Rene Horne
Gift Processing Associate

Austin Kelly
Development Intern

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Karen Badgett
Associate Marketing Director

Andrea S. Wilson
Marketing Manager

Elizabeth Stehling
Digital Media Manager

Savanna Daniels
Graphic Design & Marketing
Coordinator

Ellen McDonald
Publicist

Mark Volk
Patron Services Manager

Kim Toigo
Patron Services Representative

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION

April Berry
Director of Community
Engagement & Education

Sean Duus
R.O.A.D. Coordinator

Madelein Arnzen
Community Education
Assistant

Teaching Artists
Mary Kay Cottrill
Sean Duus
Tina Ray
Olivia Shaw
Jenna Wurtzberger

Accompanists
Robert Beasley
Samuel Beckett
James Dennihan
Melissa Mathon
Alyssa Murray
Andrew Ouellette
Roger Wilder

PRODUCTION

Amy Taylor
Director of Production

Victoria Frank
Stage Manager

Jennifer Carroll
Costume Shop Supervisor

Elizabeth Wray
Assistant Stage Manager

Betti Jo Diem
Costume Assistant

IATSE Local #31, Stage Crew

IATSE Local #810, Wardrobe Attendants

SCHOOL

Grace M. Holmes
School Director

Kimberly Cowen
Principal & KCYB Director

Racheal Nye
Principal & YAGP Coordinator

Dmitry Trubchanov
*Men's Program Coordinator &
KCYB Associate Director*

Lynley Von Engeln
*Children's Division & School
Coordinator*

Edina von Hofman
School Administrative Manager

Jessica Bacus
Bolender Center Administrator

Erin Steeley
Johnson County Administrator

Nora Burkitt
*Administrative Assistant &
Adaptive Dance Coordinator*

Hope DeYoung-Daniels
Administrative Assistant

Tessa Rube
Administrative Assistant

Lindsay Shank
Administrative Assistant



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EIN #43-6052680

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KANSAS
CITY
BALLET

DEVON CARNEY
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



KCBALLET.ORG