

# 2026 AFB Summer Intensive Faculty



## Brian Earles

Majored in Theater Arts and Minored in dance at Hendrix College '18. Brian has been teaching Jazz/Musical Theater Dance since 2019 and has been able to work with Henderson State University, the Arkansas Academy of Dance, Shuffles and Ballet 2, ACT 2, and more. Choreography credits include *Memphis*, *Cinderella* and *The Wizard of Oz* at the Argenta Community Theater, and *Kinky Boots* at The Studio Theater of Little Rock. Brian has also recently served as the Assistant Director/Assistant Choreographer at The Arkansas Repertory Theater's production of *A Little Shop of Horrors*. He has also been seen onstage at The Rep in *Guys and Dolls* (MC/Ensemble) and *Chicago* (Aaron, US Mary Sunshine) and *Little Shop of Horrors* (US Audrey II). Further stage credits include *West Side Story* (Toro) and *Guys and Dolls* (Drunk/ Ensemble) with the Arkansas Shakespeare Festival, *Grease* (Rodger/Rump) with Murry's Dinner Playhouse, *Kinky Boots* (Lola) at the Studio Theater of Little Rock, as well as *Memphis* (Gator), *Sweet Charity* (Daddy), *Chorus Line* (Greg) and *La Cage Aux Folles* (Phaedra) with the Argenta Community Theater. Brian's repertoire also includes Film work such as *Righteous Indignation* and *Transatlantic Caper*, and has been seen on screen in the Hendrix Red Brick Film Festival, The Charlotte Black Film Festival, and The Las Vegas Film Festival. Volunteer credits also include the CARTI Festival of Fashion, Dancing in Dreamland, and as an instructor/performer with the National Tumor Foundation's Dancing with Our Stars Benefit.



## Emily Karnes

Emily Karnes is an accomplished artist and teacher with significant education and experience in dance. She received her early classical ballet training with Rebecca Miller Stalcup, Dennis Poole, Mark Bush, Melinda Tobian, and Laura Hood Babcock, at Arkansas Academy of Dance. She also attended intensive programs at the Joffrey Ballet and with Doug Varone and Dancers. Ms. Karnes holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Dance from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where she studied closely with Joseph Cox, Nancy Happel, Rhythm McCarthy, Stephanie Thibeault, and Stephen Stone. In recognition of her academic and artistic excellence, Ms. Karnes was awarded a full scholarship to study dance at the Accademia dell'Arte in Arezzo, Italy in 2012. Beginning 2009, Ms. Karnes was an instructor at Arkansas Academy of Dance. She was also a resident dancer of the affiliated Arkansas Festival Ballet for eight years, performing a number of roles including Dew Drop Fairy, Clara, Sugar Plum Fairy, and Grand Pas De Deux in *The Nutcracker*, as well as Alice in *Alice in Wonderland*, Princess Aurora in *Sleeping Beauty*, and Tinker Bell in *Peter Pan*. Since her move to Austin, Texas in 2014, she has performed with modern dance companies Lisa Nicks' Band of Wild Ponies as well as Shakti Moves Dance Company, under the direction of Erica Santiago. While in Austin, she directed and taught the youth program, as well as adult students at Slavin Nadal School of Ballet and Capital City Ballet. She is currently a director of Ovation Ballet Company, the affiliate ballet company to Dancers Workshop, where she has taught ballet for all ages for 3 years.



## **Trent Montgomery**

Originally from Arkansas, having trained with Arkansas Academy of Dance and Arkansas Festival Ballet, under the direction of Rebecca Miller Stalcup and Melinda Tobian. Mr. Montgomery is a dance artist, teacher and choreographer who is currently a company member with Les Ballet Trockadero de Monte Carlo. He was recently featured in the New York Times for his artistry and performance excellence as a soloist with Les Ballet Trockadero. His performance repertoire is extensive having performed world renown choreography and ballet classics. He holds both a MFA and BFA in Dance from Florida State University and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where he had the privilege to perform works by Merce Cunningham, Dan Wagoner and others. He served as the Associate Artistic Director of Ballet Arts Conservatory of Tallahassee for several years. Trent is certified in Progressing Ballet Technique, Pilates and Gyrokinesis.



## **Rebecca Miller Stalcup**

Founding member of Arkansas Academy of Dance & Arkansas Festival Ballet in 2000, with a team of devoted supporters. With 30 + years of teaching experience, she continues to promote the highest standards of training and demonstrates a unique ability to instill, in her students, a joy for dance along with an appreciation of formal ballet etiquette. Ms. Stalcup engages the talents and expertise of established instructors to suit the demands of each level of training offered in the academy. She holds a BA in Psychology, working as an intern at Harbour House in Louisiana. She is a former company dancer with the Lake Charles Civic Ballet, Lake Charles Ballet, Delia Stewart Dance Company, Ballet Arkansas, and former Children's Division Principal of the Academy of Ballet Arkansas. Rebecca has served as Adjunct Professor at University of Arkansas Little Rock, teaching ballet and is a Mental Wellness Certified Dance Educator through Danscend, and founder and instructor of *Dance for Life* - a Dance for Parkinson's program. As instructor on the Arkansas Artist Roster, she has worked with teens at Pulaski County Juvenile Detention and served as artist in residence at both local and statewide public schools. Locally, Ms. Stalcup has taught dance classes at both The Anthony School, The Montessori School, and Maumelle High School and continues to work as a substitute teacher for LRSD. As Artistic Director for Arkansas Festival Ballet (AFB), she has produced, choreographed and received awards for original works and statewide recognition for her contribution to the dance community. She has been the spotlight feature in publications of AR Democrat Gazette, Inviting Arkansas, Little Rock Family, Dance Magazine, and The Idle Class. Through her leadership, AFB continues to celebrate membership with Regional Dance America/ Southwest. Under her artistic direction, AFB has worked collaboratively with local arts organizations including Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre, Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre, Argenta Community Theatre, Arkansas Arts Center, ACANSA, Conway Symphony Orchestra, Little Rock Wind Symphony, Opera in the Rock, Pine Bluff Symphony Orchestra, South Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Saint Mark Baptist, Praeclara Arts, The Clinton Foundation, UALR Theatre and Arts, UALR Concert Choir, Wildwood Park for the Arts. Ms. Stalcup has staged classic ballets *The Nutcracker Ballet*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Coppelia*, *Cinderella*, *Les Patineurs*, and has created original choreography for full length story book ballets, *Peter Pan*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland*, *Aladdin*, *Beauty and the Beast* ( 2 versions), *Snow White* (2 versions), *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, *Princess and the Frog*, *Babes in Toyland* and *Hansel and Gretel*. She has created original choreography for collaborative opera productions including, *The Magic Flute*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Carmen*, *Aida*, *Carmina Burana*, *Peter Grimes*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, in addition to musicals *The Music Man*, and *Pirates of Penzance*. Her original choreography is also seen in award winning works, *A New Influence*, *Aplomb*, *Rippling Soliloquies*, *Phaethon*, *Tangled Composition*, *Outrance*, *Kali Shu Kali Pai*. Rebecca is the mother of four children, Gavin, Holland, Avaleigh and Farah.



## Louisa Utley

Louisa has danced under the guidance of Rebecca Miller Stalcup and Melinda Tobian at Arkansas Academy of Dance for over 15 years. She participated in multiple performances with Arkansas Festival Ballet in roles ranging from Arabian Coffee in *The Nutcracker* to the Caterpillar in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. In 2017, she was the Little Rock Chapter contestant in the 74<sup>th</sup> annual National Society of Arts and Letters Competition in Boca Raton, FL. Louisa is also a recent Summa Cum Laude graduate from the University of Central Arkansas (UCA), with majors in Political Science and International Relations, and a minor in Honors Interdisciplinary Studies. She tutored at UCA's Writing Center, was an active member of the Schedler Honors College and interned at the Office of the Governor, Asa Hutchinson. Louisa currently works for the Administrative Office of the Courts and will attend Charles University in Prague this fall to pursue her master's in international relations.



## Caroline Young

Began her ballet education with Rebecca Miller Stalcup and Melinda Tobian at Arkansas Festival Ballet. She spent summers training at schools such as The School of American Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Ballet West, and more. She then completed her final two years of high school training at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Caroline went on to earn a BFA in Ballet Performance from the University of Oklahoma School of Dance, while concurrently performing as a second company member with the Oklahoma City Ballet. Upon graduation she continued to dance professionally with OKCB. She currently is a company member at Central West Ballet in Modesto, California.



## Meredith Zachritz

Meredith McIlroy Zachritz studied at Ballet Arkansas under the direction of founder Lorraine Cranford and RAD-trained ballet mistress Maureen Migden. As part of her studies, she attended annual Regional Dance America Southwest Festivals and received summer scholarships to study with world-renowned instructors such as David Howard, Robert Joffrey, and Bobby Barnett. She continued her studies in the pre-professional program at Ballet Austin under Michelle and Bill Piner, Stephen Mills, and Lambros Lambrou. After completing studies at Washington University and University of Texas, Ms. Zachritz returned to Little Rock and danced professionally with Ballet Arkansas. As a soloist in the company, she performed in various roles including the

Snow Queen and Dew Drop Fairy from *The Nutcracker*, Peasant Pas de Deux from *Giselle*, Princess Florine in the Blue Bird Pas de Deux from *Sleeping Beauty*, and Swanhilda from *Coppelia*. Ms. Zachritz has also performed in a variety of roles with Austin Dance Ensemble, Collin County Ballet Theatre, and Arkansas Festival Ballet. She is certified to teach West Coast Pilates, enjoys choreographing for student performances, and has taught Arkansas Academy of Dance pre-professional ballet students at the intermediate and advanced levels. She currently serves as Outreach Director for Arkansas Festival Ballet, serves as Treasurer on the Regional Dance America Southwest board, and teaches an intermediate adult ballet class for Arkansas Academy of Dance.





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