

# GONZAGA DANCE 2025-2026



## GONZAGA DANCE FACULTY & STAFF

**Cynthia Gutierrez, MFA**  
Dance Department Chair  
Assistant Professor

**Jessica Bertram-Williams, MFA**  
Assistant Professor

**Pamela Erickson**  
Lecturer, Summer Dance  
Intensive Director

**Karla Parbon, MA**  
Adjunct Dance Faculty

**Sarah Glesk**  
Adjunct Dance Faculty

**CarliAnn Bruner, MFA**  
Adjunct Dance Faculty

**Suzanne Ostersmith, MFA**  
Adjunct Dance Faculty  
Founding Chair

**Sydney Zinnecker**  
Program Coordinator

**Maria Sorce, MBA**  
Production Manager

**Melissa Keymer**  
Program Assistant

**Clara Buck, MA**  
Marketing/PR Assistant

## Letter from the Chair

Hello Gonzaga Dance supporters! As I step into my new role as Dance Program Chair, I am so excited to welcome you to the 2025-2026 academic year. This spring brought the close of a thrilling year here at Gonzaga Dance, as well as the end of an era, as our beloved Suzanne Ostersmith took her final bow and chasséd into retirement. But don't worry, read ahead to see how Suzanne will remain connected to this incredible program she has built!

The past year brought exciting visits by nationally acclaimed professional dance companies, participation in the American College Dance Association Northwest Regional Conference, a successful new Assistant Professor of Dance hire, and local recruitment touring by our student rep company. And of course, the grand highlight was celebrating the first 25 years of Gonzaga Dance. We are poised for exciting change as we grow our faculty and enhance our strong programming and curriculum.

*Vision, Collaboration, Excellence, Community.* These are just some of the words that come to mind when thinking about the next 25 years. It is an honor to take the helm of this celebrated department and to dream about the future alongside my incredible colleagues. Thank you for your continued support of Gonzaga Dance and we look forward to sharing all of the exciting events our upcoming season has to offer

- Cynthia



# Year In Review

The 2024-2025 year was an exciting celebration of 25 Year of Gonzaga Dance! We brought in professionals for residencies, took works to ACDA, put on two ZagDance and Student Choreography Showcases, welcomed a new faculty member to the team, and hosted our first Dance Alumni Weekend.

Photo by Clara Buck



## ISHITA MILI & IMGE DANCE

We kicked off the year by presenting Ishita Mili and her company IMGE Dance. She set a work on our students, who got to perform alongside her in our Season Opener. Students got to learn from her dance style of hip-hop, contemporary, and Bharatanatyam fusion.



## MUSICAL THEATRE DANCE REVUE

In January, students presented choreography set to songs from their favorite musicals. This show was headed up by student leaders Stella Hunsperger ('25) and Camille Sepulveda ('25) under the advisory of Joseph Lyons-Wolf.

Photo by Zack Berlat



## ODC & RECRUITMENT TOUR

Professional San Francisco Dance Company, ODC, set an original work on a student company directed by Sarah Glesk. The students performed alongside the company, and then toured their performance to local studios, concluding with a performance at Ballet Alliance.



## NEWLY BIENNIAL: STUDENT CHOREOGRAPHY AND ZAGDANCE

This year we offered both Choreography and Strategies in both Fall and Spring semesters! This means we got to hold two ZagDance Showcases and two Student Choreography Showcases, giving our student choreographers and ZagDance kids more production opportunities.



Photos by Scott Martinez



Photo by Melissa Allen

## ACDA 2025

In March, Cynthia and CarliAnn took students to the Northwest ACDA Conference in Modesto, California. They brought works choreographed by CarliAnn and senior Camille Sepulveda to be adjudicated.

## SPRING DANCE CONCERT I

Spring Dance Concert was a success with performances of Contemporary/Modern, Ballet, Pop Culture, Tap, Jazz, and CarliAnn's ACDA piece.

Photo by Melissa Allen



# Celebrating 25 Years!

This year officially marked 25 years of Gonzaga Dance! To celebrate, we looked back at some of our accomplishments...



To celebrate, we made videos detailing the development of dance over the last 25 years, which you can now view at the QR code!

Along with the last 25 years, we also got to celebrate the retirement of our Founding Chair, Suzanne, the rise of our new faculty Cynthia to the Chair position, and the hire of another new tenure-track faculty, Jessica!

Beyond that, we honored our 13 Dance Majors and Minors that graduated in May, had a student dancer, Talia Frausto, featured in Gonzaga's new commercial, co-presented 3 different professional dance companies with the Myrtle Woldsen PAC, and received acknowledgment from the university as Suzanne was awarded the President's Award of Distinction at commencement.

We've had so many things to celebrate this last year, but stay tuned, because there will be even more to come!

## SPRING DANCE CONCERT 2025

Photos by Melissa Allen



*A Crossing Place*

Choreographed by CarliAnn Forthun Bruner



*Swan Lake*

Staged by Pam Erickson



*Essence of Four*

Choreographed by Karla Parbon



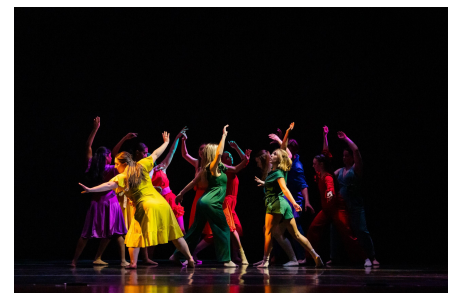
*Flicker*

Choreographed by Joseph Lyons-Wolf



*Let Me Tell You A Story*

Choreographed by CarliAnn Forthun Bruner



*All of the Flowers*

Choreographed by Cynthia Gutierrez

## SUPPORT GONZAGA DANCE

*There are multiple funds to contribute to the momentum of Gonzaga Dance at this time. The Suzanne Ostersmith Dance Endowment supports world class professional experiences for our students, while other funds can be spent at the director's discretion on dance education and other program needs.*

**Please consider making a donation** by visiting us online at [gonzaga.edu/dance](https://gonzaga.edu/dance) (support us) or email [dance@gonzaga.edu](mailto:dance@gonzaga.edu) for more information.



# Alumni Weekend

This year, we hosted our largest-ever Alumni Reunion! It was a resounding success with over 65 Gonzaga Dance Alumni coming back to celebrate our 25th Anniversary with us. Alumni joined us for a whole weekend of events, including dance classes, campus tours, dancing in the Spring Dance Concert finale, brunch, a night at Jack and Dan's, and more! This event was run by the program with help from our brand-new Dance Alumni Board.



## Dance Alumni Board

Our alumni have organized and are now headed up by our new Alumni Board. The Board was created to help plan reunion events like this one, create a network to help support and connect new Gonzaga Dance graduates, and create community among the alumni by planning in-person and Zoom meet-ups for those who want to connect.

Are you an alum that wants to join this community? Join our Slack community below to learn about the Board, Zoom meetings, and localized gatherings!



Scan here to Join the  
Dance Alumni Slack  
Channel

Together, we got to celebrate the end of our First 25 Years with a great Spring Dance Concert. Not only did we have alumni in the audience, but for the first time, we had University President Thayne McCulloh in attendance as well!



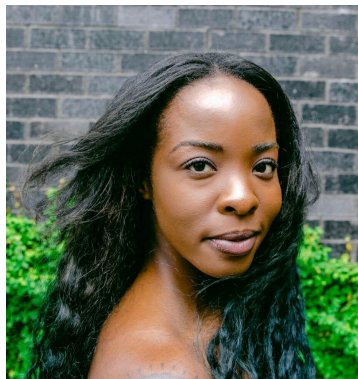
Over this weekend, got to see everyone from the last year's graduates to alumni from 2006 when we first offered the Dance Minor! Some alumni come in groups with their friends to rent Airbnbs together, and some even brought their spouses and kids to join in the fun. The weekend was a great opportunity for everyone to connect with people from all over who had one thing in common, a love of dance.

One of everyone's favorite moments of the weekend - getting to dance in the Spring Dance Concert finale with all the students!





# Looking Forward...



## NEW FACULTY: JESSICA

We are excited to welcome Jessica Bertram-Williams to Gonzaga Dance! As a dancer, she is guided by Black feminist/womanist thought and communal liberation practices. Jessica's teaching and artistic work centers empowerment and self-determination. Grounded in improvisation and contemporary techniques, her movement practice finds its fullest expression within the traditions of the African Diaspora. Her choreographic work draws from the Africanist aesthetic, as she fosters communal engagement, vitality, and ancestral connection.

## SEASON OPENER: KARIN STEVENS DANCE

Mark your calendars! For our 25-26 Season Opener, we have partnered with the Gonzaga Institute of Climate, Water, and the Environment to present Karin Stevens Dance. Along with setting choreography on dance students, they will be bringing their work "Sea Change Within Us" to present.

Karin Stevens Dance is a Seattle-based dance company founded by Karin Stevens that investigates the complex layers of our cultural time and relationship to Earth and celebrates the power of movement as a connection to ourselves, each other, and the environment.



Photo by Michelle Smith-Lewis

**ACDA** | For 2026, we will be bringing students to the conference in Las Vegas, and in case you haven't heard, Gonzaga will be hosting ACDA's Northwest Conference in 2027! This will be our second time hosting this gathering, with the first time being in March of 2020, so we're hoping to avoid the complications of a global pandemic this time.

ACDA will be at Gonzaga March 8-12th, 2027, over our University's spring break. We will hold dance classes all across campus, from our studios, to the Hemmingson Ballroom, to the Cataldo Globe Room, teachers from all across the region will be teaching a variety of dance styles and topics to attendees. The adjudicated concets will be held in the Myrtle Woldson PAC, and the informal concerts will take place in our Magnuson Theatre.

We hope to see our students and alumni on campus then for the conference! Whether you're performing in the concerts or not, registration will be open to anyone who wants to come take classes and watch high-quailiy, collegiate performances.



Photos by Zack Berlat and Zoe Driml



# GONZAGA DANCE 2025-2026 SEASON



## Season Opener

September 19th, 7:30 p.m.

Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center

Featuring Karin Stevens Dance and their work "Sea Change Within Us"

## 60x60

October 3rd, 6:00 p.m.

Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center

Creative Short Works by Students, Faculty, and Alumni

## Student Choreography Showcase

November 21st & 22nd, 7:00 p.m.

Magnuson Theatre

Visionary Student Creativity in Choreography



## Thumbelina

January 23rd & 24th, 7:00 p.m.

January 24th & 25th, 2:00 p.m.

Magnuson Theatre

An Original Production of the classic story  
"Thumbelina".

## Student Choreography Showcase

April 10th & 11th, 7:00 p.m.

Magnuson Theatre

Visionary Student Creativity in Choreography

## Spring Dance Concert

April 24th & 25th, 7:30 p.m.

Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center  
Faculty Choreographed Works From a Variety of  
Dance Genres



### Complexions Contemporary Ballet

October 10th at 7:30pm



### Campana Sobre Campna Christmas in Mexico

Deember 20th at 7:30pm



### Ballet Hispánico

March 22nd at 7:30pm



MYRTLE WOLDSON  
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

AT GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

Box Office: 211 E Desmet

(509) 313-2787 | [gonzaga.edu/ticketcenter](https://gonzaga.edu/ticketcenter)

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