



2023 JUDGES BIOGRAPHIES



SHANNON BARRETT – Hailing from Dearborn Heights, Michigan, Shannon has been involved in the world of dance for more than 35 years. Over the last two decades, she has worked as a dance and cheer coach, pompon coach, choreographer and competition judge, instructing both competitively and recreationally at multiple studios, high schools and colleges throughout metro Detroit. Prior to teaching and choreographing local productions, she performed as a guest dancer for the NBA's Detroit Pistons and Detroit Rockers soccer team.

Throughout her teaching career, Shannon has quickly taken competitive tap dance programs to platinum and overall-winning performances, earning entertainment and showstopper awards for routines that have been recognized for entertainment value, intensity and technique. Her competitive students have earned high and overall awards throughout the U.S., and have gone on to study with Alvin Ailey, earn college degrees in Dance Education, become members of the Detroit Tap Repertory and even become successful dance teachers.

After serving as the coach and Program Director of the University of Michigan Pompon team for three years, Shannon shifted her focus to her passion for training and building kind, confident, and well-rounded dancers. She enjoys age-appropriate choreography that pushes the envelope in a creative way, and wants dancers to know that the competition scores and trophies don't define you—the journey that got you there is what matters most.

CYNDI BUCZEK – Cyndi Buczek has been a professional dance teacher and choreographer for over 40 years. She attended Wayne State University where she received a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Dance. Cyndi has taught at many different dance studios over the last few decades and had been an acting Assistant Director for a few of them. She has taught as a guest master teacher at several dance workshops including Oakland Dance Festival, Brighton Dance Festival, Cleary University, Harrison High School Dance Department, as well as for the Arts Centered Education Program in the Detroit Public Schools just to name a few. She is the owner of Cohesion Dance Company and had directed a preprofessional dance company for young dancers in the Southeast Michigan and Toledo, Ohio areas for several years. Some of her former CDC students have gone on to dance professionally and are currently employed with prestigious dance companies. She began her professional dance career at the age of 16 and was a member of the Fairlane Ballet Company, under the direction of Pamela Dunworth for several years. She has trained extensively in ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop and modern.



Cyndi has choreographed for many local theater productions throughout her career and has received recognition for her work including the 1995 Copperfoot Award from Wayne State University, several Top Teacher awards as well as overalls at both the regional and national levels of competition. She is currently the acting Costumer for the South Lyon East High School Drama Department and is very excited to be joining the Dance Force Express Staff this season as a judge. Cyndi finds joy in sharing her love of dance with her students of all ages and levels. She strives to consistently encourage her students to be the best version of themselves and to find the confidence to express their artistry freely.



NIKKI KRINGS

– Nikki Krings has been dancing for nearly 25 years. She grew up in the competition scene all over Metro Detroit and the midwest. She studied and competed in all genres of dance on the local and regional levels. In college, Nikki danced for Cadence Dance Company at the University of Michigan, while pursuing various choreography opportunities and performances. She has been teaching competition and technical dance for the past 5 years in the styles of ballet, jazz, lyrical, contemporary, and musical theater. Nikki continues to further her education in dance by attending workshops and teacher training, which are hosted by industry leaders. It is her passion to help dancers become confident in the beautiful discipline of dance while they explore the movement of their bodies through dance in a safe space. Though dance is her true passion, she also loves being a fifth grade teacher with all of her heart!

BECCA GRDEN

– Becca Grden grew up as a competitive dancer in Livonia MI.

She knew from an early age she wanted dance to be a part of her life far beyond high school continuing her education at Western Michigan University studying business and dance.

(Focusing on choreography). Becca was also a part of the nationally ranked bronco dance team and trained with several top choreographers and instructors. She has been

choreographing and teaching for the past 12 years and her students have achieved great success most recently attending: Marymount, Pointe Park, Boston Conservatory, NYU, Pace, and more. She has developed her own modern and contemporary syllabus to help aid dancers to bridge the gap between the competitive and professional world. Becca has won

the honor of choreographer of the year at the Youth American Grand Prix is and top choreographer at the world art ballet competition. Becca has set pieces at several

universities including Wayne State and Michigan state Orchesis society as well as setting a piece at the Eisenhower dance festival in 2019. She is also a full time competition judge and travels in the summer to teach master

classes and set choreography. Her unique blend of concert dance, competitive dance, and dance teams gives her a well rounded skill set in the industry. She is passionate about spreading dance education to all and creating unique works across all platforms.

Becca is also certified with the yoga alliance and a fitness instructor passionate about all things movement.



MELISSA JONES

– Melissa started dancing at the age of 2, and started competing at the age of 9 in Battle Creek, Michigan. After graduating high school, Melissa attended Grand Valley State University where she danced on the Laker Dance Team for all 4 years and was captain of the team for 2 years. She was asked to join the National Dance Alliance in 2007, where she worked for 2 years before becoming a social worker for the State of Michigan. Melissa received her Masters Degree in Counseling from Wayne State University in 2018, and plans to transition to a entrepreneurial career the emphasizes and combines the benefits of movement/dance and therapy.

*Looking for judges for your invitational competitions or auditions – let us know!
We have team of over a dozen professional contacts who love to inspire through dance.*

WWW.DANCEFORCEXPRESS.COM