

# GONZAGA<sup>®</sup>

# DANCE

## MAGAZINE

FLORENCE TOUR  
STUDENT EXPERIENCES,  
PERFORMING, AND  
LEARNING!

ACDA 2020  
HOSTING A  
CONFERENCE

ALUMNI  
UPDATE  
WHERE ARE THEY  
NOW

SPRING DANCE  
CONCERT  
THE 20TH  
ANNIVERSARY!



@gonzagadance



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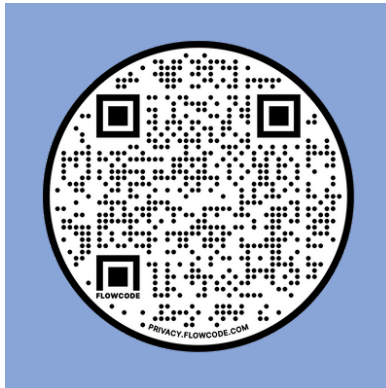
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# Gonzaga Dance Program

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Faculty: Pamela Erickson, CarliAnn Forthun-Bruner, Sarah Glesk, Karla Parbon, and Joseph Lyons

Magazine editors: Hannah Grimes ('22), Halle Goodwin ('15), Suzanne Ostersmith, and Sarah Thurston

This Gonzaga Dance Magazine was created in celebration of the 20th Annual Spring Dance Concert, as well as to acknowledge all the accomplishments of the students, alumni, and faculty at Gonzaga. This magazine would not be possible without the efforts of all students, alumni, and faculty who were involved. We hope this magazine serves as a way to learn about what the Gonzaga Dance Program has to offer, and a trip down memory lane for our current and past students. Enjoy!

Special thanks to the faculty and staff of the Department of Theatre and Dance and the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center for supporting us with their time, expertise, space, costumes, lights, A/V support, ticket support, student employees, and so many other things that help us thrive. And to the many student and staff photographers that make us look so good!



At Spokane Dance Boutique, we specialize in one-on-one pointe shoe fittings along with fitting every style of dance shoes with every type of dancer. We also offer mobile services where we come to you with all the dance items you can imagine. You might have even seen us at Gonzaga a time or two. Caley Edwards, owner, is a Gonzaga Dance Alum and enjoys providing dancewear to all future Gonzaga grads and alumni, of course!

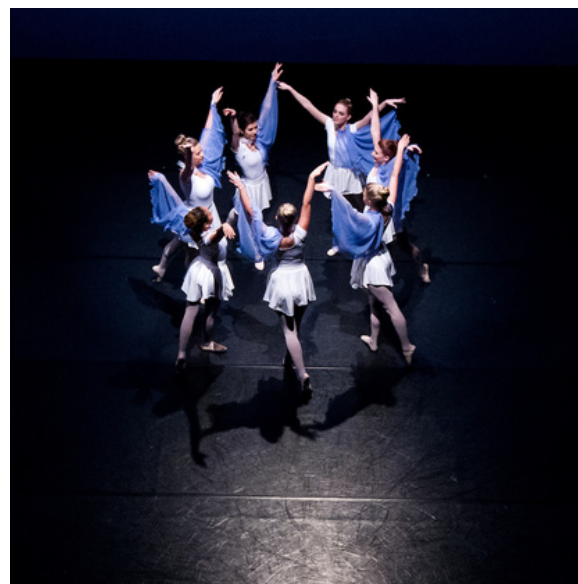
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# Spring Dance Concert

Early on, students requested an opportunity to showcase what they were learning in the few dance classes that were offered. The Spring Dance Concert began in 2002 in the Russel Theatre, now named the Magnuson Theatre. That first year there were performances by Jazz, Ballet, and Tap classes, and they were an instant success. Annually this show has grown to include Contemporary, Modern, Musical Theatre Dance, and Pop Culture (once named Urban). Spring Dance Concert was the only concert produced by the Dance Program for many years, and now our season boasts seven concerts each year. As the program continues to grow, it is now held in the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center. The Spring Dance Concert is still an audience favorite, and a very happy memory for dance alums, with many returning each year to see the concert and celebrate the efforts of the current students. Students and Alums alike love the photos of the Spring Dance Concert photos that grace the walls of our Theatre and Dance Studio Building.









# 20th Anniversary Spring Dance Concert

The Annual Spring Dance Concert features choreography by our Dance faculty from Jazz III, Modern III, Ballet III, Musical Theatre Dance (even years) or Pop culture (odd years), and our Gonzaga Repertory Dance Companies. This concert is fully supported with set, light and costume design and is one of the Theatre and Dance Department's main stage productions for the season. This year we celebrate 20 years of the Spring Dance Concert! For this special event we invited alums for a full day of activities to connect and catch up on the growth of the program. We also planned some exciting announcements for the future of Gonzaga Dance.



**SAVE THE DATE**

**20TH ANNIVERSARY**  
GONZAGA DANCE PRESENTS  
**SPRING DANCE CONCERT** 2022

We're going all out for the 20th Anniversary of the Spring Dance Concert. Celebrating Gonzaga Dance and sharing our vision for the future of the program. We hope you will join us.

<b>Saturday, April 23</b> 11:00am - 12:15pm TDS Dance for Parkinson's 12:30pm Magnuson Pizza Lunch 4:00 - 5:00pm MWPAC Tour 5:00 - 5:45pm MWPAC Patio Drinks 6:00 - 7:00pm Dinner and Program 7:30pm 20th Annual Spring Dance Concert	<b>Sunday, April 24</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Dance Brunch Suzanne's House Join for Mimosas! Come early, stay late Students will be here from 11-1 RSVP <a href="mailto:dance@gonzaga.edu">dance@gonzaga.edu</a> Purchase concert tickets <a href="http://gonzaga.edu/ticketcenter">gonzaga.edu/ticketcenter</a>
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Jazz III dancers finish off their piece with a dynamic silhouette pose

- 
- "This will be my first experience
- dancing without a mask on the big
- stage. It is such a great opportunity
- to connect with my fellow dancers
- and perform for a full audience"
- **Sydney Zinnecker '24**
- 

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"Spring Dance Concert has always been held in The Magnuson Theatre for years. While we loved that space, we had outgrown it about a decade before we moved into the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center. Now, here we are at the 20 year anniversary! This year, along side our advanced classes performing, we are showcasing the work of three of our Repertory Dance Companies." - **Suzanne Ostersmith**



# Founding Director, Suzanne Ostersmith

## Where it Began

Suzanne's mother knew she needed dance classes when she would wiggle at the coffee table before she could walk. After training in Royal Academy of Dance studios as a youth, Suzanne found her love of Jazz and Musical Theatre through High School. Her undergraduate degree is in theatre, but dance was always a part of her studies and performance career. She worked for Pacific Northwest Ballet in PR and founding their DanceChance program before settling in Spokane and creating the dance programs at Whitworth and Gonzaga simultaneously. Eventually the programs grew big enough she put all her creative capital into Gonzaga Dance. Suzanne began teaching at Gonzaga in 2000 for the Theatre Program in the Communication Arts Department. At that time Gonzaga offered one or two dance classes a semester. Eventually the Spring Dance Concert, Dance Minor, Interdisciplinary Arts Minor and Dance Major were created. Facilities have changed over the years as well. Dance classes began in the Martin Center basement studio, then Rudolf Center Studio, then Magnuson Theatre loft and finally the Theatre and Dance Studio Building! Certainly the opening of the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center and hosting the Regional Conference of the American College Dance Association were major moments that have inspired many.



## Looking Forward

Gonzaga Dance is ELEVATING to new heights. Following the energy and momentum of our students is always what drives our Dance Program. Suzanne has three big wishes in the next 5-10 years.

- 1) Scholarships to help recruit and support dance students**
- 2) Faculty additions so that we can expand our offerings**
- 3) Facility development**

We have a number of possibilities coming down the pipe to make our facilities stronger and better able to meet the needs of dance students. Ultimately, as we continue to grow, we hope that we continue to be the welcoming, inclusive, and engaged dance community that has been a big part of our ethos over the years.





## Assistant Director, Halle Goodwin ('15)



"I could never imagine at 17 years old, watching my first Spring Dance Concert and meeting Suzanne as a prospective student, that I would be here today. After graduating with a Business major and Dance minor, I completed my Masters in Organizational Leadership. I continued my work with the Parkinson's community, teaching Dance for Parkinson's and serving as the Regional Director of the Northwest Parkinson's Foundation for three years, before joining Suzanne as Assistant Director at the end of 2020. I love working with our student Dance Club, work studies, and supporting the many projects our students and faculty dream up. I keep falling in to roles worthy of "Dream Job", but this one takes the cake."



# DANCE FACULTY



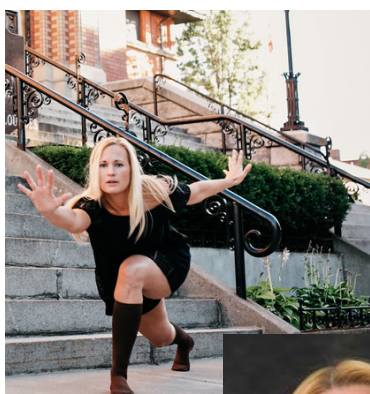
**Pamela Erickson** has been teaching at GU since 2003 and teaches Ballet, Dance History and Dance Pedagogy. Pam is a Cal Poly San Luis Obispo alumnus and is also a dance faculty member at Whitworth University. Her professional dance experience includes dance companies in the United States and Europe as well as a year spent aboard the MS Crystal Harmony. As a dance educator, Pam has taught master classes at the American College Dance Association Conference, Western Washington University and the Universities of Alaska and Utah. Additional educational experiences include the teacher training course at the Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet and, in conjunction with the Mark Morris Dance Group Outreach Program, training and teaching dance classes for Parkinson's patients and their care-givers. For the past 25 years, Pam has been a national judge for Spotlight Dance Competitions and enjoys educating the next generation of dancers. She also shares her passion at several Spokane area dance studios and coaches young dancers for the Youth America Grand Prix ballet competitions. As the director of Gonzaga University's Summer Dance Intensives and the high school Dance Day event on campus, Pam aspires to ignite the passion for dance and dance education in all of her students.

**CarliAnn Forthun Bruner** has been teaching at Gonzaga University since 2019. She received her MFA in Dance from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and her BFA in Dance and minor in Kinesiology from Simon Fraser University. Her choreography has been presented by On the Boards, Seattle International Dance Festival, Inlay Dance, Velocity Dance Center, YAW Theater, Intrepidus Dance, and Terrain 11. She has performed professionally with Khambatta Dance Company, Intrepidus Dance, 127th St. Dance Company and as a freelance performer with Noam Gagnon, KT Niehoff, Rob Kitsos, Marla Eist, and Ashleigh Claire Miller. CarliAnn has enjoyed performing, teaching, and touring internationally in Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Lithuania, and India. In 2016, she formed Forthun+Rome Dance Theater with Ethan Rome. Since then, the company has created over a dozen new works including full evening length pieces and dance films. In 2018, the dance company received the year-long James Ray Residency Award to create a new dance work for the 2019 Seattle International Dance Festival. As a dance creator, CarliAnn investigates human interactions that are universal and transcend language, exploring the ineffability of life. Courses Taught: Jazz Dance, Levels I, II, III, Contemporary/Modern, Levels I, II, III, Strategies for Dance Instruction, Arts Administration and Leadership.





**Sarah Glesk** has been teaching and choreographing in Spokane, WA, since 2011. She is currently a dance adjunct faculty member at Gonzaga University since 2013 and Whitworth University since 2018. She is also a dance instructor for numerous studios in the Spokane area. Sarah earned a BFA in Dance from Cornish College of the Arts, graduating Cum Laude in 2006, where she was the recipient of several scholarships, including the Kreielsheimer Scholarship. She has performed in such works as Martha Graham's "Diversion of Angels" and other notable choreographers in the Seattle area such as Deb Wolf, Pat Hon, Rainbow Fletcher, and Zoe Scofield. Sarah is co-director and choreographer for the Gonzaga Blue Repertory Dance Company. In 2020, Sarah was the rehearsal director for the Gonzaga University Ballet Ensemble, featuring an original work by Kyle Davis, principal dancer from the Pacific Northwest Ballet. Sarah has notable choreographic features in Gonzaga's annual Spring Dance Concert, the Spokane Film Project, 50 Hour Slam, and a music video for Water Monster, which she also performed in. She also collaborated and performed in a multi-media dance piece with CarliAnn Forthun Bruner of Forthun + Rome Dance Theater and performed with Vytal Movement Dance Company. In addition to adding quirky humor to her choreography, she also loves illustrating these qualities so that her family and loved ones are always on their toes!



**Karla Parbon** has been teaching at Gonzaga University since 2008. She studied for 15 years under the Royal Academy of Dance curriculum and graduated from Whitworth University with a B.A. in Psychology and a focus in Women's Studies and M.A. in Theology with an emphasis in Dance. Karla's specialty is in connecting art, spirituality, and the human experience. Karla has been teaching dance for over 20 years where she has had the opportunity to choreograph musical theatre shows including: The Boyfriend, Cabaret, Working, Jesus Christ Super Star, The Mattress, and The Wakefield Mysteries. She has also presented several works at the American College Dance Association Conference for the past 8 years as well as choreographed and performed with the St. John's Professional Choir and members of the Spokane Symphony for the Good Friday performance, Buxtehude. In 2014, Karla founded and is the Executive Director of the nonprofit organization, Partners Through Art, that leverages the power of theatre, dance, and visual art with other non-profits to expand their individual success and advance the collective goal of positive social change. Over the last few years, Karla has been developing a new passion that combines the art of dance and film to create screendance. Her first screendance Tethered Edges, was accepted into the American College Dance Association Festival Gala and her second work, Dwelling Place, is being presented in this year's Spring Dance Concert. She also started the Gonzaga Screendance Film Festival in 2021 and looks forward to many more years of directing this festival in years to come! In her spare time, Karla enjoys practicing and teaching at a local yoga studio. Courses Taught: Jazz Dance, Levels I, II, III, Contemporary/Modern Dance, Levels I, II, III, Principles of Dance Conditioning, Pop Culture Dance, Advanced Screendance Composition, Choreography

**Joseph Lyons-Wolf** has taught at Gonzaga University since 2021. His body of work includes professional theatre, studio work, and competitive dance. Joseph received a B.M. in Musical Theatre from Oklahoma City University, an M.A. in Educational Theatre from New York University, and a Certificate of Excellence from Broadway Dance Center. Past professional experiences include Disney Theatrical Group, where he taught professional Broadway workshops, facilitated post-show Q&As, and collaborated on curricula for their licensable musicals. Joseph currently teaches on the faculties of Artistry in Motion and Expressions School of Performing Arts, and also works as a freelance director and choreographer for regional theaters. This summer he will start a low-residency M.F.A. in Choreography at Jacksonville University. Courses Taught: Musical Theatre Dance, Musical Theatre Pedagogy, Musical Theatre Tap







## Gonzaga Dance on Tour

Gonzaga Dance has toured to a variety of locations over the years with a number of productions. Touring dance provides students with an educational experience that is very different from performing on campus. Audiences react differently in various spaces. Reactions from a group of elementary students in a school gym will be different than a formal audience in a theater. In addition to audience response, dance students learn to adapt to a variety of changing rooms, floor surfaces, and stage sizes. Touring is something we have done occasionally over the last couple decades, and we look forward to doing more in the future.

The first touring production was *Weaving Our Sisters Voices* in 2006. Partnering with playwright Dr. Linda Schearing, from the Religious Studies department, and composer Dr. Robert Spittal was a rich collaboration that created a 'sacred tapestry of story and dance'. This successful twelve-performance tour connected Gonzaga to the community, and the community to this contemporary exploration of sacred stories. This story created fertile ground for contemplation and post-performance discussions. In 2016 this performance toured under student direction.



2019-2020 GURDC Tour

"The best memory I have from touring was performing at Sorenson Elementary, an arts magnet school in Coeur d'Alene. The kids were excited to learn parts of our dance and their school dance team performed for us. It was really impressive to see how quickly they picked up on the choreography." **Anna Gyure '22**  
(Red Repertory Company)



2020-2021 GURDC Tour



## Dance and Science

In 2014 Miranda Heckman ('16) found a way to blend her three academic loves: biology, dance and education. During the summer before her junior year, Miranda researched scientific highlights of the Spokane River. Specifically, she studied the dams and the historical context of generating electricity, as well as the impact on fish and their habitat. Miranda then wrote a script to narrate lessons for an elementary audience as dancers visually depicted the life of the river. Through this performance, young children could learn about rainbow trout, algae, and other aspects about the river that runs through Spokane. In spring of 2015, the *Dancing Spokane River* toured to six Spokane elementary schools and shared grade-specific lesson plans to complement the production.

*Beautiful Weapons* was another tour using the artform of dance to explain science. Dr. Brook Swanson, professor of Biology, and Suzanne Ostersmith collaborated on a First Year Seminar called the Art and Science of Dance. In 2017, with the newly formed Gonzaga Repertory Dance Company, they took Swanson's research in biodiversity and Fiddler Crabs and created a performative dance/lecture. This tour performed at Universities around the region for Biology and Performing Arts students and faculty.





# GONZAGA UNIVERSITY REPERTORY DANCE COMPANY (GURDC)

# THROUGH THE YEARS...



## Erin Walker ('21) | 2017-2018

"In my freshman year, the repertory company showcased *Beautiful Weapons*. This piece was created by Biology Professor, Brook Swanson and choreographed by Dance Director, Suzanne Ostersmith alongside her company of six dancers. After months of tedious rehearsals, it was performed for various universities around the Pacific Northwest, ACDA, Gonzaga's annual Spring Dance Concert, and Spokane TEDx. For the Repertory Company's TEDx performance we presented a version of *Beautiful Weapons*. We wanted to give audiences an idea of what the original piece looked like, while also demonstrating the process behind making it and how transformative it was. In the end, we were able to demonstrate to people that it is possible to depict science through art and that artists can also use dance to interpret science. "

### **Kalleigh Wagner ('21) | 2018-2019**

"As a sophomore, my participation within GURDC was focused on opening Gonzaga's new Performing Arts Center with the production of Alex Roth's *A New Season*. Starting in September, the company learned and rehearsed over 20 dance pieces, which were accompanied by the Gonzaga Choir and members of the Spokane Symphony. In May, I was fortunate enough to travel to Florence, Italy with Professor Ostersmith to perform this production alongside my peers in the Pergola Theatre. Throughout an extremely strenuous year, Suzanne remained a consistent source of joy and light. Despite the pressures, deadlines, and an innumerable number of unknowns, she placed her dancers first time and time again. Suzanne is someone who continuously seeks more for her students. Fueled by her passion for the arts and creative exploration, she has built a program that strives for excellence, and exceeds all presuppositions placed upon her. Over the past two years, the Gonzaga Dance Program has been a place that has challenged me creatively, aided in developing my artistry, enhancing my technique, and where I found some of my lifelong friends and mentors. Suzanne's approach to instructing and teaching dance is unlike anything I have ever experienced. Professor Ostersmith challenges her students in not only the technical aspects of dance, but more importantly, aiding them in personal growth as an artist, a learner, and a human being. Professor Ostersmith has the rare ability to create, mold, and love simultaneously. Where some instructors are only able to choreograph, and others are only able to berate, Suzanne approaches her endeavors with adoration, clearly cherishing her role. "



### **Sydney Skinner ('20) | 2019-2020**

"Dancing in the Reparatory Dance Company my senior year was an incredible experience. Not only did I love it because I got to go further in my dance education, technique, and training, but I also got the chance to dance alongside my best friends! I would not have traded a minute of time with that company because those girls that I was able to perform and create movement with were such amazing dancers, leaders, performers, and friends. We also had amazing choreographers who helped us work and play to all of our strengths. Seeing the look on kids faces when performed at different schools in the area was something I will never forget! Being able to leave a lasting impact on others is such an amazing experience!! "





### **Andrea Bracamonte ('21) | 2020-2021**

"Where do I even begin?! Rep was one of the most, if not the most, impactful part of my time at Gonzaga. Getting to tour all around Spokane and share art with kids and see them light up with such joy and wonder is one of the things that inspired me, and gave me the confidence to apply for my current job with STEM From Dance. The group of dancers are all so special to me; we shared so many laughs, tears, long days, joyful moments, and everything in between. Getting to work with Karla for the tour, and CarliAnn and Ethan for our ACDA piece, guided me to find an even deeper love and passion for dance, which solidified my decision to pursue dance after college. I remember getting so excited to go to rehearsal and see what we could create. The whole experience was beautiful and foundational to who I am today; I really miss it a lot! Our work with Rulan Tangen

and CarliAnn's thesis not only pushed me as a dancer, but showed me how I want to show up as a human being in the world. There was something very profound about the entire experience that I will hold close to my heart forever. Because of the extensive research aspect of the process, I was able to have conversations with my family and friends about things I never would have brought up on my own. From start to finish, we pushed the boundaries of what is traditional in "contemporary dance", and I am so grateful to have been a part of a larger movement in amplifying Native voice, ways of knowing, and existing in the dance world. "

### **Gillian Wittstock ('23) | 2021-2022**

"Being able to participate in the screen dance companies in both 2020-21 and 2021-22 has been such a privilege and pleasure. I'm thankful to have been provided the opportunity to explore a field of dance that I had never really considered before coming to Gonzaga. The concept of screen dance, the preparation involved, and the execution of the project is so unlike any kind of dance I've done before. Karla has taught all of us so much about the kind of repetition and persistence that it takes to put a dance on film. She told us the importance of capturing varying angles, the encouragement of dynamic and interesting movement, as well as the facilitation of a relationship between the dancer and the camera during the filming process. This experience has taken me places I never thought I would go – figuratively and literally. I can see an improvement in my dance quality and ability, and that is in large thanks to Karla and the discipline in her instruction. I also got to dance in the Spokane River, which I never thought that I would do, ever, and it was super fun. The process of filming outdoors has given me both a better appreciation for the indoor spaces we have the opportunity to dance in, as well as the beautiful nature around us. These projects have taught me so much about what dance can be regarding its mode, content, location, and expression. I was able to pressing the boundaries of what I believed dance to be by being a part of these companies, and I'm so thankful for what they have taught me."





**Brooke Geffrey-Bowler ('22) | 2021-2022**

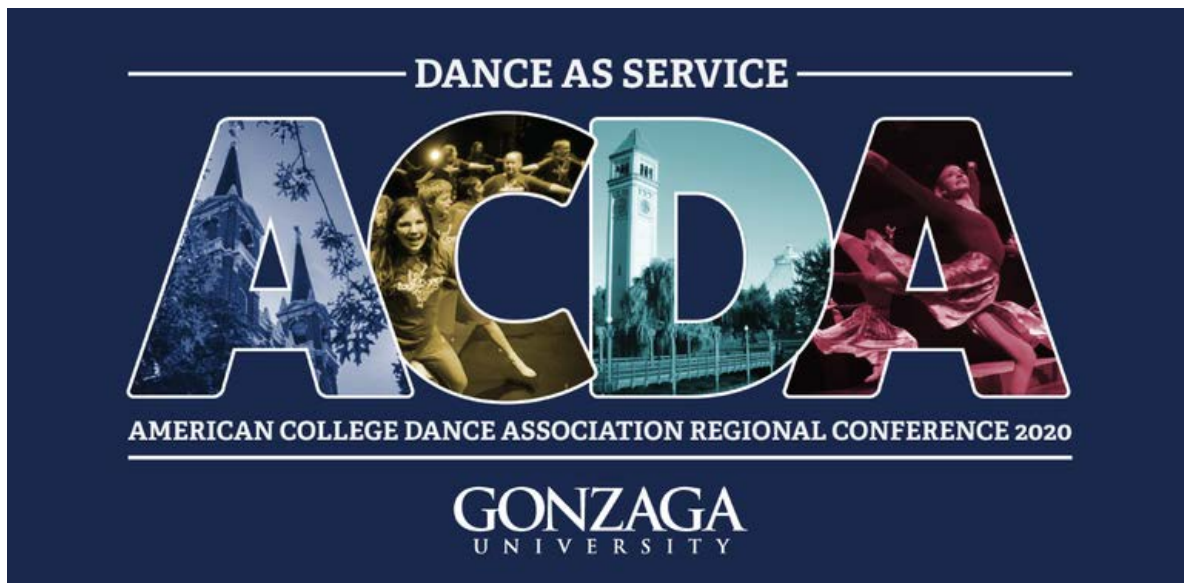
"Blue Rep has been a great experience for me. Getting to be a student and see the extensive collaboration with our choreographers, Pam Erickson, Sarah Glesk, and composer Annabella Gelmetti, has been an invaluable educational experience and so cool to be a part of! It's been fun getting to grow close to our company members as a group and has definitely been one of the biggest highlights from my time here at GU. My favorite part of touring was getting to meet all of the dancers at each of the studios we've been to and getting to perform and talk with them about our experiences as college dancers. Their questions and comments are always so insightful and endearing! It's been such a unique experience to perform my role in *The Fearies* because of the specific story and themes that the piece revolves around. As it's about a young performer and the fears that oftentimes overwhelm us in following our dreams, I have resonated with this story and been able to engage with my role on a very personal level. "



**Mia Person ('24) | 2021-2022**

"Being a part of the Red Repertory Company with CarliAnn this year has been an incredible experience. We created a piece that centered around the Philosophy of Seven Generations. That is, how do our actions today impact those that come after us and reflect on those that came before us? We crafted the dance from scratch, collaborating and sharing our personal interpretations of what it meant to us. My favorite part of this company was touring our piece around local elementary schools and introducing the students to dance. It was so cool to have kids come up and say they want to start dancing in the future because of our visit! I am so appreciative of the connections I made with every single member of this company and will remember them forever!"



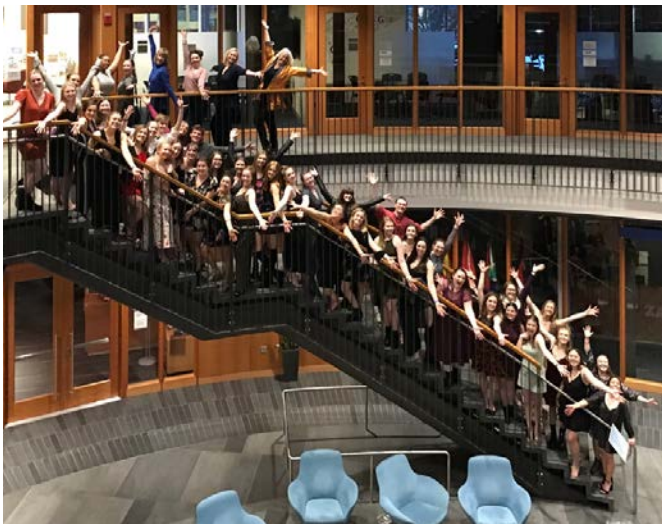


Every other year, Gonzaga Dance attends the American College Dance Association Regional Conference that joins together university dance programs across the region for a four-day experience in the spring semester. During this dance experience, we attend a variety of dance classes and lectures taught by professors from various universities and guest artists. In addition, we see over 40 dance works from various universities, present work in both informal and adjudicated concerts, and meet and befriend other college dancers from around the region.

#### Screendance in ACDA

"ACDA is a conference that every dance educator hopes to present work at and be recognized as an exceptional piece, selected by world-renowned adjudicators, to be presented in the ACDA gala concert. My dream came true last year when my first screendance was selected as one of these pieces. I was a little shocked, but so incredibly proud. Not only was this my first attempt at producing my own screendance, but I was also the choreographer, videographer, film editor, and director. I learned and grew so much from this experience and continue to seek ways to improve my knowledge of how to combine film and dance." - **Karla Parbon**





2020 was the year that Gonzaga had the honor of hosting ACDA. Throughout the experience, Gonzaga students volunteered their time and energy in order to make the conference run. Over 500 students attended and registered for the conference and more than 30 university dance programs.

There were several memorable moments and highlights from the conference including Gonzaga's Repertory Dance Company's performance at the Gala concert. CarliAnn choreographed for the Repertory Dance Company that year, creating a piece entitled 1.5 Degrees C. This Gala concert showcased the selected few dances from each of the other adjudicated concerts.

"The piece Gonzaga submitted for the 2020 ACDA adjudicated concert was called 1.5 Degrees C and was created by me and my longtime collaborator Ethan Rome. We were inspired by the discussion of the global warming crisis and the increase in natural disasters around the world. The piece was divided into sections, each representing a different natural disaster such as volcanoes, hurricanes, and so on. The dancers both embodied the elements of the natural disasters and humanity walking through this time on earth. The piece was powerful, dynamic, and technical.

Watching GURDC dancers perform 1.5 Degrees C during the adjudication concert, I was filled with pride seeing their hard work pay off as they attacked the piece with grace and ferocity. I (and other faculty members) welled with tears as we watched our students rise to the occasion.

As the conference went on, the world outside was beginning to shut down for COVID. It became apparent to all of us that once we left this weekend, live dance classes and performances were going to be uncertain for the foreseeable future.

"ACDA 2020 will forever be one of the most challenging and rewarding things I have ever gone through. I started attending ACDA as a freshman and then continued to attend every year to learn from those hosting the conference so Gonzaga could prepare to host. "

**Audrey Parks '19**

Learning that 1.5 Degrees C had been selected for the Gala performance was emotional and exciting for so many reasons. It was the first time Gonzaga had been selected for the Gala and it meant that GURDC got to perform it one more time, for some of our dancers, it would be their last Gonzaga Dance program performance.

I still get goosebumps thinking about the Gala performance. It was the best they had ever performed it, hitting every line, move, and skill, but beyond that, they performed with such heart and passion. They danced for each other and all of us. Karla and I ran to meet them afterwards as they went back up to the dressing rooms of the Myrtle Woldson PAC and let's just say there was a lot of tears and laughter. It is one of my most cherished moments of my time at Gonzaga so far. "

**CarliAnn Forthun-Bruner**



# GUEST ARTIST

The Gonzaga Dance Program not only offers a variety of classes taught by dedicated faculty, but dance students work with other dance professionals to broaden their educational experiences. Over the years, we have hosted numerous guest artists and companies in a residency format. When the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center opened, we were able to formalize our September residencies to correlate with our Season Showcase giving the dance community, both at Gonzaga and the greater region, a sense of what they can anticipate the rest of the year. These residencies and the show *Dance Presents!* were made possible through the establishment of the Suzanne Ostersmith Dance Endowment. We have been able to host such organizations as Khambatta and Forthun and Rome, Pacific Northwest Ballet's Kyle Davies choreography, and Spectrum Dance Theatre. Prior to the establishment of *Dance Presents!* there were no consistent presenting organizations of dance in our region. Gonzaga Dance is thrilled to provide these opportunities in the name of educating our students, supporting artists, and bringing professional dance to the region!



## Spectrum

We presented Spectrum Dance Theatre, Seattle Fall 2021.

"Spectrum Dance Theater (SDT) was founded in 1982 to bring dance of the highest merit to a diverse audience composed of people from different social, cultural, ethnic and economic backgrounds. SDT's principal objective is to make the art form of dance accessible through contemporary dance performances and high-quality dance training in a variety of dance styles. Three organizational components comprise SDT: the professional Company, the School, and Community and Outreach programs. Under Donald Byrd's visionary artistic leadership since 2002, the organization has embarked on an exhilarating transformation that has attracted world-class dancers, produced some of the most avant-garde works in contemporary dance, and generated local and national praise."

# RESIDENCY

A full-page photograph of a dancer in a teal and black leotard performing a low, arched pose on a dark stage. The dancer is wearing a black face mask and has her hair in a bun. Her right arm is extended upwards and back, while her left arm is extended forward and down. Her legs are bent, with her feet flat on the floor. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the dancer against the dark background.

## Khambatta

We presented Khambatta Dance Company along with Forthun+Rome in Fall 2019 .

"Khambatta Dance Company (KDC) connects artists and audiences through the exploration of contemporary issues, emotionally resonant performances, and a collaborative process of dance creation. KDC tours nationally and internationally, intentionally cultivating networks of support with other dance artists. Since 2006, the Seattle International Dance Festival, KDC's signature program, unifies communities and celebrates the city's neighborhoods by showcasing the work of local, regional, national and international dance artists who exemplify the diversity of contemporary dance."



## GUEST SCHOLARS

The Gonzaga Dance Program has hosted several exceptional guest artists and scholars each year. Specifically in 2015-2016, guest artist, Jessica Lindberg, introduced the Loie Fuller technique to Gonzaga dance students in the fall. Loie Fuller was an Interdisciplinary Artist, from the turn of the last century, who utilized large silk dresses like wings that would catch the light and create magical imagery. During this experience, two dancers were selected to perform the 'Lily' solo at the Spring Dance Concert. Helen Schantz ('20) and Lauren Miller ('18) trained throughout the year with Suzanne Ostersmith and research assistant Elena Pignolet ('17) to prepare for this performance. The strength needed to manipulate the silks in this historic way was different from anything the students had experienced before. In the spring, another Loie Fuller Scholar came to Gonzaga to teach the theatre and dance students how to capture historic lighting design for this elaborate solo. Suzanne Ostersmith also reconstructed the ideas from 'Lily' into a piece called 'Reblooming' that was presented at the Spring Dance Concert along with the Maryhill Fine Arts Center on the Colombia Gorge. Part of the scholarship that year also included an exhibit in the Jundt Art Museum and lecture demonstrations.







# Dance as Service



## ZagDance

**ZagDance** is our free after school dance program taught by current students. Gonzaga Dance Students learn how to teach creative movement in the service learning course, Strategies for Dance Instruction. Our partnership with local elementary schools and with GU's Campus Kids, creates a dynamic connection to our community and real-world/life experience for the Gonzaga Dance Students.


"Each and every struggle I have faced in ZagDance has made me in to a more passionate, empathetic, responsible leader, and dancer." - **Carly Goodspeed '18**





# Dance for Parkinson's

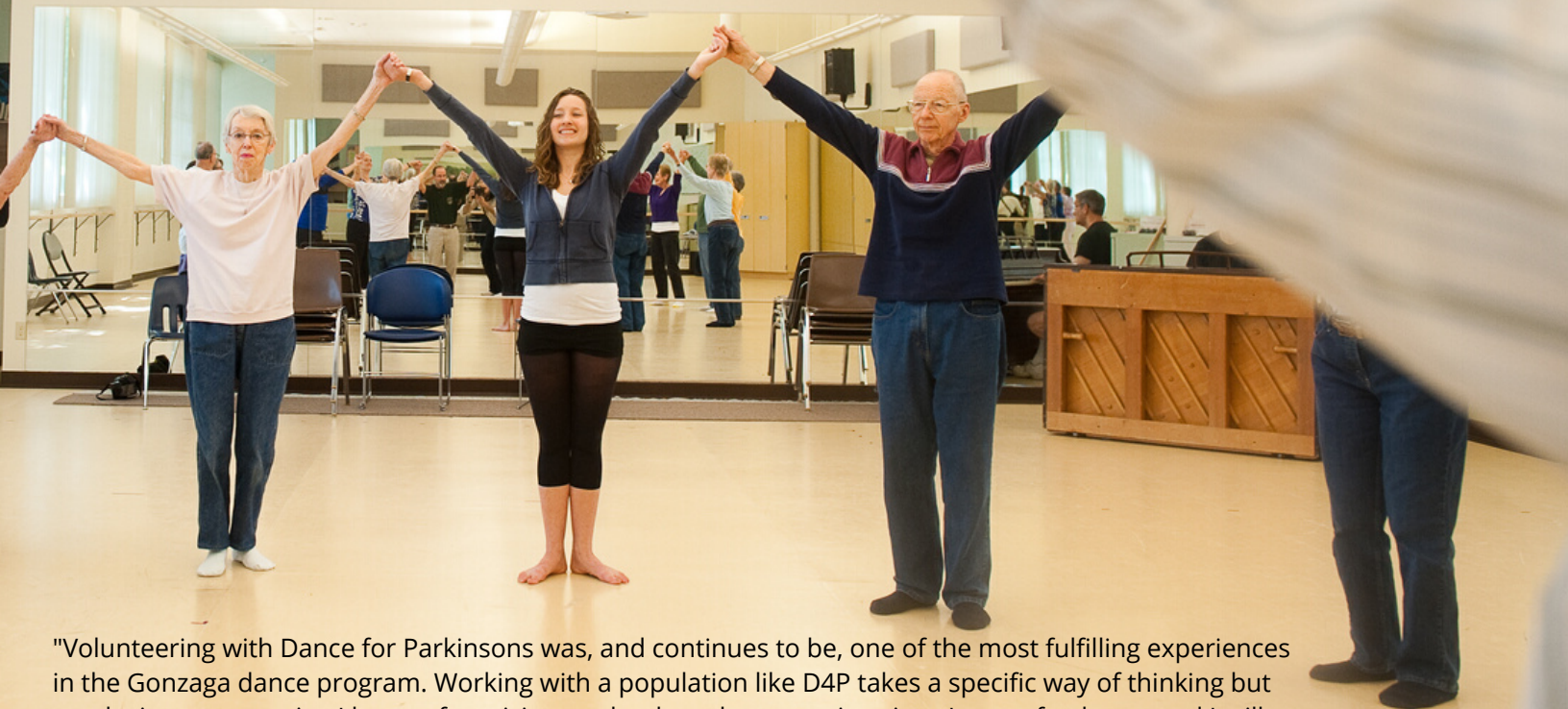
**Dance for Parkinson's** offers accessible movement classes for people with Parkinson's and their care partners. Designed through a training from the Brooklyn Parkinson's Foundation and Mark Morris Dance Groups, this program is a partnership with Northwest Parkinson's Foundation and Gonzaga University's Dance Program. Gonzaga University Dance students participate in the class as volunteers. Students dance alongside participants as examples and sources of support, and also help with setup and takedown .



"Dance for Parkinson's was actually one of the things that helped me figure out that Gonzaga was the place to be. I remember seeing it on the dance program's website and thinking that it would be a great opportunity to combine my love for service and dance. And it has been exactly that! Dance for Parkinson's is always a wonderful way to start my Saturday mornings. I leave feeling refreshed and energized, and I am filled with the good energy that is created in that space.

It also fits right in with my dance and psychology double major. I've been learning about the physical and psychological aspects of Parkinson's, and dance helps me to put that information into a movement-based understanding. My interest in this program has allowed me to explore future options such as Dance Therapy and Movement Therapy as well.

I feel that this program gives as much back to me as I give to it, and I am truly grateful to be considered a part of it." - **Maria Scott '25**



"Volunteering with Dance for Parkinsons was, and continues to be, one of the most fulfilling experiences in the Gonzaga dance program. Working with a population like D4P takes a specific way of thinking but results in a community. I know of participants that have been coming since I was a freshman and I still see almost every week. To go from volunteering, to assisting, to being a lead teacher means these participants have watched me grow as an instructor and I have learned just as much from them over the years. " -

**Audrey Parks '19**





**Boundless** is a program within Dance Club that allows students, who don't have space in their schedules, the opportunity to dance. Both dancers and non-dancers are able to try out different styles of dance without the commitment of a for-credit class. Boundless classes and scheduled dance classes from the Fall semester have the chance to perform in the annual Snowflake Showcase, and share what they have learned. Boundless offers a wide range of dance styles including: Ballet, Jazz, Lyrical, Contemporary, Hip Hop, Tap, Irish, East Asian Fusion, Drill, Ballroom, Heels, etc.

#### **Creation of Boundless by Kellie Carnes '08**

"During my time at Gonzaga, the Academic Dance Program was still new and the Dance Minor had only been official in my last two years of school. Because it was still taking off, there were limited class options and availability. I would often chat with my classmates about the kinds of classes they enjoyed and missed the most from pre-college. For my Bunhead friends, they wished for more advanced ballet and pointe classes. My contemporary friends longed for more advanced modern, lyrical, jazz, and hip-hop classes. Friends who danced outside of the Academic Dance program, wished for classes that didn't conflict with classes for their major.

At the end of my senior year, I went to a Whitworth dance club performance to support my friends I met through ACDA, and it was truly inspirational. It was the first time I had seen a completely student-run dance program that not only provided classes, but also provided opportunity for a full stage production. Furthermore, it didn't only engage the dance department students, it also consisted of students who wanted to dance, but could not accommodate it in their schedules. A switch flipped in my brain - this is what we were looking for! I ran the idea of starting our own club by my friend and co-founder, Rachel (Packard) Jones, and she lit-up just as much as I did, so we decided to turn thought into action. When we approached Suzanne about being a club mentor, she was both excited and supportive. Then it came down to a name. We knew we were starting small, with the idea of creating space for student taught dance classes, but the hope for the future was to expand to a wide variety of student hosted dance classes, workshops, and stage productions. Boundless seemed like the perfect description and sentiment for what we were trying to achieve."





**Maura Warnecke, Boundless chair 2021-2022**

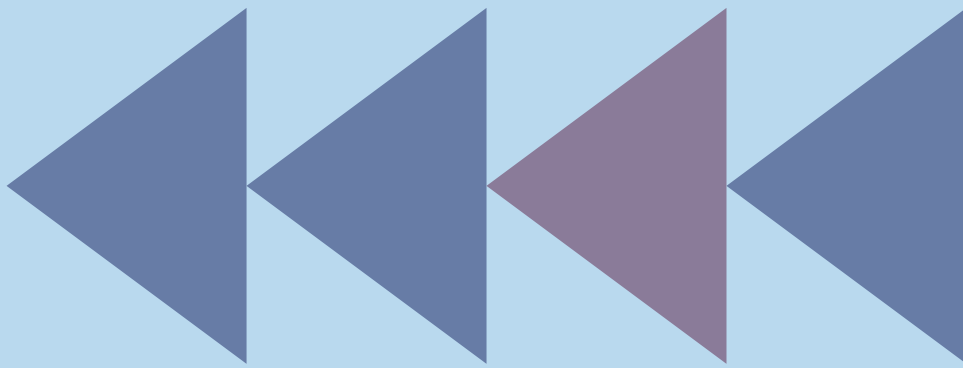
"Participating in Boundless at Gonzaga has been one of my favorite ways to get involved in the dance program! Freshman year, my first experience with the dance program was through a Boundless class taught by a senior (Audrey Parks '20). I made some of my closest friends and had so much fun while taking this Boundless class and performing in the Snowflake showcase! This year, I decided to take on a leadership role as Boundless chair and taught a jazz class myself. It has been so wonderful to help promote Boundless and watch it grow in the program. This fall we had nine different Boundless classes each week, with such a variety of styles (ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop, contemporary, improv, etc.) and great attendance from dancers and people new to dance alike! This Spring, we started a new form of Boundless called pop-up classes, which are one-time student taught workshops open to all, and I am excited to see how this expands Boundless offerings as well! What I love most about Boundless at GU is that it is entirely run by, and for, students, and is free and open to students of all skill levels. It is a great way for anyone and everyone to enjoy dancing and moving your body in a very low-key setting. For me personally, I am so glad Gonzaga has Boundless, because as a nursing and honors student I do not have room in my schedule to take academic dance classes. Boundless allows me to keep on doing what I love!"





# From Dance Council to Dance Club

At an ACDA conference in 2015, dance students Halle Goodwin '15, Melanie Lowry '16, and others suggested the creation of a Dance Council. Noticing how much was going on in the Dance Program and how much help Suzanne could use, they thought giving students leadership positions would be valuable both to the program and their learning. The Dance Council grew over time with students taking on such important aspects of the program like Orientation Performances, GEL weekend events, and other social gatherings. As the Council and Dance Program grew, along side Boundless Dance Club, it became evident in 2020 that combining into one Dance Club, under the advisement of new Assistant Director of Dance, Halle Goodwin, was the way to go. Now the club assists and coordinates such programming as: **Boundless, Orientation, 60x60, Snowflake Showcase, Love Your Body Week/Dance as Cura Personalis, Retreats, Honors, Conferences, Workshops, and Dance for Parkinsons, etc.**





"Being president of Dance Club has been so exciting as this was a big transition year for our club. We integrated Dance Council and Boundless Dance Club together to create one "Dance Club". It has been fun to support everyone in their endeavors and create new events and opportunities for our club members. Each month, I was filled with joy to see a full studio of dance students ready to learn and connect through our club. Gonzaga Dance fosters community and Dance Club is an extension of that." - **Elisabeth Ehnert '22**

"I was the social chair for the dance council. I loved being a part of a group that was helping the dance program grow and develop. I got to make sure dancers' voices were heard and helped organize events that brought the program together." - **Vanessa Fisher '18**



# GONZAGA DANCE IN FLORENCE

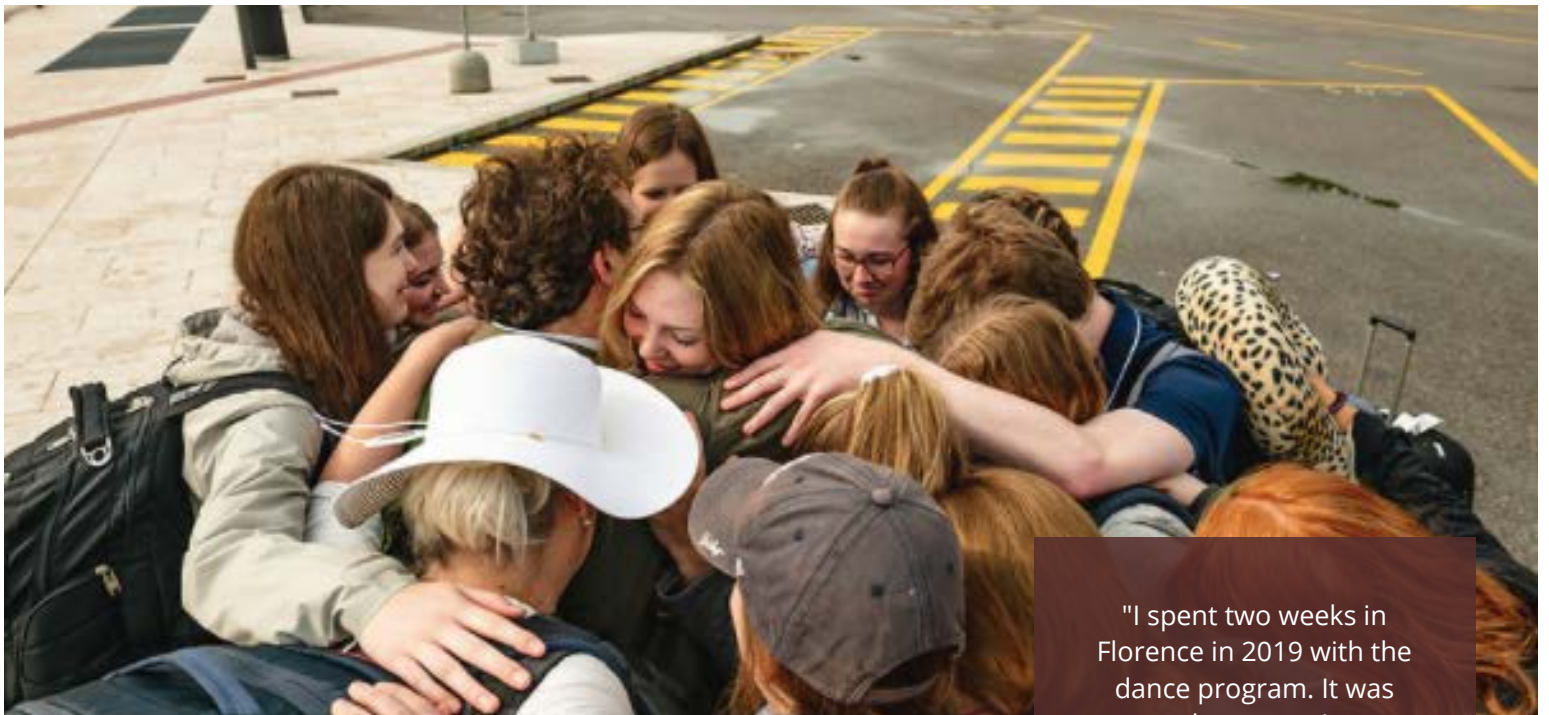


After Suzanne taught a core course the summer of 2017 in London, she knew an established Summer Dance Study Abroad was needed. Studying abroad educates a student in a whole new way, exposing them to new cultures, languages, cuisines, and healthy discomfort with adapting to a new country. Gonzaga in Florence was established in 1963 and has its own beautiful campus just steps from the Duomo. Our first dance tour in 2019 was a collaboration with Gonzaga Choir after the successful opening of the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center. That year, the tour was separate from the regular summer study abroad program. Suzanne and a few students continued with the six week program and it became evident that the tour needed to be immersed into the regular program, as the students had the benefit of a more extensive living experience.



"Dancing in Florence in 2019 was incredible and one of my favorite Gonzaga memories. I think my favorite part was bonding with all the other dancers and choir students while we were there. We were able to perform in incredible theatres and experience so much culture and history related to Gonzaga. I would highly recommend touring with Gonzaga Dance for summer abroad, as it has been by far one of my best GU memories." - **Elisabeth Ehnert '22**





"I spent two weeks in Florence in 2019 with the dance program. It was such an amazing opportunity to perform in places including the Teatro della Pergola. I remember feeling very nervous to travel abroad with the dance program as a freshman, but I quickly felt right at home with the group. We had so many fun experiences including experiencing different restaurants and foods, and going to museums. "

**Peyton Mckenny '22**



# GONZAGA DANCE IN FLORENCE

Even with the challenges of the ongoing pandemic, five students traveled to Florence to take class and tour *Pay the Price*. Spring semester, the students worked under the direction of guest artist Noelle Price and Suzanne to develop work looking at institutional racism, privilege, and power. They performed in a variety of locations to live cello accompaniment by Dr. Kevin Hekmatpanah from the Gonzaga Music Department. The touring company also continued the tradition of taking class at Opus Contemporary Ballet School. The culminating performance took place in Santa Croce as part of the Gonzaga Law School's Human Rights Conference themed "Black Lives Matter as a global movement."



"Participating in this conference and these performances was such an important experience because I learned so much about racism and my own biases. We had such a great group of dancers and all became very close throughout the rehearsal and traveling process. I will always remember what I learned through the Human Rights Company in Florence. On the weekends, I traveled with friends to various places in Italy including: Cinque Terre, Rome, Sienna, Pisa, Lucca, Sorrento, Amalfi, Capri, and Naples. My favorite weekend trip was to Sorrento, Amalfi, and Capri because these were the most beautiful places I have ever been. We were able to do a boat tour, limoncello tasting, and a bus tour along the Amalfi coast. Overall, these trips to Florence were amazing experiences where I had fun and grew a lot as a person and student." - **Peyton Mckenny '22**

"Touring in Florence was such an amazing experience and a unique part of my Gonzaga experience. I learned so much about dance, culture, and myself. One of my favorite parts of the trip was the masterclass with Opus Ballet and developing life long friendships with Gonzaga dancers." - **Ryan Hayes '22**



SUMMER 2023

# GONZAGA DANCE IN FLORENCE

**Gonzaga Dance in Florence 2023 will include dance students and students from the Gonzaga Jazz Music program who will travel together and learn in Italy 2023. The students will create a work looking at the historical development of Jazz Dance and Jazz Music, and where their journeys run parallel, diverge, and coalesce.**



"Those who participate in the 2023 summer program will be able to learn and tour with a performance we will learn during the 2023 Spring semester. This is an opportunity to share your love for dance with people you may have never expected to perform for. You will also have the chance to take master classes and travel throughout Italy. Additionally, you will take a Touring Performance course and another core course of your choosing. The summer program offers several fantastic experiences, and it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! As someone who has only heard of the wonders of Italy, I am most excited to experience the art and history Florence is known for, while being able to grow in my passion for dance. The ability to study the artform of dance, which is so dear to my heart, in a country as magnificent as Italy, is an incredible opportunity that I feel so fortunate to partake in. I cannot wait to enjoy every moment of learning and dancing with my close friends in beautiful Florence!" - **Carolyn Chadbourne '24**







# Theatre/Dance Studios





# Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center

## Magnuson Theatre





"Wanting to introduce young dancers to our Gonzaga Dance Program and life on campus, in 2016 I organized the first Gonzaga University Summer Dance Intensive. For two weeks each summer, the dance faculty and I welcome 60+ students to campus for dance training. As director of the annual SDI, my responsibilities include instruction, recruitment, promotion, curriculum and the hiring of additional teaching artists." - **Pam Erickson**



# Gonzaga Summer Dance Intensive

The Gonzaga University Summer Dance Intensives focuses on ballet and contemporary technique, with supplemental classes in Jazz, Hip-Hop, Modern, Dance Composition, Pilates, and Musical Theatre. Classes are taught by Gonzaga University Faculty and guest artists in the Gonzaga Dance Studios and the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center.

Intensive Sessions:

**Int./Adv. Senior Session (ages 13-20)**

Late July from 9:00am - 3:45pm

**Beg./Int. Junior Session (ages 9-13)**

Early August from 9:00am - 12:30pm

For more information:

Contact Summer Dance Intensive Director,  
**Pam Erickson (erickson@gonzaga.edu)**

Dance Program Assistant Director,  
**Halle Goodwin (goodwinh@gonzaga.edu)**

Phone: 509-313-4417

Email: [dance@gonzaga.edu](mailto:dance@gonzaga.edu)





# Fall Dance Day

"In 2019, I started the Gonzaga high school Fall Dance Day where under my leadership the Dance Department hosts 10-20 high school dancers on campus for a day of campus tours, faculty-led dance classes and a question and answer time with our current dance majors and minors. The outcome of both the Summer Dance Program and the Fall Dance Day has been successfully measured with alums of the programs among Gonzaga's in-coming freshman each year!" -

**Pam Erickson**

As Gonzaga Dance has grown, dancers have heard about the great education they can get here. Now they can visit for a full day program the last Saturday before Thanksgiving during *Dance Presents!* Not only do they get to see the facilities, learn from Gonzaga Dance faculty, and hear from current students, but they get to attend a professional dance concert in the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center.







LOVE  
YOUR  
BODY

Every February, we celebrate Valentines with a week of caring for the whole person through dance. Originally Love Your Body Week, Dance Club celebrates Dance as Cura Personalis week through panels, workshops, the Annual Screen Dance Film Festival, and performances, we join as a community to celebrate our bodies and raise funds for our Dance for Parkinson's program.



"Love Your Body Week was always a joyous occasion at All That Dance Seattle where it originated; a mini-break in the dance semester where the big kids came into our classes and had us draw pictures of the parts of our body that we were thankful for. The annual plastering-over of the mirrors was a reminder to dance from the inside out, not the outside in. As we got older and became those big kids ourselves, our own discussions became more nuanced. How can we practice self care toward the bodies we depend on? How does mental health come into the conversation? Where in the world of dance are bodies (whether they be female bodies, black bodies, fat bodies, differently abled bodies, queer bodies — any body that deviates from the "dancer ideal") being mistreated, and how should we navigate such injustices? I am thrilled that other ATD alumni (some of the very same big kids that came into my classes and led LYBW discussion years ago) have brought this growing national tradition to Gonzaga. It felt oddly comforting to pick up an activity packet and lead discussions in multiple classrooms for the first time in three years, with discussions relating to issues about bodies and minds in the dance community." - **Lily Sager '23**



"To me, a big part of the value in DCP/LYBW is the community coming together, not only to celebrate themselves, but to raise funds and awareness for Parkinson's Disease in the community. This seems like a beautiful manifestation of Gonzaga's humanistic Jesuit values. It's a great way for students to engage with the greater Spokane community--especially first year students who may not have had much of a chance to yet--while simultaneously spending meaningful time caring for their own physical and mental selves. I hope that students and community members continue to embrace both the community building and self-reflective aspects of DCP/LYBW going forward. To me, one of the most important things that happens in DCP/LYBW is that we have a space to talk about serious and heavy things like disordered eating. Sometimes I find it wild to think about how common disordered eating, unhealthy body image, and other mental health issues are, not only on college campuses in general, but here at Gonzaga, and how little we actually talk about these things in an intentional way. Having the opportunity to discuss these problems out in the open is something that I find incredibly inspiring. After discussions and activities, like our expert panel or class visits, I always feel a bit of a weight off my chest having such an open and honest conversation.

This year we had some amazing classes and workshops given by professionals in the area, including a Foam Rolling and Pilates Workshop. One of my favorite activities of DCP/LYBW has always been the expert panel, where we discuss issues of body imaging, self-worth, as well as how being a part of the dance world provides unique challenges to maintaining mental health and a positive self-image. This year we had a smaller group in attendance, which turned out to result in a very rich and intimate discussion that was really heartening to be a part of. Class visits, during which every academic dance and theatre class has a discussion, guided by a student leader about a topic surrounding a DCP week theme, are another highlight for many folks. This year our discussion was based around the "Body Peace Treaty" created years ago at All That Dance studio where LYWB began!" - **Emily Hunter**

'23



# Workshops



## INDA

The Inland Northwest Dance Association (INDA) is an umbrella organization for Dance Studios and Professionals in our region. Years ago we began a partnership with them to host 'Masterclasses' with performers in town, as part of the Broadway Touring Productions. Students have had the opportunity to learn from professionals touring with productions like *The Lion King*, *Motown*, *Margaritaville*, etc. Typically, the classes include warm up, technical combination, and then learning choreography from the production. Students that make time for these experiences sometimes take advantage of getting student rush tickets to see their newfound friend perform on the Opera House Stage downtown. Our workshops extend beyond this partnership with INDA to bringing back alumni to teach, or other professionals to give, students opportunities to learn from as many teachers as possible during their four years at Gonzaga.



## Ryan Hayes

Ryan Hayes is a Gonzaga Dance alum who is currently training in musical theatre at the Steps on Broadway Conservatory. During a trip home to Spokane, Ryan had the opportunity to share his experiences with current Gonzaga students through a musical theatre style workshop. Students were able to learn a jazz combination that was influenced by the intricacy and style of Bob Fosse. A Q&A session followed this workshop, where students got to learn more about Ryan's daily life dancing in New York, and advice on pursuing dance.

"Teaching a workshop at Gonzaga was so fun and rewarding, it was really great to be welcomed back into the incredible Gonzaga dance community and share what I have learned." - **Ryan Hayes '22**

# Lindsey Gaardsmoe



I had such a blast getting to teach a workshop for the dance program in January! I taught a Jazz Fusion piece, which the program will use for Orientation in the Fall, so my goal was to make the piece really fun, upbeat, and welcoming to encapsulate the Dance Program. At the same time, I wanted to challenge the dancers to approach the combination in a different way by intentionally listening to the sounds that were happening in the music and use that to inspire how they executed the movement.

Approaching dance in this way has helped me to refine my musicality and improve my movement quality tremendously. I believe it is something that the dancers can use in any style and continuously throughout their dance journey.

I was excited to do the Q&A portion of the workshop and share what my dance journey has looked like so far. When I was in their shoes, I was not exposed to the idea of having a career in commercial dance. I shared what inspired me to get in to the industry, some of my favorite jobs that I have worked so far, the commercial vs. company track, some of my current and future goals, and much more! If anyone is interested in learning more about pursuing dance, please do not hesitate to contact me, as I would love to chat about my experience thus far!"

**Lindsey Gaardsmoe '18**

"I really enjoyed Lindsey's teaching style because it had so much clarity and diversity in the movement. You can just tell that she really knows what she is doing. The Q&A at the end was so inspiring to hear how she started where we all are now, and is now working with renowned artists in LA!"

**- Mia Cretarolo '22**





# 60x60

**60x60** is a one hour public concert presented by the Gonzaga Dance Club. It includes 60, 60-second pieces during Fall Family Weekend. All students are able to contribute to the project through either choreography, performance, screen dance composition, or music composition. This show is a great way to get more involved in the dance program, outside of taking registered dance courses.





**Claire Columbini '20**

"60X60 Dance was such a special part of my experience in the Dance Program. Suzanna Bilderback and I were the first to produce and direct it on-campus. The process of creating the show was particularly unique for us since we had minimal experience in production, but we weren't starting from scratch. 60X60 Dance is a part of the 60X60 family with productions world-wide. This show was something we knew would be successful because of the great opportunities it provides to all dancers. Since the production contains 60 individual dances, it can be as low-commitment or as involved as a person wants. Thus, making it appealing to someone trying their hand at dancing as well as experienced dancers wanting a challenge. This was also the perfect opportunity for dancers to explore their choreographic abilities and expand their experience in other genres.

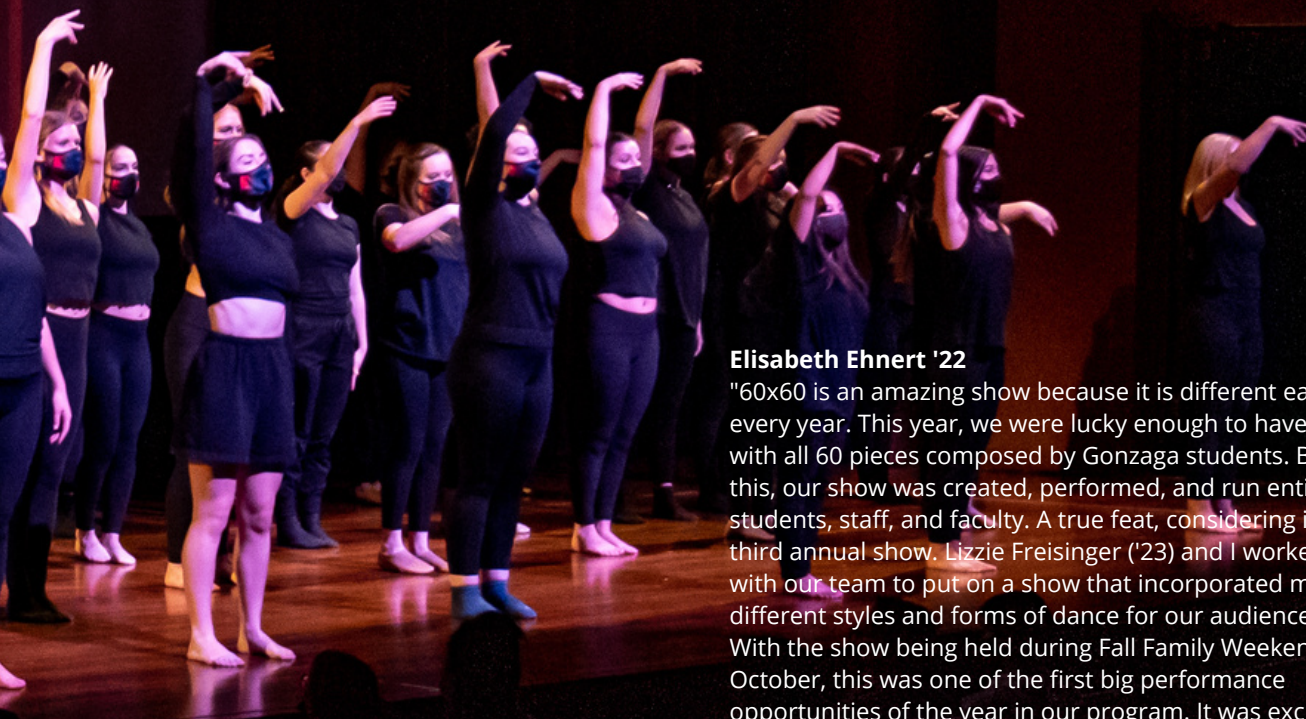
As a new student-led show, we encountered many challenges while preparing for the final performance. However, Suzanna and I loved the inclusivity this show allows, and were ecstatic with the overwhelming support and participation we encountered. This success helped us grow the show for its second year where we were able to move into the main theater within the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center. Performing in the Coughlin Theater, along with the large amount of student involvement, were great accomplishments that I am extremely proud of. I can only hope that the show continues to grow and evolve for what best serves Gonzaga's Performing Arts Students in the future. "

**Suzanna Bilderback '21**

"My proudest accomplishment during my Gonzaga career was bringing the 60x60 art movement to the Gonzaga Dance stage. The "60 by 60" art movement began not as a dance production, but as a music festival in New York. It quickly melded into an interdisciplinary movement, inspiring 60x60 Film and now 60x60 Dance showcases across the country.

Claire Colombini and I combined forces to direct, produce, choreograph for, AND perform in the first and second, 60x60 Dance Showcase. Last year, I had the honor of choreographing and directing both live performance pieces and screen dances for the production, being spear headed by new student leaders.

In Fall 2019, we gathered 75 dancers to put on an hour-long show with 60 one-minute pieces, performing to a sold-out audience. Against all odds, we rallied 80 participants last Fall for a live-streamed show, with the addition of screen dance to the original 60x60 framework. This program helped us push GU dancers, choreographers, and audience members beyond their comfort zones while encouraging innovative and explorative movement, film, and music. This experience allowed me to see my passion for arts administration and production. I am proud to leave a legacy for the Gonzaga community."



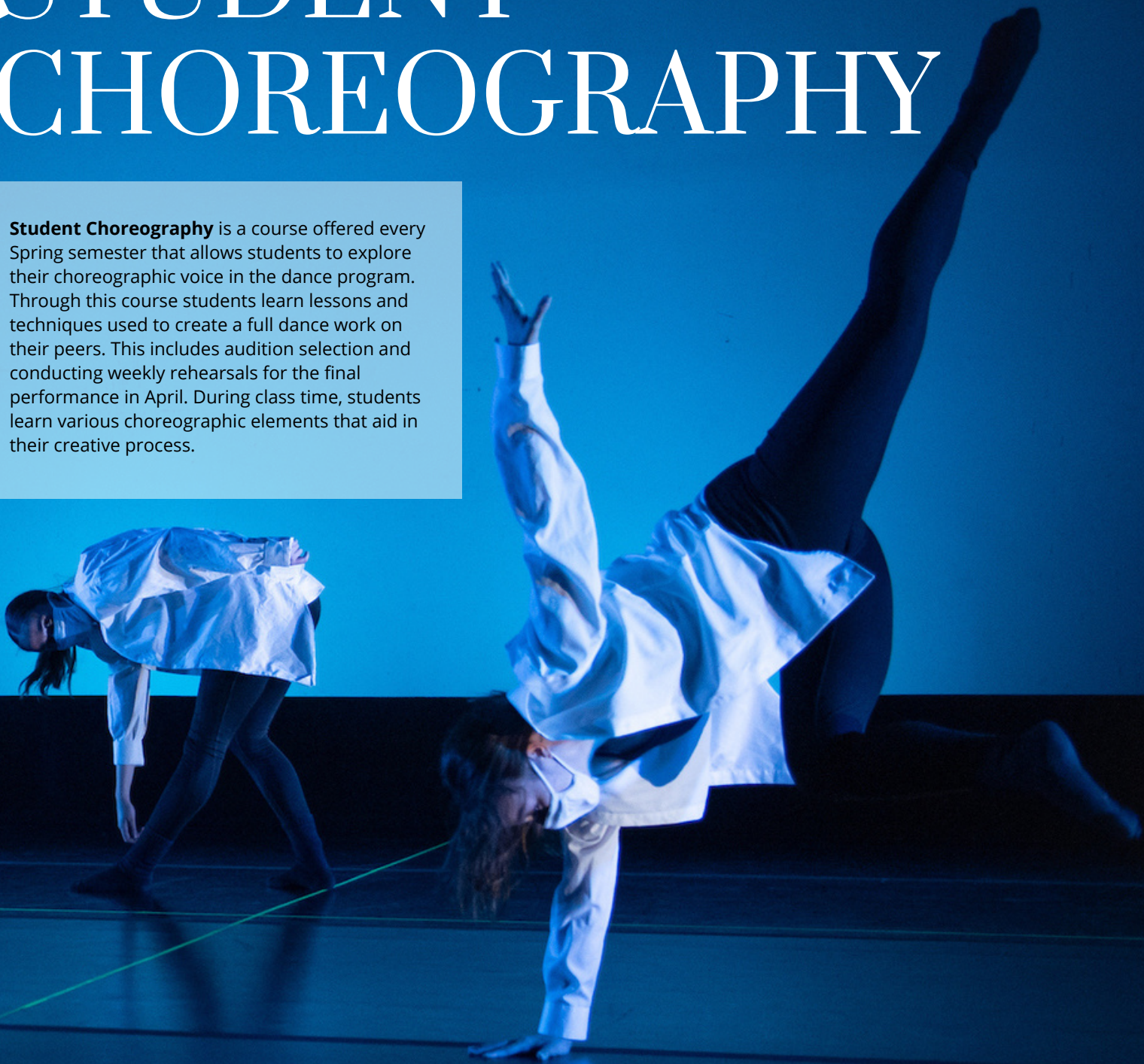
**Elisabeth Ehnert '22**

"60x60 is an amazing show because it is different each and every year. This year, we were lucky enough to have a show with all 60 pieces composed by Gonzaga students. Because of this, our show was created, performed, and run entirely by GU students, staff, and faculty. A true feat, considering it was the third annual show. Lizzie Freisinger ('23) and I worked closely with our team to put on a show that incorporated many different styles and forms of dance for our audience to enjoy. With the show being held during Fall Family Weekend in October, this was one of the first big performance opportunities of the year in our program. It was exciting to see our community come together to create art, especially all our freshmen. 60x60 is particularly special because it is entirely student run. Dancers can be involved in as much or as little as they would like. It is a chance for students to dip their toes into choreographing, composing, or performing. It is truly one of my favorite shows our program puts on, and I cannot wait to see how it flourishes."



# STUDENT CHOREOGRAPHY

**Student Choreography** is a course offered every Spring semester that allows students to explore their choreographic voice in the dance program. Through this course students learn lessons and techniques used to create a full dance work on their peers. This includes audition selection and conducting weekly rehearsals for the final performance in April. During class time, students learn various choreographic elements that aid in their creative process.



Covid-19 presented challenges when it came to this course. In 2020, the course was fully remote and no performances could take place. The students' ideas and choreography were turned into solo screen dances presented in place of the final performance. In Spring 2021, Choreography students were back in person, but were constrained to 10'x10' taped boxes to dance in. As a class, they discussed how to be as creative as possible, while keeping dancers distanced. Dancers had nine boxes to choreograph with and created unique ways to move dancers safely within those spaces. This included coming up with different strategies for dancers to exit and enter and giving time between the use of each box. This challenge made levels and directions of the dance even more dynamic, and some even creatively used the tape as a 'tightrope' for the movement. This course has challenged students for decades, and it was impressive to see how even this extreme 'limitation' was made into a creative asset. The concert was held in Magnuson Theatre with a sold out, socially distanced audience. The dance companies used classrooms in College Hall, once called the Administration Building, and would rotate onto the stage, and exit back to their greenroom/classroom. We found solutions for everything! As you know, the show must go on!



"The student choreography class opened my eyes to the transcendent nature of dance. I discovered that whether performing choreography as a dancer, or taking in a piece as an audience member, intentional movement creates opportunities for the mind and body to connect with the soul on a deeper level than other art forms. My creative journey in the class revealed to me just how powerful, beautiful, and important a role choreography can have to inspire those around us when words aren't enough. What a gift!" - **Ariel Reynolds (Woods) '13**



**Kelsey Wickman '13** - Taking choreography was one of those classes that I was really excited about, and also very nervous for, because I knew the challenge it would be. The whole process from learning about choreographic concepts, to learning our own teaching styles, and figuring out how to count out the music was fun and rewarding. I still use many of these skills, whether I am in the studio, at work giving directions, or showing leadership. Choreography ended up being more of a challenge for me than I could have imagined, but it pushed me more than any other class to work outside my comfort zone and develop my skills. It's such a unique experience to go through. Knowing you are doing it with a cohort of dancers alongside you makes it a really wonderful bonding experience.



Pro tip: Don't be too hard on yourselves. I remember feeling disappointed in the moment about my piece and struggled a lot throughout. However, when I have looked back and watched the recording, I have grown to be so proud of what I accomplished. Every time I watch it, I wish the younger me would not have been so critical. Enjoy all the ups and downs of the process! "



"As a 6th Grade teacher, I reflect on how the skills developed in choreography class impact my teaching. I need to meet my students at the level they are. I learned so many things from Gonzaga Dance, but this stands out"  
**Alyssa Drinkwine, '20**





# MORE CLASSES

## PRINCIPLES OF DANCE CONDITIONING

**Principles of Dance Conditioning** introduces the student dancers to the foundations of human movement and Functional Awareness Principles. This course allows students to gain an understanding of the body and how it functions through movement exploration. Students learn experiential anatomy with applications to dance training by connecting the scientific with the somatic and anatomy with artistry. In the first half of the course, we look at alignment, posture, and use of the body to help improve its function and longevity. For the second half, we focus on the kinetic chains of the body and discover how connected everything in the body is and how it best functions as a cohesive organism. All throughout the semester, the dancers explore various stretching, conditioning and somatic practices to help them further engage with the course content. The ultimate goal of this course is to empower the student dancer to know and trust their bodies as a beautiful, strong, and capable creation.

"My biggest take away from this class was becoming more aware of mindfulness practices that can inform your dancing and physicality as a mover. We worked on skills like meditation, and other practices about being present, that I still utilize today. It really opened my mind as a dancer to the more spiritual and psychological side of dance"

**Brooke Geffrey-Bowler '22**





# ADVANCED COMPOSITION: SCREEN DANCE

## **Advanced Composition: Screen Dance**

has a foundation in dance conceptualization, analysis, communication, and choreography. Students create advanced compositions by developing their voices as dance artists, translate through the perspective of the lens. Students in this course observe, reflect, revise, and further develop their individual creative voice.

Some of the key learning outcomes from this course include the ability to design, create, communicate, and effectively develop an idea and vision of complex movement compositions for dance on film. Students receive positive and constructive feedback from their instructor and peers, and work collaboratively with the instructor and their peers to develop and complete a finished work of dance on film.

## **Karla Parbon**

"The first advanced composition class screendance was this past fall. I had the privilege of designing this course and bringing my newfound passion for dance on film together and sharing it with the students to explore. We looked at a lot of dances on film, talked about lighting, camera angles, storytelling from the perspective of the lens and so much more! I loved every minute of it, and I couldn't have asked for a better group of students for my first crack at this course. Their final film projects surpassed expectations and I am so excited to see how this course grows and develops. "



"I really enjoyed being behind the camera rather than in front of it. In this class I was not only able to create the choreography and storyline, but also become more familiar with the directing and editing side of dance."

**Hannah Grimes '22**



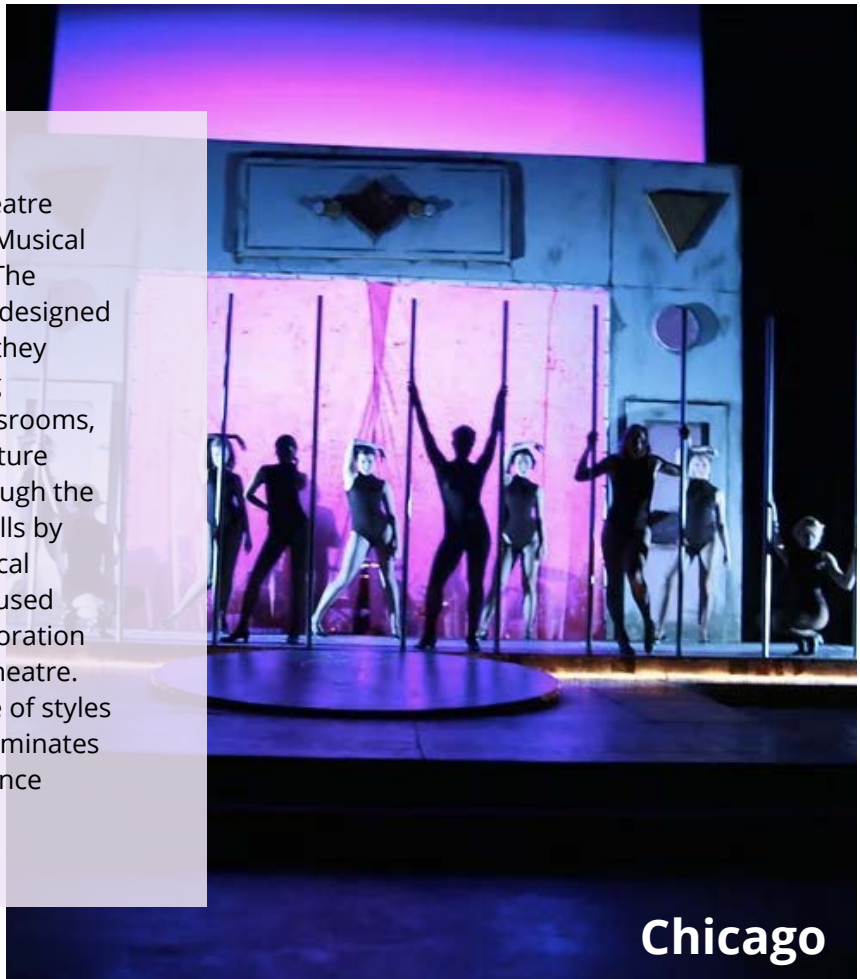
# MUSICAL THEATRE

## Performance and Pedagogy with Joseph Lyons

The Department of Theatre and Dance has typically produced a Musical every other year, and the Dance Program has offered Musical Theatre Dance. Suzanne had the pleasure of directing/choreographing such musicals as: *Pippin*, *Seussical*, *Urintown*, *A Chorus Line*, and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Students have always wanted more. In Fall of 2018, two dance students, Kelsey Moran ('20) and Alexa Robinson ('20), directed a Musical Theatre Dance Revue. And in Spring of 2021, Kalleigh Wagner ('21) and Ryan Hayes ('22) "zoomed" in professionals from the Musical Theatre field for workshops, and produced a two-person Musical Theatre Dance and Song Showcase.

Now with Joseph Lyons teaching, we are offering courses in Musical Theatre Dance Pedagogy, Musical Theatre Dance, and Musical Theatre Tap. We are looking forward to him advising future student-directed Musical Theatre Dance Revues.

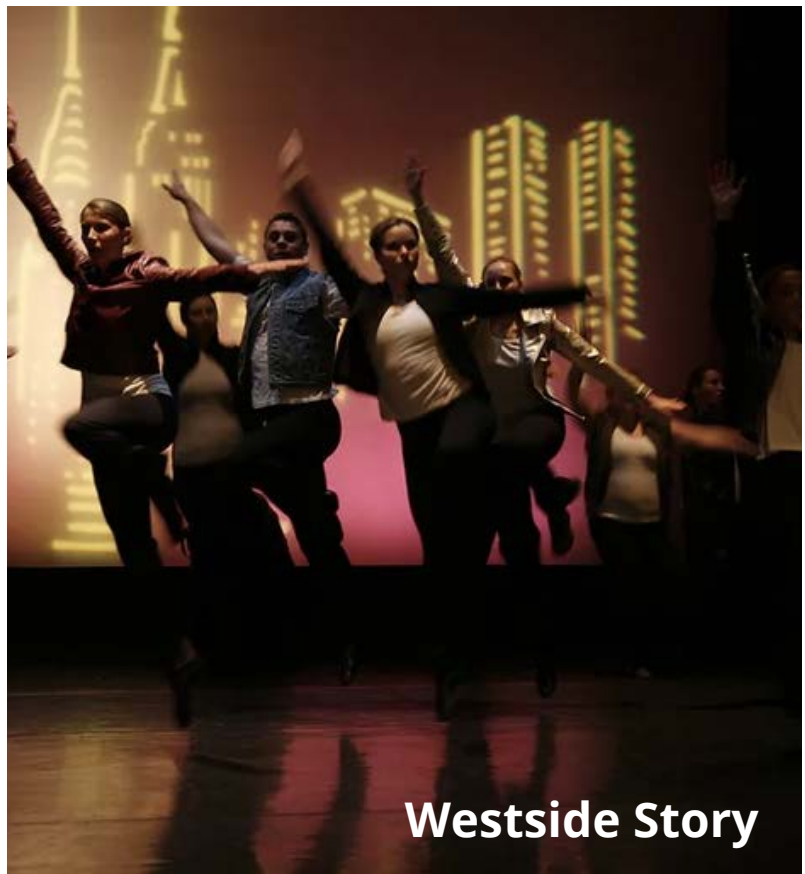
Joseph teaches both the Musical Theatre Pedagogy course in the fall and the Musical Theatre Performance in the spring. The Musical Theatre Pedagogy course is designed to instruct and support students as they refine pedagogical tools for teaching theatrical movement in studios, classrooms, and production settings. It guides future facilitators and choreographers through the process of teaching performance skills by utilizing musical theater styles. Musical Theatre Dance is a performance-focused study of dance coupled with an exploration of the history of American musical theatre. The course navigates the wide range of styles in the musical theatre canon and culminates with a performance in the Spring Dance Concert.





**When asked about the future of Musical Theatre in the program**

Joseph states, "I would love to see musical theatre grow and become more prominent at Gonzaga University, and even become the reason prospective students choose Gonzaga. I would love to see a minor in musical theatre developed someday! One of my favorite elements of the form, especially at the university level, is how it brings different disciplines together to create something great. I think cross-departmental projects inspire our students to be interpersonal collaborators and yield a strong sense of community."



**Westside Story**



**Oklahoma**



# Pushing the Boundaries



In 2020, the Gonzaga Dance Program auditioned students to be a part of the first ballet ensemble for the fall semester. The ballet ensemble featured 12 Gonzaga ballet dancers who took part in the Pacific Northwest Ballet (PNB) residency. Kyle Davis, one of the company's principal dancers, instructed the dancers virtually, and choreographed a piece for them to perform at the annual *Dance Presents!* show. This piece was a 17-minute long performance that included complex choreography. Each dancer was required to dance in 10-by-10 foot boxes. Masks was an added challenge to this dance, forcing the dancers to adapt, and focus on controlling their breathing throughout the piece.

Through the challenges of learning choreography over Zoom, dancing with masks, and being confined to a 10-foot bubble, the dancers excelled on stage performing elegantly to variations on a Theme by Tchaikovsky, Op.35a composed by Anton Arensky, played by Camerata Tchaikovsky. This experience demonstrated the dancers ability to adapt to difficult situations, and perform a professional-level ballet.



**Suzanne Ostersmith** explains, "Dance is about movement and taking up space so we're used to traveling and leaping, but when dancers are confined to 10-by-10 foot squares, that can really limit the imagination. With a professional like Davis, these restrictions actually expanded his imagination because the way he takes ten feet and creates this three-dimensional, rich movement using different directions and shifting through space has really been impressive to behold."



## **Peyton Mckenny '22**

"The ballet ensemble was one of my all time favorite dance experiences at Gonzaga. Ballet has always been my passion, and I was excited for the opportunity to work with Kyle. We auditioned for the ensemble in the studio while Kyle was on Zoom. We learned small excerpts of the choreography during the audition so Kyle could begin casting. Rehearsals continued on Zoom, which was a very interesting process. The most difficult part of having Kyle on zoom and the dancers in person was understanding the different facings, and directions of the choreography. Rehearsals went really well, and it was inspiring to be a part of a group of dancers that were so dedicated and hardworking. We all got to know each other really well, including Kyle. These bonds were a large reason of why the experience was so fun and rewarding. After one of our rehearsals, we went to a group dinner to Caruso's and it was so fun to spend time together outside of the studio. The performance was a 17-minute long piece in the MWPAC that was livestreamed. Kyle joined us on Zoom, and also shared some of his screendances. The energy during the performance was amazing and I could tell we were all dancing our hearts out. After the performance was over I felt proud, but also sad that the experience was coming to an end!"







## Audrey Parks ('20)

"Dance is still very much a part of my life and I am lucky to be able to stay connected to the Gonzaga Dance program by working with the student choreography performances. I also teach at studios in the Spokane area and teach Dance for Parkinson's. I also work on the DEAW (Dance Educator Association of Washington) board as the conference coordinator.

One of my favorite dance memories at Gonzaga was participating in the Student Choreography Classes. Taking classes from other dancers creates such a strong community; it can challenge you because you never know who's company you will end up in and it is such a unique experience that I have yet to run into outside of Gonzaga. Being a choreographer is hugely impactful and I loved how much I learned in the class. To be in a company again the following year, after taking the class was very rewarding. I miss dancing with peers for fun and performing for the community in the Mag."

## Vanessa Fisher ('19)

"I am currently becoming certified as a Barre fitness instructor. This outlet has been wonderful since it incorporates many of the things I love about dance, but fits better into my professional life. My favorite memory was performing at the new performing arts center my senior year at the Spring Dance Concert. It was so special to be a part of such a unique experience with all my dance friends. I was lucky the building was completed before I graduated so I got to experience performing in such an amazing venue!"

## Lindsey Gaardsmoe ('18)

"Currently, I am dancing professionally in Los Angeles, specifically pursuing opportunities in commercial dance (anything for film, TV, music videos, artist tours, etc.). I also work at TMILLY, a professional dance studio, and teach at a local kids dance studio. Some of my favorites memories at Gonzaga would be getting to tour around to the Spokane elementary schools, working with a company to perform a piece at ACDA, brunch at Suzanne's after SDC, and just getting to hang out with all of the dancers backstage at every performance! "





## Suzanna Bilderback ('21)

"I currently work in the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center as the administrative assistant. I am always looking for opportunities to move and create. One way I stay active in the dance community is through teaching. I am honored to teach workshops and classes at local dance studios. With the rise of popularity of dance on film, I have been honing my screen dance directing, choreographing, and editing as well.

I am happy to say that it is difficult for me to narrow down a single favorite Gonzaga dance memory. If I had to choose, the most impactful memory was our Gonzaga in Florence, "A New Season" dance tour in the Summer of 2019. Being a member of this touring company and having the opportunity to perform a solo in the historic, Teatro della Pergola, in Florence, Italy, was one of the proudest moments of my life. Working with Italian conservatory students, and our very own Gonzaga musicians and choir, was a surreal experience, and I often look back and wonder if that was the peak of my performance career."

## Claire Colombini ('21)

"I graduated with the class of 2021 with majors in Biology and Dance. After graduating I completed an Animal Care Internship with Northwest Trek Wildlife Park. I now work full time as a veterinary assistant in a veterinary hospital in Gig Harbor, Washington. However, I will be moving back to the East-side to attend Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine beginning Fall 2022. I currently find time to dance as a preferred form of exercise, with hopes to teach a little in the future."

## Ryan Hayes ('22)

"Dance is still a part of my life as I dance at the Steps on Broadway Conservatory and dance professionally. I will be dancing in Mamma Mia! this summer at a regional theatre. My favorite Gonzaga dance memory was performing in Florence at the Human Rights Conference, or the musical theatre workshops that went on last Spring. They were so fun and educational!"



## Kelsie Ackerman ('21)

"Dance is still part of my life and I know it always will be. I am currently living in London doing my masters in biomechanics, while taking weekly dance classes at a training studio here. I am currently searching for more dance opportunities. My favorite Gonzaga dance memory is when we hosted ACDA 2020, right before Covid first affected us. The Gonzaga dance community really came together that week to dance, be together, and enjoy our time when there were so many unknowns ahead of us. I was part of the Gonzaga University Repertory Dance Company that year and we made it to the final showcase of the ACDA competition the day we found out our school would be cancelled for the rest of the semester. We really put everything onto that stage and had our strongest performance together that night. We left the stage hugging, knowing how special that moment was we had shared. It is something I'll always remember."



## Hannah Hodulik ('14)

"I graduated from Gonzaga University in 2014 with a Major in Theater Performance and Minors in Dance and History. After graduation, I moved to sunny Southern California to work for the Happiest Place on Earth, helping portray some royal, villainous, and MARVELous friends. Currently, I still make magic on the weekends while pursuing my masters in Global Strategic Communications & Audience Analytics, and managing a mid-sized apartment complex. Performance will always be a part of who I am, and I plan to continue on with the skills I learned at GU. My favorite memories include choreography class, Boundless Belly Dancing, and Choreographing for Alice in Wonderland."





## Andrea Bracamonte ('21)

"I am currently living in NYC, working for a non-profit called STEM From Dance. We use dance to build confidence and creativity in young girls, to inspire them to learn more, and pursue a STEM career. So much of what I learned at GU I have carried with me into this job! Outside of work, I am taking classes and training at many of NYC's top studios with some incredible teachers and choreographers. I am hoping to broaden my career as a professional dancer while also working on a few personal projects, so stay tuned! There are so many to choose from, but I think my favorite memory would have to be finding out GURDC was selected to be in the final Gala performance at ACDA in March of 2020. We were all sitting at Wendy's eating Frosty's when the news came out and we were cheering so loud, crying, and hugging. I am sure everyone in there thought we were crazy, but it was such a special moment to find out we had the chance to perform one last time. I do not think any of us realized the magnitude of how the world was about to change, but we all knew this was one of the most incredible moments to make history for GU making the gala for the first time on top of the looming pandemic."



## Kelli Carnes ('08)

"I currently perform with the Guild Dance Company. Most recently, performing a commissioned work by the Reno Chamber Orchestra and Auburn Symphony Orchestra in the re-imagining of Aaron Copland and Martha Graham's 'Appalachian Spring,' which again focuses on mental health, diversity, identity, and community."

The experience that stands out the most to me at Gonzaga was teaching creative dance in the ZagDance program to kids who otherwise might not have the opportunity to dance. It was truly rewarding to watch the kids become more engaged and expressive throughout my time with them. Ultimately, it connected me to the mission of the Academic Dance Program, service through dance, and has influenced the way I approach dance and the kinds of dance work I choose to do. Since I left Gonzaga, I have had the opportunity to perform with several Seattle-based and Honolulu-based dance companies including 127th St. Dance Company, Convergence Dance Theatre, Version Excursion, and PRICEarts N.E.W.. I was drawn to these dance companies because they were dedicated to producing work that fosters awareness and conversations on issues like mental health, diversity, identity, and community. With N.E.W. I even had the opportunity to participate in outreach by bringing dance to schools and community centers, hosting health professional led workshops on mental health for youth, and providing suicide prevention resources. Continuing to dance and perform after college has allowed me to build and become part of a stronger community, created life-long friendships, and been one of the most rewarding journeys I have taken."







## Caley Edwards ('15)

"I am the founder and owner of the Spokane Dance Boutique. Dance has always been a huge part of my life. The moment I stopped viewing myself from others point of view, I became a dancer who danced because she loved it and danced freely. This is my favorite dance memory because I became the dancer I was meant to be. The Gonzaga Dance Program pushed me outside of my comfort zone and provided me with the opportunity to perform in Spring Dance Concerts, attend ACDA conferences, be a ZagDance instructor, be the ASL choreographer for Weaving Our Sisters' Voices, teach Dance for Parkinson's, and choreograph for an all-boys catholic school for the spring production. I am blessed to still be connected to the Gonzaga Dance family to this day."



## Erin Walker ('21)

"I have not been dancing as much these days. However, dance always holds a huge place in my heart and I try to remain as connected to it as possible. Whether it's going to shows, taking classes, or even watching videos online, I am always looking for ways to stay involved. My favorite Gonzaga dance memory was touring A New Season in Italy. After crafting the performance for nearly a year, and already having had the opportunity to share it with the Gonzaga community in Spokane, it was so special watching it grow abroad. Exploring all that Italy has to offer was breathtaking, and experiencing that within the close-knit dance program community was unforgettable. It was so fun seeing the city through tours, dinners and shows and getting to know the dance community, and even taking classes at local studios."



## Sydney Skinner ('20)

"Dance is most definitely still a huge part of my life and always will be! I am teaching dance classes at a local dance studio a couple days a week. Trying to stay well rounded in my dance genres by teaching ballet, jazz, and working with special needs students as well! I am still creating on my own as well by getting in the studio whenever I can! Being in a dance studio gives me time to create and move where I feel most comfortable!

My favorite Gonzaga dance memory is when I got the chance to travel abroad to Italy. Being able to tour around different theaters and perform for different audiences is an experience like no other! This opportunity also brought the dance program together with our choir program which was such an amazing learning and bonding experience! I would go back and do it all again in a heartbeat!!"



## Carly Goodspeed ('18)

"Dance is still a part of my life now as I found myself jumping back into Competitive Irish Dancing once I graduated in 2018. The world of Irish Dancing is not new to me as I had been involved, dancing, teaching, and competing for approximately eight years before going to Gonzaga. At this point, competition looks a little different than it once did (in part due to the logistics of taking time off as well as a minor interruption due to the pandemic), but I can proudly say that I have touched the podium at both the regional and national levels over the last few years.

As an incoming Freshman with an interest in Biochemistry, I found myself walking into Jazz I on the first day of class and from that point on, I knew that I had stumbled upon something special. Although I had been dancing since the age of three, once going to college I assumed that dance would no longer be a part of my life. Fast forward, the next four years I would find myself filling my schedule with dance classes and performance credits, taking on creative roles whenever I could, painting with my feet for the Gonzaga Will... Campaign, working with a local Spokane musician to choreograph for movement and music, teaching kids from the local community, working with guest choreographers, touring the Beautiful Weapons show with the Rep Company, and so many more amazing memories! The Gonzaga Dance program is a special place filled with opportunity and it would be an impossible task to narrow it down to just one favorite memory."





# Gonzaga Dance ALUMNI

## **Class of 2022**

### **Majors**

Maria Carter  
Brooke Geffrey-Bowler  
Anna Gyure  
Ryan Hayes

### **Minors**

Sophia Alvord  
Elisabeth Ehnert  
Hannah Grimes  
Peyton McKenny  
Alexa Varga

## **Class of 2021**

### **Majors**

Suzanna Bilderback  
Clara Buck  
Claire Colombini  
Kayla Crow  
PJ Seeberger  
Whitney Temby-Sturtevant  
Kalleigh Wagner  
Erin Walker

### **Minors**

Kelsie Ackerman  
Andrea Bracamonte  
Annie Buttafoco  
Chloe Crawford  
Corinne Fukunaga  
Isabelle Horgan  
Hillary Longoria

## **Class of 2020**

### **Majors**

Kaylee Bosse  
Alyssa Drinkwine  
Kelsey Moran  
Audrey Parks  
Helen Schantz  
Sydney Skinner  
**Minors**  
Reilly Carson  
Emma Leary  
Kendall Lilley  
Emily Marchel  
Sophia Orzepowski  
Alexa Robinson

## **Class of 2019**

### **Majors**

Angela Boulet  
Cassie Selle  
**Minors**  
Kyla Colliton  
Kelly Crum  
Vanessa Fisher  
Molly Foster  
Madelyn Healy  
Briana Ofilas  
Olivia Sands  
Gabby Thuillier

## **Class of 2018**

### **Minors**

Emily Earnshaw  
Lindsey Gaardsmoe  
Carly Goodspeed  
Frankie Giuntoli  
Madison Hendricks  
Marisa Mathias  
Amber Weatherly

## **Class of 2017**

### **Minors**

Elaina Pignolet  
Britta Pihl  
Hannah Resnick  
Halee Sanko

## **Class of 2016**

### **Minors**

Katie Burns  
Diana Fisher  
Miranda Heckman  
Laura Jacob  
Melanie Lowry  
Janelle vonBirgelen

## **Class of 2015**

### **Minors**

Patron Cooney  
Caley Edwards  
Halle Goodwin  
Laura Shellooe

## **Class of 2014**

### **Minors**

Becca Campbell  
Anna Demarinis  
Breanne Flynn  
Hannah Hodulik  
Breanna Johnson  
Cheryl Villareal  
Hannah Wentz

## **Class of 2013**

### **Minors**

Meg Gardner  
Nicole Hall  
Maddy Nolan  
Tamera Pumphrey  
Ellie Thodal  
Maite Urcaregui  
Kelsey Wickman  
Ariel Wood

## **Class of 2012**

### **Minors**

Jessie Castro  
Marisa Crisostomo  
Danika Pariseau  
Emily Werner

## **Class of 2011**

### **Minors**

Samantha Cottrell  
Shannon Kestell  
Acacia Standish

## **Class of 2010**

### **Minors**

Rachel Erby  
Devon Huggins  
Rachel Packard

## **Class of 2009**

### **Minors**

Laurel Clark  
Michael Crowley  
Ann Zimmerschied

## **Class of 2008**

### **Minors**

Meghan Bookey  
Emily Burnett  
Kelli Carnes  
Annemarie Hein  
Virginia Moore

## **Class of 2007**

### **Minors**

Beth Bland  
Megan Bowers

## **Class of 2006**

### **Minors**

Christi Anne Hofland  
Julia Keller



# Gonzaga Dance ALUMNI





# GONZAGA DANCE SEASON



September

Classes begin  
Dance for Parkinson's begins  
Season Showcase  
Guest Artist Residency  
Auditions for various companies

October

60x60  
Fall Family Weekend  
ZagDance begins

November

Dance Workshops from guest artists  
Guest Artist Residency  
Dance Presents!  
Fall Dance Day

December

ZagDance Showcase  
Snowflake Showcase  
Holiday Cookie Decorating Party  
Finals Week  
Winter Break Begins

January

Classes begin  
Guest Workshops

February

Dance as Cura Personalis Week

March

American College Dance Association Conference  
Dance Treks, Spring Break  
Spring Workshop and Mock Audition

April

Student Choreography Concert  
Spring Dance Concert  
Dance Brunch

May

Theatre and Dance Awards Banquet  
Finals  
Graduation

June

Dance Tour Study Abroad in Florence, Italy  
(odd years)