



2026-2027 Pre-Professional, Junior Trainee, and Trainee Programs Welcome Packet



DEVON CARNEY – ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

OLIVER TILL – SCHOOL DIRECTOR

KIMBERLY COWEN – PRINCIPAL, BOLENDER CENTER

TARYN OUELLETTE – PRINCIPAL, SOUTH CAMPUS AT MEADOWLARK

JENNIFER WELCH CUDNIK – PRINCIPAL, PRE-PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM

DMITRY TRUBCHANOV – LEAD TEACHER



ABOUT THE ACADEMY

Kansas City Ballet School, the official school of the Kansas City Ballet, was founded in 1981 by Artistic Director Todd Bolender. Bolender appointed longtime associate Una Kai as ballet mistress, establishing a strong artistic foundation for the school. Soon after, Diana Adams—a former principal dancer with New York City Ballet and later its school director—came to Kansas City to lead the school, further shaping its early development and connection to the Balanchine tradition.

A major milestone came in 2011 when Kansas City Ballet established its permanent home at the Todd Bolender Center for Dance & Creativity. Located on the west edge of the Union Station campus in downtown Kansas City's vibrant Crossroads Arts District, the historic Powerhouse building was transformed from a former coal-fired power plant into a state-of-the-art, 60,000-square-foot dance facility. That same year, in October 2011, Kansas City Ballet made its debut as the resident dance company of the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, marking a new era of artistic growth and visibility.

Today, Kansas City Ballet School continues its legacy of excellence through comprehensive training programs that serve students of all ages and aspirations. Through the rigorous curriculum of the school, students are prepared to pursue professional careers with companies around the world, continue their education in collegiate dance programs, or apply the discipline and artistry of ballet to success in any field they choose.

PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM



Trainee

The Trainee program, a post-graduate element of Kansas City Ballet School in collaboration with Kansas City Ballet professional company and Kansas City Ballet Second Company, offers young aspiring dancers an opportunity to continue daily intensive ballet study while expanding knowledge of the professional stage environment. The Trainee Program aims to nurture and develop the technical skills and artistry of young aspiring post-secondary dancers. This will ultimately prepare them for a professional dance career by bridging the gap between student and company dancer.

Benefits

This program provides students with numerous benefits including on-site physical therapy provided by Performance Rehab, Pilates training, waived program registration fees, weekly classes with Kansas City Ballet company, and complimentary studio rentals and classes in the Academy's Open Division. The school will host educational seminars for Trainee and Pre-Professional students as part of their mandatory class schedule. Possible seminars include Dance History, Pedagogy, Anatomy, Injury Prevention, Music Class, Audition Tips, Careers in Dance, and more.

Trainee & Conservatory Partnership

Kansas City Ballet School proudly offers a Trainee and UMKC Conservatory - University of Missouri-Kansas City partnership, allowing students to earn academic credits while pursuing rigorous dance training. Many Kansas City Ballet Trainees began in the Daytime Program and advanced through the levels to become Trainees with Kansas City Ballet.

Schedule

The Trainee class schedule runs from Tuesday – Saturday from late August to early May. Trainee classes may include Ballet Technique, Pointe, Modern, Jazz/Fosse, Ballet History, PBT (Progressing Ballet Technique), Strength Training, Pas de Deux, and Improvisation. Trainees participate in some company classes.

Performance Opportunities

Trainees have multiple performance opportunities. Trainee students will be considered for all casting of corps roles in company productions throughout the season. They may also participate in Second Company productions as well as many additional educational and community outreach performances.

2026-2027 Start Date

The first day for students in our 2026-2027 Trainee program is August 10, 2026.

PRE-PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM



Junior Trainee

The Junior Trainee Program is designed for advanced dancers ready to bridge the gap between full-time training and pre-professional performance. This hybrid program combines the rigorous training of the Pre-Professional Daytime Program with performance opportunities from the Trainee Program.

Junior Trainees split their time between daytime classes that build technique, artistry, and versatility, and select company classes, rehearsals, and productions alongside Trainees. This structure strengthens technical

development while offering valuable insight into the professional ballet environment.

Typically for dancers ages 17 and up, the program supports dedicated students with strong potential, preparing them for advancement into a Trainee position and, ultimately, a professional dance career.

Benefits

This program provides students with numerous benefits including on-site physical therapy provided by Performance Rehab, Pilates training, weekly classes with Trainees, and complimentary studio rentals and classes in the Academy's Open Division. The school will host educational seminars for Junior Trainee and Pre-Professional students as part of their mandatory class schedule. Possible seminars include Dance History, Pedagogy, Anatomy, Injury Prevention, Music Class, Audition Tips, Careers in Dance, and more.

Schedule

The Junior Trainee class schedule typically runs from Monday through Friday from August 10th to early May. When involved in company or second company productions weekly schedules may run Tuesday through Saturday/Sunday. Otherwise, the regular schedule is Monday through Friday from 9:15am to 3:00pm. Students spend two days a week with Trainees for class and rehearsals, then three days a week embedded with Daytime III. Classes may include Ballet Technique, Pointe, Modern, Flamenco, Strength Training, PBT (Progressing Ballet Technique), Pas de Deux, Variations, and Repertoire.

Uniforms

Junior Trainee's wear the required uniforms as Pre-Professional 3 students. Required uniform details are on the [Pre-Professional Program website](#). Uniforms are required to be worn at all times outside of specific and communicated events. Navigate to the [Élevé School Uniforms](#) section (<https://elevedancewear.com/>) scroll to the bottom under Learn More – Uniforms. Click the dropdown to Select Your School – Kansas City Ballet. Enter password: **KCB2526**

Performance Opportunities

Junior Trainees have multiple performance opportunities. They will be considered for casting in student and corps roles in company productions. They may also participate in Second Company productions, the Pre-Professional Daytime Program Choreographic Workshop, Partnership performances as well as the School Performance.

2026-2027 Start Date

The first day for students in our 2026-2027 Junior Trainee program is August 10th, 2026.



Pre-Professional Program

Designed for aspiring dancers ages 13 and older, the Pre-Professional Division Program offers an immersive training experience for those preparing for the demands of a future career in ballet and dance. This program is ideal for highly motivated students seeking to elevate their technical proficiency, artistic expression, and overall versatility.

Benefits

The School will host educational seminars for Trainee and Pre-Professional students as part of their mandatory class schedule. Possible seminars include Dance History, Pedagogy, Anatomy, Injury Prevention, Music Class, Resume & Cover Letters, Audition Tips, Careers in Dance, and more. Students have access to physical therapy and company observations.

Choreographic Program: Students are encouraged to explore creativity by creating original work or performing in works choreographed by fellow classmates, culminating in a performance for families.

Student Forum: Representatives from each level meet regularly with school leadership to share ideas, voice concerns, and provide feedback that strengthens the student experience.

Artistic Staff Observation: Students are frequently observed by Kansas City Ballet Artistic Staff. Pre-Professional dancers 17 and older may be considered for the prestigious Kansas City Ballet Trainee Program.

Schedule

Students train five days per week, totaling approximately 23 hours of in-studio instruction. Daily classes in ballet and pointe (or men's technique class) form the core of the curriculum, supported by a rotating schedule of additional disciplines including women's and men's variations, pas de deux, Character or Flamenco, Progressing Ballet Technique, Pilates, yoga, women's and men's strength training, modern, contemporary, or jazz, and coaching.

Placement

Pre-Professional level placement will be determined at the start of the school year, and registration will be subject to availability. Leveling is based on a student's development and age and designed to provide a challenge to the student to set them up for success.

Uniforms

Required uniform details are on the [Pre-Professional Program website](#). Male-identifying student may purchase all required items to be prepared for the start of the year. Female-identifying student may pre-purchase all items EXCEPT the required leotard. Once placement is official during the first week of class, students will receive the link to our partner, Eleve Dancewear to purchase the correct leotard.

Performance Opportunities

Students can be selected through an audition process to perform with the main company in productions such as *Swan Lake*, *Don Quixote*, and *The Nutcracker*. All students will participate in the end of the year School Performance in May. Students may be invited to perform at community events. Students in select levels may represent KCBS at competitions such as Youth America Grand Prix and Universal Ballet Competition. Participation requires a significant commitment of time, preparation, and additional rehearsals beyond the regular class schedule.



2026-2027 Start Date

The first day for students in our 2026-2027 Pre-Professional Program is September 8, 2026. Pre-Professional uniforms are purchased through our partner, Eleve Dancewear and level specific requirements will be shared before the school year starts.

Students interested in registering for the Pre-Professional Program are strongly encouraged to attend the Summer Intensive.

REGISTRATION

Please note that acceptance into a program does not guarantee your place in that program until you complete registration. All accepted students register on a first-come, first-served basis until the limited number of spots have been filled. We encourage interested students to register as soon as possible.

Registration Dates

Please note—these are the dates registration begin. Registration remains open until programs have filled.

- Trainee Programs Registration: Registration and deposit due by July 31
- Junior Trainee & Pre-Professional Daytime Programs Registration: April 1 at 9:00 AM CT



Registration Fee

All students must pay a registration fee at the time of registration. This fee covers registration/admin processes, production and performance costs. Please see the payment charts below for each program's registration fee.

Waitlist

If a student is placed on a program waitlist, a School staff member will contact you if a spot becomes available. Placement on the waitlist does not guarantee acceptance.

Tuition & Refund Policy

Note that all payments, including the registration fee, are non-refundable. Registrants are liable for the full tuition amount indicated on any Kansas City Ballet School materials, including any fees, even in the event of the student's withdrawal or dismissal from the program before it has begun or is complete. KCBS does not offer any refunds, credits, or transfers for missed or canceled classes, injury/illness, dismissal, or withdrawal from programming.

Registration Instructions - All Programs

Students must enroll by submitting a [Pre-Pro Daytime Registration Form](#), or the [Junior Trainee/Trainee Registration Form](#) then paying the required fees through our student software, Mindbody Online. **Step-by-Step Registration Instructions can be [found here](#).** We recommend creating your Mindbody account prior to registration day and using the direct link in the instructions to finalize registration.

Payment Information

Payments may only be made by credit/debit card. A credit/debit card is required to be kept on file in your Mindbody account for auto-draft purposes. Three options for payment are available at the time of registration: pay in full, a 2-installment (semesterly) payment plan, or an 8-installment payment plan. A registration fee is due at the time of registration for all payment options. Staff will set up the payment plan selected in your registration form.



*Students may request a 10-installment plan that would go from July-April. Please email request to school@kcballet.org.

Payment Plan Details: For each of our payment plan options, a 10% down non-refundable payment plus the registration fee is due upon registration. Remaining installments will be drafted from the card on file in your account on the 5th of each month that payment is due.

Monthly-Installment Payment Plan: This plan divides the total annual tuition into eight equal payments from September through April. Installments are not monthly tuition rates. The full year tuition is calculated in advance, with school breaks and holidays already included, so the installment amounts remain consistent throughout the year. Families who choose this plan are responsible for the full academic year tuition.

Please see the charts below for each program's details.

Payment Plan: Trainee	Total Tuition Cost	Due at Registration	Due July 31	Due Sept 5	Due Jan 5
Pay In Full	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2-Installment Plan	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Payment Plan: Trainee	Total Tuition Cost	Due at Registration	Due July 31	Due Sep-Apr	
8-Installment Plan	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$375.00	

Payment Plan: Junior Trainee	Total Tuition Cost (Includes Reg Fee)	Due at Registration (Includes Reg Fee)	Due Sep 5	Due Jan 5
Pay In Full	\$7,000.00	\$880.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2-Installment Plan	\$7,000.00	\$880.00	\$3,060.00	\$3,060.00
Payment Plan: Junior Trainee	Total Tuition Cost (Includes Reg Fee)	Due at Registration (Includes Reg Fee)	Due Sep-Apr	
8-Installment Plan	\$7,000.00	\$800.00	\$765.00	

Payment Plan: Pre-Professional Daytime Program	Total Tuition Cost (Includes Reg Fee)	Due at Registration (Includes Reg Fee)	Due Sep 5	Due Jan 5
Pay In Full	\$6,195.00	\$799.50	\$5,395.50	\$0.00
2-Installment Plan	\$6,195.00	\$799.50	\$2,697.75	\$2,697.75
Payment Plan: Pre-Professional Program	Total Tuition Cost (Includes Reg Fee)	Due at Registration (Includes Reg Fee)	Due Sep-Apr	
8-Installment Plan	\$6,195.00	\$799.50	\$674.44	

**All students will pay the same fee at registration, regardless of scholarship or financial aid. Scholarship and financial aid amounts will be included in the subsequent payments.*

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

Scholarships

Kansas City Ballet School provides a limited number of merit-based scholarships. These scholarships cannot be applied to. If a student received a scholarship award, these details are listed in your acceptance letter. If a student was awarded financial aid, they are not eligible for a scholarship.

Financial Aid

Kansas City Ballet School provides a limited amount of financial aid. Students and Families may apply for aid by submitting a [Financial Aid Application](#). If a student was awarded a scholarship, they are not eligible to apply for financial aid. The application takes 30-45 minutes to complete. Applications are due by **March 29, 2026**. Any application submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

**Junior Trainees and Trainees are not eligible for financial aid.*

LIVING IN KANSAS CITY

Housing & Academics

Although Kansas City is a relatively affordable metropolitan area, housing and other living expenses will vary depending on each dancer's lifestyle. All housing and academic arrangements are the responsibility of the families.

UMKC - In partnership with University of Missouri-Kansas City, students may choose to live in a double room within a four-person suite for students ages 16 and up. This option provides a traditional residential campus experience as KCBS students live on the same floor as university students. Students will have access to campus and housing amenities and a flexible meal plan. The housing is on a first-come, first-served basis for dancers that identify as female or are in the female track. The application process will go through UMKC. See website for [UMKC Rates](#).

Courtney's Cottage is a home with a rent by the room environment. Each room has an ensuite bathroom for privacy as well as opportunities for community in a shared living area, kitchen, and laundry. Rooms are furnished with a full bed with bedding, mini fridge, dresser, lamp and television. Residents can enjoy an inviting front porch as well as a spacious back deck. Each room has its own programmable locking system, and the house is equipped with a security alarm system. Off street and street parking are available. These rooms are primarily rented to medical students and travelling medical professionals. Former KCBS students, trainees, and company dancers have been housed here.

Rent is \$950 per month and includes all utilities – heating, air, electricity, water, trash and Wi-Fi. There is no age restriction, but please be aware this is a private room with no on-site supervision. Contact Courtney for more information at 513.720.9919 or Courtney.deister@gmail.com.

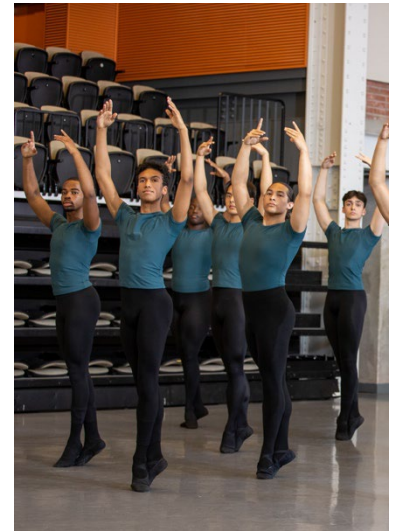
Apartments - Students may also choose to secure their own housing in offsite apartments located along the KC Streetcar route. This option allows for independent apartment living, convenient transportation access to Kansas City Ballet, and flexibility in selecting roommates and amenities.

Visit the [UMKC Off-Campus Housing Marketplace](#) for a convenient map or search [apartments near KCBS](#)

Health Resources

KC Ballet School has connections to local area doctors, hospitals, and mental health counseling facilities in the Kansas City area. A list of these resources will be provided in students' Orientation Packets. Additionally, Kansas City Ballet has a partnership with Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City for resources.

PHYSICAL THERAPY





On-Site Physical Therapy

Physical therapy consultations will be provided once a week at Bolender Center by Performance Rehab physical therapists (PTs) who specialize in treating performing artists.

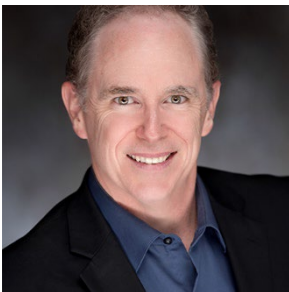
Dancers may schedule an appointment to consult a physical therapist about injury prevention or for a screen of an injury that the dancer has sustained. Following the screening of the injury, the physical therapist can make recommendations to the dancer about how to best manage their injury. Such recommendations may include simple first aid interventions, possible PT or the need for further medical evaluation.

ALUMNI

Students have acquired positions with other world renowned professional dance companies including American Ballet Theater, New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, Tulsa Ballet, State Street Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Atlanta Ballet, Oklahoma City Ballet, Texas Ballet Theatre, BalletMet, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Alabama Ballet, Ballet West, Ballet Nebraska, Ballet Austin, Grand Rapids Ballet, Nashville Ballet, New Jersey Ballet, Orlando Ballet, Sacramento Ballet, Colorado Ballet, Louisville Ballet, Saint Louis Ballet, Nevada Ballet Theatre, Ballet Des Moines, Indianapolis Ballet, Carolina Ballet and Sarasota Ballet.



Artistic Team



Devon Carney

Artistic Director

Devon Carney joined Kansas City Ballet as Artistic Director in 2013 after 10 years with Cincinnati Ballet as Associate Artistic Director. His early training was with Harvey Hysell of New Orleans. He was a Principal dancer with Boston Ballet 12 of 20 years. He has performed many leading roles by choreographers such as Mark Morris and Maurice Bejart. In addition, he performed a diverse Balanchine repertoire and toured the world extensively with greats such as Rudolf Nureyev. With Boston Ballet, he was also a ballet master and director of their Summer Dance Program. Mr. Carney's teaching credits include Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, San Francisco Ballet students and many others. He has choreographed for Boston Ballet, Ballet Met, Cincinnati

Ballet, Cincinnati Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Grand Rapids Ballet, Ballet Hawaii and Kansas City Ballet. He is an ongoing judge for the premier dance competition Youth America Grand Prix. With Cincinnati Ballet, he created over 20 original works including *World Citizen* in March of 2009 with a review stating, "Carney's work is not only well crafted but moody and intense with a palpable sense of loneliness. His work grows more confident and more skillful with every piece he creates" (David Lyman, *Cincinnati Enquirer*). Additionally, he created *Dracula* and his versions of the classics of *Giselle*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake* for Cincinnati Ballet. Devon Carney was appointed Artistic Director of Kansas City Ballet starting with the 2013–2014 season. Upon arrival, he created his first work for the company, titled *Opus I*. Additionally, in 2014, he choreographed for Lyric Opera of Kansas City's productions of *Die Fledermaus* and *La Traviata*. In 2015, Kansas City Ballet presented his critically-acclaimed version of *Giselle*. Also in 2015, Kansas City Ballet debuted his newly-choreographed rendition of the timeless classic, *The Nutcracker*, with stellar reviews including: "The rebuilt and re-imagined "Nutcracker" ... is, among other things, a visually mesmerizing spectacle that will fill viewers' heads with indelible images." (Robert Trussell, *The Kansas City Star*). This success was immediately followed in 2016 with his staging of the world-renowned classical masterpiece, *Swan Lake*. One review stated: "In Kansas City Ballet's first-ever presentation of "Swan Lake," artistic director Devon Carney's relentless enthusiasm and vision seems to have



finally manifested—the performance Friday indicated a company capable of anything.” (Libby Hansen, *The Kansas City Star*). In 2017, audiences enjoyed for the first time his [The Sleeping Beauty](#) and his world premiere choreography of [Romeo & Juliet](#). The 2017-2018 season closed with Carney’s world premiere choreography of [Peter Pan](#). In 2023 he created his full-length production of [Cinderella](#). Additionally, his *The Nutcracker* has been performed at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 2017 and 2022.

Christopher Ruud

Second Company Manager & Rehearsal Director

Growing up backstage at the San Francisco Ballet, Ruud was immersed in the art of professional dance, performance and stagecraft from the start. Receiving the majority of his dance training at San Francisco Ballet School, Ruud was hired into Ballet West in 1998. Quickly moving through the ranks, he was named Principal Dancer in 2004. He spent 21 years as a leading artist for Ballet West performing a huge range of classical and contemporary repertoire. Ruud is grateful to have performed all over the United States, and internationally most notably in China, Cuba, Scotland, Canada, New York and at the Kennedy Center. In his time with the company, he danced major roles in the great works of Balanchine, Kylián, Tharp, Forsythe, Ashton, Tudor and Cranko to name a few. He has been personally coached by some of the great names in the ballet world such as Sir Anthony Dowell, Cynthia Gregory, Hans Van Mannen, Bruce Marks, and Anna-Marie Holmes. Ruud has seen success as a choreographer having his ballets performed in the Ballet West Innovations program and at their annual gala performance garnering such awards as a New York Choreographic Institute Fellowship as well as several NEA grants. Ruud directed his own small company RUDDANCES, which was a regular attraction at the annual Utah Arts Festival, and has toured to Jacobs Pillow. Retiring from being a professional dancer in 2019, Ruud joined the artistic team at Kansas City Ballet that same year. Since taking the position of KCB Second Company Manager and Rehearsal Director for the company he has created and ballet-mastered many new and existing works such as George Balanchine’s *Rubies*, Lila York’s *Celts*, and Alexander Ekman’s *Cacti*, while also spending time in the Kansas City community educating children and adults about ballet and live performance.

Kristi Capps

Rehearsal Director

Kristi Capps accepted the position of rehearsal director for the 2014-2015 season after serving as a rehearsal director in residence for the 2013-2014 season during the company’s production of *Dracula* as well as a répétiteur for its spring production of *Cinderella*. Capps began her professional career with the Atlanta Ballet and then joined Cincinnati Ballet. Rising quickly through the ranks to principal, Capps delighted audiences in leading roles in many major classical and contemporary ballets both within the company and abroad as a guest artist. With Kansas City Ballet, Capps has been given the opportunity to be the répétiteur for many of the company’s productions, including Devon Carney’s *Sleeping Beauty* for Ballet Hawaii, Cincinnati Ballet and Grand Rapids Ballet, Victoria Morgan’s *Cinderella*, Edwaard Liang’s *Wunderland* and Helen Pickett’s *Petal*. Additionally, she has staged Septime Webre’s *The Wizard of Oz* for Kansas City Ballet, Colorado Ballet, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Nevada Ballet, and most recently Hong Kong Ballet.

Parrish Maynard

Rehearsal Director

Parrish Maynard danced with American Ballet Theatre, where he was invited to join by Mikhail Baryshnikov. He rose through the ranks to become a Principal Dancer before joining San Francisco Ballet. In addition to being a recipient of the Princess Grace Award and the Presidential Scholar Award, he was a silver medalist in the International Ballet Competition. Maynard has performed in Dance in America’s American Ballet Theatre Now, danced Nacho Duato’s *Romanzo*, and danced in Lar Lubovich’s *Othello* at San Francisco Ballet in the role of Iago which was created on him. In 2005, Maynard joined the faculty of San Francisco Ballet School. In his 10 years at San Francisco Ballet, Maynard choreographed more than 20 ballets for the San Francisco Ballet School, some of which have been danced by companies around the world including American Ballet Theatre Studio Company, Royal Ballet School, and Royal New Zealand Ballet. Maynard is well versed in the classical full-length repertoire as well as neoclassical works such as Lar Lubovich’s *Othello*, Val Caniparoli’s *Lady of the Camellias*, John Neumeier’s *The Little Mermaid*, and Val Caniparoli’s *Jekyll & Hyde*. Throughout his career, Maynard has worked with many of the leading choreographers of our time, including George Balanchine, Jorma Elo,

William Forsythe, Nacho Duato, Jiří Kylián, Hans van Manen, Yuri Possokhov, Wayne McGregor, Mark Morris, Alexei Ratmansky, Twyla Tharp, Helgi Tómasson, Paul Taylor, Antony Tudor, and Liam Scarlett. Maynard specializes in male classical technique and coaching and currently serves as Rehearsal Director for Kansas City Ballet under Artistic Director Devon Carney.

Oliver Till

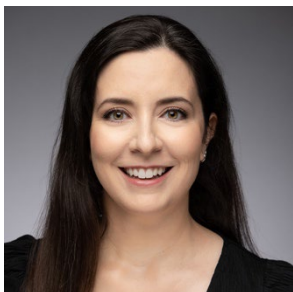
School Director

Oliver Till trained at The Royal Ballet School and danced as a Soloist with Birmingham Royal Ballet under Sir David Bintley's directorship. Through his career, he performed diverse roles from repertoires by renowned choreographers such as Peter Wright, David Bintley, Jessica Lang, Stanton Welch, Kenneth MacMillan, Michael Corder, Frederick Ashton, and Ninette de Valois. His performances took him on tours across the UK, Europe, USA, Japan, and China. Parallel to his ballet career, Till pursued a BA in Business with Environment and gained valuable experience interning at an investment bank in New York City. He later founded a video and distance coaching platform based in the US and gained his ABT-NTC Pre-Primary to Level 7 and Partnering certification. Till then transitioned to the role of ballet teacher at the Swedish National Ballet School, where he led the implementation of the ABT National Training Curriculum. As Mentor Team Leader for students aged 8 to 11, he focused on student wellbeing and transition to vocational training as well as supporting fellow teachers in their roles. As manager of the school's outreach programs, he developed support for young dancers and the school's teachers. Returning to the US, Oliver joined the Joffrey Ballet as Head of Children's, Adult, and Adaptive Programs. There, he focused on curriculum development, program structure, and creating performance opportunities, aiming to enhance the student experience and support teacher development. Operationally he has driven efforts to streamline processes and effectively communicate to new and existing audiences. Till believes in making dance accessible to everyone, regardless of age or ability, ensuring high-quality support and expertise are available to all. In the pre-professional sphere, he champions a holistic approach to nurturing young students, integrating mental and physical methods to support their development. Till's commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and excellence defines his vision for the future of dance education.

Kimberly Cowen

Principal

Kimberly Cowen, a native of St. Louis, Missouri, received most of her ballet training from Nathalie LeVine. She also has studied at St. Louis Ballet under Ludmila Dokoudovsky and Antoni Zalewski, at Pacific Northwest Ballet with Fleming Halby and Nina Danilova and at The Joffrey Ballet with Francesca Corkle and Winthrop Corey. She studied at the Kansas City Ballet School with Todd Bolender, Una Kai, and Lisa Dillinger before joining the Kansas City Ballet in 1991, where she danced for 20 years. Cowen has danced as Swanilda in *Coppélia*, Odette in *Swan Lake*, Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty*, the title role in *Giselle*, *Carmen* and *Romeo & Juliet*. She has had the pleasure of dancing a wide variety of styles by famous choreographers such as George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, Anthony Tudor, Todd Bolender, David Parsons, Paul Taylor, Merce Cunningham, Twyla Tharp, Vincente Nebrada, Nacho Duato, Margo Sappington, Trey McIntyre, Jessica Lang, Val Caniparoli, Mary Wigman and William Whitener. Cowen began teaching at the Somerset Ballet in 1998 and joined the Kansas City Ballet School staff in 2002. Cowen is responsible for the students of the Upper School and is the director of the Kansas City Youth Ballet. She is dedicated to teaching the next generation of dancers and passing on all she has learned in her time as a student and a professional.



Taryn Ouellette

Principal, South Campus at Meadowbrook

Taryn Ouellette is a graduate of New York University, holding a Master of Arts degree in Dance Education with a focus in Ballet Pedagogy, studying under Franco DeVita, Raymond Lukens, and Harriet Clark. She has been a ballet educator for nearly two decades, also working as a choreographer and coach for pre-professional ballet students. Ms. Ouellette received her early ballet training in Iowa City, IA, and continued her training at Kansas City Ballet School, as well as at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance. She had the privilege to train extensively in New York, at Steps on Broadway and at Peridance Center, with teachers such as Nancy Bielski and Elena Kunikova, while pursuing opportunities as a freelance performing artist living in NYC. Ouellette has enjoyed having the opportunity to work

with multiple Midwest-region dance companies as a dancer, teacher for company class, and choreographer. She is an American Ballet Theatre certified teacher, having successfully completed the ABT teacher training intensives in Pre-Primary through Level 7 and Partnering of the ABT National Training Curriculum, and has had the privilege of working as a proctor for ABT NTC certification exams. Additionally, she has attended the Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet's Teachers Workshop, studying the CPYB teaching syllabus and methodologies developed by Marcia Dale Weary. Ouellette is a fully certified Pilates instructor, with training through both Stott Pilates and the Kane School. She received her Pilates training and certifications in New York, furthering her studies by attending the Functional Anatomy for Movement and Injuries (FAMI) workshop at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. She has also completed the Level 1 Progressing Ballet Technique teacher certification. As an educator, she is passionate about sharing and developing progressive, holistic ballet pedagogy, rooted in the foundations of classical ballet, prioritizing inclusivity and excellence. Ouellette is happy to be able to combine her experience as a ballet educator and arts administrator in her role as a Principal at Kansas City Ballet School.



Jennifer Welch Cudnik

Principal, Pre-Professional Program

Originally from St. Louis, Welch Cudnik studied with Berkeley Evans, Nathalie LeVine and Alexandra Zaharias in St. Louis and Todd Bolender and Una Kai at the State Ballet of Missouri (now Kansas City Ballet). At age 15, she moved to NYC to study on full scholarship at the School of American Ballet; training under master teachers Stanley Williams, Hélène Dudin, Elise Reiman, Antonina Tumkovsky, Suki Schorer, Kay Mazzo and Suzy Pilarre, among others. While there she performed Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*, *Rubies*, *La Source* and *Concerto Barocco*, Bournonville's *Napoli* and originated roles in new works by Christopher Wheeldon and Damian Woetzel. She also trained with Pacific Northwest Ballet School, Wilhelm Burmann,

David Howard and Nancy Bielski. Welch Cudnik danced professionally with Pennsylvania Ballet and Saint Louis Ballet for a decade. She had the honor of performing multiple roles in works by George Balanchine such as the Waltz Girl and Russian in *Serenade*, principal in *Allegro Brillante*, principal in *Divertimento No. 15*, principal in *Valse Fantaisie*, *Who Cares?*, and Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*, as well as roles in classical ballets such as *Cinderella*, *Coppelia*, *Swan Lake*, Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty*, and the title role of *Giselle*. A dance educator for twenty-five years, Welch Cudnik was most recently the Principal of the Sarasota Ballet School. She has been an adjunct professor at Webster University, on faculty at the Center of Creative Arts (COCA) and Saint Louis Ballet and has taught in public schools and community centers. Welch Cudnik directed and co-founded the nonprofit, Ballet Initiative, which presented summer intensives and free performances in collaboration with the Saint Louis Symphony and the Missouri History Museum. Welch Cudnik is a commissioned choreographer, a career consultant for dancers, an adjudicator for dance and choreography competitions, and a curator for dance festivals and productions. She is certified in the American Ballet Theatre® National Training Curriculum and holds an MFA in Dance from Hollins University. As an educator who teaches future generations of dance advocates, Welch Cudnik cultivates with compassion and empathy, ensuring technique and artistry are instilled and achieved with pride and prowess. Her entire teaching career and MFA education is focused on equity, diversity and inclusivity being of paramount importance.



Dmitry Trubchanov

Men's Program Coordinator

Dmitry is native to Russia and studied ballet at the Vaganova Academy of Russian Ballet in Saint Petersburg. Upon his graduation, Trubchanov joined the Mariinsky Theater (formerly known as Kirov ballet) as a company member. While with the company, he danced soloist roles in many classical ballets and was invited as a guest performer with the Universal Ballet in Seoul, South Korea. In his four years with Mariinsky Theater Dmitry traveled extensively throughout the world. In the late 1990s Trubchanov moved to the United States and joined Cincinnati Ballet. For the next ten years Trubchanov danced as a principal dancer with the company, dancing a vast variety of classical and contemporary ballets by

renowned choreographers. He was also featured in documentary "Do Not Go Gently" and in a recreation of "La Sonnambula" for George Balanchine archives. In both cases he closely worked with the legendary Frederick Franklin, C.B.E., who was a premier dancer with Ballets Russes. Trubchanov and Mr. Franklin, C.B.E. worked together on recreating many forgotten ballets by Leonide Massine. After Cincinnati Ballet, Trubchanov moved to Denver and danced with Colorado Ballet as a principal dancer until his retirement in 2015. Throughout his dance career, Trubchanov danced as a guest artist with numerous ballet companies in the U.S. and abroad. He has been invited to perform at several ballet festivals including Vail International Ballet Festival, Miami International Ballet Festival dedicated to Vladimir Vasiliev and Ekaterina Maximova, and Fukuoka Ballet Gala Festival in Fukuoka, Japan. After Trubchanov's



retirement, he moved to Kansas City, Missouri and joined the faculty of Kansas City Ballet School. Trubchanov also served as a ballet master in-residence for the Kansas City Ballet Company. Currently Trubchanov holds the position of Men's Program Coordinator with Kansas City Ballet School and Associate Director of Kansas City Youth Ballet.



Kansas City Ballet Mission and History

Kansas City Ballet is a 30+ member professional ballet company under the direction of Artistic Director Devon Carney and Executive Director David Gray and is a resident company at the world-class Kauffman Center for Performing Arts.

Our professional company, the second company (comprised of KCB II and Trainees), professional dance school, and partnership programs, seek to nurture and develop our artists, audiences, and students in the values inherent in the creativity, diversity, and joy of dance.

Kansas City Ballet reaches more than 20,000 students and adults each year through our many community partnerships and education programs for all ages. The Kansas City Ballet School offers professional dance training for the career-minded student as well as for those simply seeking a healthy lifestyle to over 2,000 students each year in two locations: the Todd Bolender Center for Dance & Creativity in downtown and our South Campus at Meadowbrook in Prairie Village, KS.

Mission

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

Vision

Outstanding Dance Experiences Accessible to All

History of Kansas City Ballet

Kansas City Ballet was founded in 1957 by Tatiana Dokoudovska with the goal of establishing a regular presence for ballet in the city. For 20 years she nurtured the company before her retirement. In 1980, Todd Bolender—a former New York City Ballet dancer and international opera and ballet choreographer was chosen to lead. In 1995 with Bolender's appointment to artistic director emeritus, William Whitener was appointed artistic director. He served until 2013 creating versatile programs filled with contemporary work and traditional company hallmarks.

On July 1, 2013, Devon Carney became Kansas City Ballet Artistic Director and brought with him to Kansas City a renewed excitement about the future of dance in the nation. In his first year, he created KCB II that performs at a variety of venues throughout the region on a smaller scale to make dance more accessible. The following year, Mr. Carney created the Trainee Program to complete the bridge from school to company. Both KCB II and the Trainees combine to make up the Second Company. Mr. Carney is dedicated to bringing a balanced repertoire to the Kansas City Ballet community by presenting authentic interpretations of the great classics of the dance world, as well as time-honored 20th-century creations and brand-new world premieres from today's leading choreographers.

In addition to the professional company, Kansas City Ballet also has a School and a Partnerships function dedicated to enriching all ages in the community with programs revolving around dance. Both have grown in their dedication and size and programs to fit the needs of the Kansas City community.