

# WMU Department of Dance

## Alumni Newsletter

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**Spring 2013**

Dear Dance Alumni and Friends,

April is speeding to a close, and it is hard for me to believe that another academic year is ending. As we prepare to send 20 new graduates into the world, I look back on how they have grown in their time with us, and all they have brought to enrich our lives. I am so proud of what our students and our alumni have accomplished and the impact they have had on dance.

Spring semester began with a superb Winter Gala Dance Concert, featuring eight diverse and engaging dances. Our Great Works dances were "Viva Vivaldi" by Gerald Arpino as staged by Joffrey Ballet's Willy Shives and a new commissioned work, "Light and Landless," by KT Nelson, co-director of ODC in San Francisco. Two student works, "Ardently Involved" and "In Silence There Is Eloquence," were selected for the program and both works also represented WMU at the regional American College Dance Festival (ACDF) in February at Oakland University. Also on the program was Carolyn Pavlik's dynamic modern work, "If I Could Disguise the Scream," and a vibrant new work created by Chicago choreographer Monique Haley, "Talk to Me!" for Western Dance Project. Completing the concert were "Freshie Portrait" by alum Derrick A. Evans for 25 of our new majors and "FRUG," a jazz romp by LA choreographer Lauren Thompson Hall. Despite a major snowstorm on opening night that closed the university, the show danced on as scheduled!

February brought more accolades when both dances submitted for adjudication at the regional ACDF, "Ardently Involved" and the third movement of "Viva Vivaldi," were selected for the Gala Concert. As best we can remember, this is the first time that both of WMU's dances were selected for this honor!

Over spring break, faculty member Kirsten Harvey took nine seniors to Los Angeles for a Student Investment trip made possible through Differential Tuition. One student said, "It opened my eyes to the endless possibilities in the commercial dance world in LA and gave me contacts for my future career goals." Ten other students will travel to San Francisco with faculty members David Curwen and Whitney Moncrief to explore the dance scene there at the end of this semester. During the trips, students meet with agents and company directors, take classes and attend performances, as well as meet with WMU alumni who live and work in the area.

At the end of break, Kirsten Harvey competed for and won the top prize at the Inaside Choreographic Sponsorship Event. Her dance, "Black Iris," was performed by twelve of our WMU students in Chicago at the Athenaeum Theatre. The stellar dancing continued with Junior Juries, an outstanding Noon Dance Showing and a wonderful Graduating Presentation concert. At the end of March, Gabrielle Lamb was named the 2013 winner of our National Choreography Competition and plans are in motion for her residency to create a new work for our students in October that will premiere at the 2014 Winter Gala Dance Concert. A sneak peak will be presented at a free public open rehearsal in October. In May, eight students will return to China and Taiwan with faculty members David Curwen and Sharon Garber for three weeks of performances, classes and cultural discoveries. This trip is made possible by a \$25,000 College of Fine Arts Global Initiative grant.

If your travels bring you to Michigan, we hope you'll visit us in Dalton. A calendar of events for the coming year should be up on the website very soon! Best wishes for a fun-filled summer!

*Jane*

## DaLette Anderson (BA 2011)

Since graduating in June 2011, DaLette has pursued her degree in Secondary Education. She has taught Spanish and English at the following schools: Galesburg August Middle School, Climax-Scotts, and Southfield Regional Academic Campus. Her specialty with at-risk students has built excellent support of her teaching excellence and incredible classroom management. In the midst of school teaching, she has been invited to instruct Latin dance workshops at many high schools, master classes, and performances in dance. She has recently worked as a dance teacher in her home town of Southfield at Gotta Dance studio teaching jazz and tap as well as a 2013 featured principal dancer for "Broadway Detroit." DaLette just moved to Los Angeles, California to further pursue her career as a professional dancer, choreographer, and educator. She is working toward finding a dance agency and seeking professional work, and she met up with the WMU students for the LA Student Investment trip in March.



## Bethany Blanchard (BA 2009)

Bethany recently got married this past August. She continues to perform as a Rockette with her sister and WMU alum Emily Blanchard. This past year, Bethany has been touring as a director with Cathy Roe's Ultimate Dance competition. Cathy Roe is also a WMU alum. Bethany continues to teach dance and Pilates in the metro Detroit area.

## Erin Lamont (BA 2002)

Erin just finished choreographing *Larry Gaye: A Renegade Male Flight Attendant* featuring Mark Feuerstein (Royal Pains) and Stanley Tucci. Erin worked with twenty dancers on a musical theatre number in the Ontario airport. She also choreographed a Vitamin Water commercial and is still doing shows with her burlesque group The Lalas!

## Colleen (Sullivan) Champagne (BFA 2003)



This past year has been a whirlwind adventure for Colleen. She graduated from New York University College of Nursing in May 2012, moved back to Michigan in July, and got married in September. Colleen is blessed to work at Children's Hospital of Michigan in Detroit on the Born/Surgical/Rehab unit.

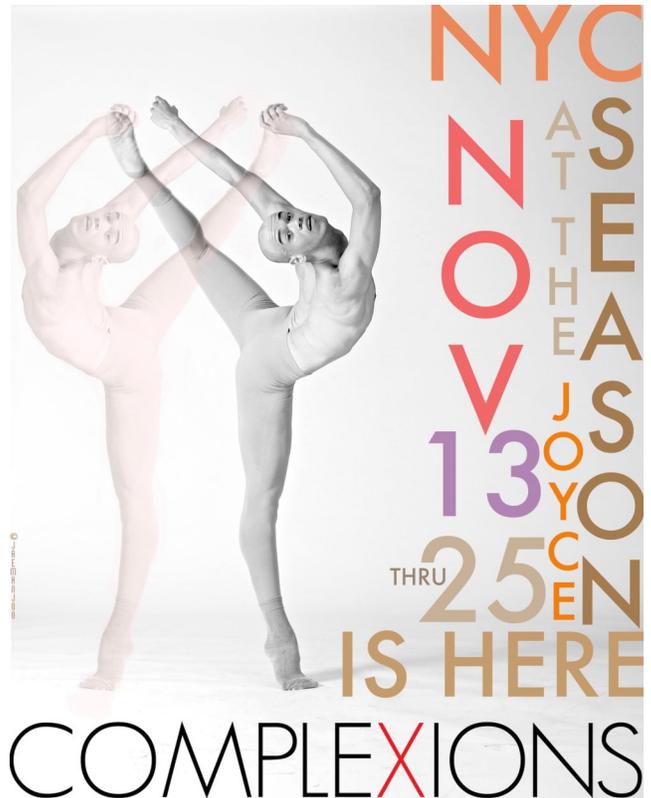
## Morella Petrozzi (BA 1989)

Morella is the co-director of "Danza Viva Peru," a contemporary dance company based in Lima. Danza Viva was invited to participate at the 5th Contemporary Fusions Festival at the British Theatre. The choreography was set by Morella, entitled "Doggy Style" and was performed by the dancers of Danza Viva. The performance duration was one hour, and was performed in February 2013. It received excellent reviews from the public and the press.



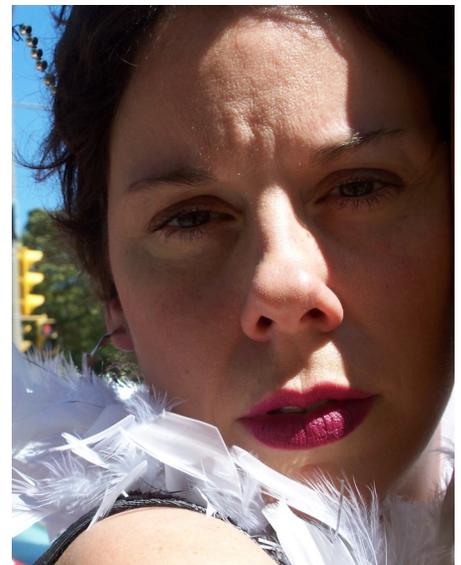
## Tercell Waters (BFA 2010)

Tercell "Terk" Waters is finishing his third season with Complexions Contemporary Ballet under Artistic Directors Dwight Rhoden and Desmond Richardson. He recently finished tours to Italy, Los Angeles, North Carolina, Texas, Oklahoma, Russia and the Ukraine. Terk was also featured on recent promotional material for the company that appeared across New York City and the internet. His photo appeared in the New York Times again, accompanying a review of the company. In his fourth Joyce Season with the company, he was honored to dance leading roles in several world premiere and repertory ballets. He has also taught classes for Complexions at Broadway Dance Center in New York City. Terk looks forward to continuing his creative and artistic pursuits. [Complexionsdance.org](http://Complexionsdance.org)



## Angie (Wieland) Yetzke (BA 1994)

Angie (pictured at right) has been hired as a full-time Assistant Professor at the Department of Dance at Hope College in Holland, MI. Angie, her husband, and two sons reside in the greater Grand Rapids area.



## Erin Falsetta-Petkovski (BA 2001)

Erin is a school counselor at Lansing Everett High School, as well as adjunct dance faculty member at Lansing Community College teaching Intermediate Jazz and creating works for annual department concerts. Erin and her husband are anxiously awaiting the birth of their first child.

## Ashley Rop (BFA 2011)

Ashley recently was accepted into the University of Michigan—Flint graduate program for arts administration. In the fall of 2013, she will begin pursuing her Masters in Arts Administration.

## John Bradley (BA 1985)

John Bradley has lived in the New York area since 1989. After graduating from WMU, John received an MFA in Modern Dance from Case Western Reserve University in 1988, where in addition to dance, he studied Eurhythmics and Early Music. After moving to New York, John studied with Erick Hawkins before beginning to explore Baroque and Renaissance music and dance at Mannes Conservatory. One of his favorite gigs during that period was a tour of English Baroque composer Henry Purcell's opera *Dido and Aeneas* in which he was a singer and featured dancer. After being sidelined by a hip injury that ultimately led to a total hip replacement in 2010, John devoted most of his energy to music, performing both as a soloist and choir member in several New York-based professional concert and church choirs, before founding his own ensemble, Polyhymnia, in 1994. Polyhymnia has emerged as one of New York's leading professional early music ensembles, and has been a recipient of the competitive New York Department of Cultural Affairs grants for the last several years. In 2012, John and the choir were awarded a competitive New York State Council on the Arts Artists Grant that will allow the organization to raise performer's salaries and update the web site. You can find out more about the ensemble and hear recordings of the music at [www.polyhymnia-nyc.org](http://www.polyhymnia-nyc.org).

When not doing music, John works in admissions and administration for the interdisciplinary graduate program at the Gallatin School at NYU. Being quite interdisciplinary himself, this is an excellent fit.

John married his partner of 10 years, Charles Keenan, in 2010. They live in Jersey City, NJ with their two overindulged cats Moses and Abraham. They are both active parishioners in their Episcopal church, St. Luke in the Fields in Greenwich Village. John and Charles purchased a condo in 2012 which is currently occupying most of their time with painting and renovating. They live in a wonderful and culturally diverse neighborhood of Jersey City, with lots of neat Victorian and Edwardian buildings, and a huge urban park for long walks.



# Gabrielle Lamb named 2013 National Choreography Competition winner!



The Department of Dance at Western Michigan University is pleased to announce that Gabrielle Lamb has been selected as the winner of the **2013 National Choreography Competition**. The competition was developed to identify and recognize emerging choreographers, and to present the selected choreographer with an opportunity to set an original work on dance majors at WMU. The winning choreographer will receive a \$5,000 prize plus travel, lodging and food expenses. The selection process began with a dance faculty committee that narrowed the pool of entries to three finalists. Innovation in movement, dance structure and subject matter were the criteria the faculty committee used to select the three finalists: James Gregg, Shannon Gillen and Gabrielle Lamb.

More than 100 students and faculty of the Department of Dance and the Southwest Michigan community attended the Community View and Vote at WMU's Little Theatre at the end of March, an open voting event where the finalists' choreography was shown via video. Voters were also provided with the finalists' biographies and choreographic proposals and selected Gabrielle Lamb as the winner of the **2013 National Choreography Competition**. She will come to campus in the Fall 2013 semester. During this time, Ms. Lamb will create a dance for WMU dance majors, teach master classes and present a rehearsal of the work-in-progress open to the public. The dance will premiere in the 2014 Winter Gala Dance Concert.

During her nine years as a soloist in Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montreal, Gabrielle Lamb has worked closely with some of today's finest choreographers, including Mats Ek, Ohad Naharin, and Shen Wei; and she has performed featured roles on stages across the world—Berlin, Munich, Riga, Madrid, Sao Paolo, Mexico City, Vancouver, Toronto, Los Angeles, and New York, where Anna Kisselgoff, New York Times dance critic, praised her "fine slithering resilience."

Gabrielle Lamb was a winner of the 2009 National Choreographic Competition of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago; and her dance works for stage and screen have been presented by Hubbard Street 2, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, the Dance Theatre of Harlem, BalletX, Dance on Camera at Lincoln Center, and the American Dance Festival. Her dance-film work has also screened on the Bravo and ARTV networks (Canada) as well as at dance film festivals in Australia, Belgium, Argentina, France, and Japan.

For more information, visit [www.wmich.edu/dance](http://www.wmich.edu/dance) and Ms. Lamb's website: <http://www.gabriellelamb.com/>.

# WMU Dancers Selected for ACDF Gala Concert



Both dances submitted by the WMU Dance Department were selected by three professional adjudicators for performance at the Gala Concert at the regional American College Dance Festival held this year at Oakland University, February 20-23, 2013. Twenty-eight schools had work adjudicated by blind peer review; the adjudicators knew only the title of the dance, the premiere date, and the title of the music. Eleven dances were selected for the program from 8 different schools from Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> movement of *Viva Vivaldi*, choreographed by Gerald Arpino for the Joffrey Ballet in 1965, and *Ardently Involved*, a duet choreographed and performed by WMU senior dance majors Karina Conley of Bay City, Michigan and Jesse Hoisington, of Commerce Township, Michigan, were featured on the Gala Concert program on Saturday evening, February 23 to close the festival. Professor Sharon Garber served as rehearsal director for “Viva Vivaldi,” and Assistant Professor Megan Slayter served as technical coordinator and lighting designer for both dances.

Adjudicators called *Viva Vivaldi* “a gem, such a treat. You see those legs, those backs, wonderful technique and really sensitively performed.” They also noted the strong ballet and pointe technique shown by the five dancers. For *Ardently Involved*, an adjudicator commented, “This set me up and then I loved that it went somewhere else. I was surprised and I’m not often surprised! This was very satisfying. It had humor, was sexy, intense; they were dancing in unison but not together—Well done!” *Viva Vivaldi* was the only ballet selected for the performance and *Ardently Involved* was one of only two works choreographed by undergraduate students selected for the Gala Concert. <http://www.acdfa.org/>.

# Dance Professor Wins Choreography Competition

WMU Assistant Professor of Dance Kirsten Harvey's choreography was selected from a field of 16 professional choreographers to receive the 2014 Choreographic Sponsorship Event top award hosted by Inaside Chicago Dance on March 9, 2013. Harvey's students traveled with her to Chicago to perform her jazz dance, "Black Iris," which first premiered at WMU's Winter Gala Dance Concert in 2012. Professor Harvey is completing her fourth year on the WMU dance faculty, specializing in jazz dance and musical theatre. As part of her award, Harvey will set her choreography on Inaside Chicago Dance for their 2013-14 season.

Inaside Chicago Dance, a professional jazz dance company, advances innovative artistry through choreography, performances, and educational programs to heighten the state of the art in the Midwest. The vision of Inaside Chicago Dance is to enrich the art form of dance by nurturing the dancer as a performer, choreographer and teacher and by making dance accessible to all ages through performances, workshops and outreach.





“FRUG” by Lauren Thompson Hall

## Winter Gala Dance Concert 2013



“Light and Landless” by KT Nelson



“Freshie Portrait” by Derrick A. Evans

# Winter Gala Dance Concert 2013



“If I Could Disguise the Scream” by Carolyn Pavlik



“In Silence There Is Eloquence” by Sayre Masters



“Talk To Me!” by Monique Haley



“Viva Vivaldi” by Gerald Arpino, staged by Willy Shives

## Winter Gala Dance Concert 2013



“Ardently Involved” by Jesse Hoisington and Karina Conley

# Community Dance Advocacy Award 2013

On Friday, February 1, Partners in Dance and members of the community gathered for the annual Great Works Dinner to learn more from one of this year's Great Works choreographers, KT Nelson, and to celebrate the 2013 Community Dance Advocacy Award winner, Diana Hart Johnson. Partners in Dance created the Community Dance Advocacy Award to highlight and recognize dance activity and leadership in the greater Kalamazoo area. It is given annually to honor a leader or volunteer who has demonstrated significant accomplishments in advancing and supporting dance in the greater Kalamazoo region. Nominations are accepted each fall.

The evening was hosted by alumna, part-time faculty member and community choreographer and arts advocate, Kathryn "Kathy" Williams. At the start of the evening, Kathy inspired the audience with her remarks, including: "...one of the things our 'Great Works Programs' do—they allow our students to travel back in time when they reconstruct a Great Work by a previous choreographer. They are exposed to a particular time and place in our human history....Not only do they learn technique, choreography, plotlines or movement for the joy of movement—they learn about history with their whole dancing selves: their intellect, their spirit, their emotions and their bodies. And working with current and emerging choreographers, the students reexamine the present and look at the future with new eyes and ideas. They see possibilities they never may have seen or imagined."

Next, department chair Jane Baas and nominator Debra Norton presented Diana Hart Johnson with the 2013 Community Dance Advocacy Award. Ms. Hart Johnson was lauded for her record of service to the art of dance is diverse, deep, and sustained. A native of Michigan, Ms. Hart Johnson held the prestigious role of soloist with the internationally acclaimed Martha Graham Dance Company. As a dance educator, she has taught at universities as well as public elementary and secondary schools. Most recently, Hart Johnson has served the Kalamazoo area as a dance teacher, program coordinator, curricular developer, and mentor to over a thousand students. As a dance educator, her accomplishments are extensive. She founded the dance program at the Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts and has taught for Education for the Arts at Woods Lake Elementary, Winchell Elementary, Washington Writer's Academy, Ryan Intermediate, Spring Valley and Lake Center Elementary.

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Hart Johnson is noted for the breadth of her career, her dedication to dance and, especially, the sustained influence she has had on students through her work in public education. In her remarks, she spoke eloquently about the role of arts in education: “To me it is evident and easy to understand that the arts cannot be separated out from a healthy person’s life, and compartmentalized. The development of a whole person depends upon the integration of many aspects of study and of life. The arts and language are what distinguish us as human beings. This has been true in all times, in all lands, and for all people. It is how we are made. We diminish ourselves and our children when we eliminate arts programs, narrow our studies to reading and math, with a smattering of history and science thrown in....Often, arts programs are the hook that keeps some young people in school to learn other important things they need to live adult lives.”

The evening concluded with remarks by Great Works Project choreographer, KT Nelson, who shared insights into her creative process as well as her new work for WMU students, *Light and Landless*. The evening concluded with a near-sell-out performance of the 2013 Winter Gala Dance Concert at Shaw Theatre. Nominations for the 2014 Community Dance Advocacy Award may be submitted at any time through October 15, 2013. Information and a nomination form are available on the Partners in Dance website at: <http://www.wmich.edu/dance/pid/award.html>.



# Graduating Presentations 2013



The WMU Department of Dance and the 2013 graduating BFA seniors presented “From Where We Stand” April 11th through the 14th. This concert showcased the culminating projects of Kaitlyn DeSatterlee, Sayre Masters, Kattie Mattar, Joseph Hernandez, Genna Carey, Hanna Stangebye, and Dani Mattar. The student-produced concert also included a new work created for the BFA seniors by Chicago-based choreographer Robyn Mineko Williams, titled “Seven.”

The following featured works joined to make a for a diverse concert which represented each of the seniors’ personal aesthetics and collectively showcased their individuality as artists. Kaitlyn DeSatterlee’s work, “Fixed in a Winding Design,” reflected on the assembled motivations which impel her decisions and contribute to the framework of her identity. In “In the Realms of Consciousness,” Sayre Masters took the ideas of Michael Nugnet’s five possible theories on reality, and implements them into choreography; she attempted to formulate her own hypothesis on reality. The concert also features “A Form That Mutates is Possibility” choreographed by Genna Carey, which investigated movement inspired by abstract sculptures. More up-beat works by Dani Mattar and Joseph Hernandez rounded out the concert. Dani’s “We’re Gonna Skip the Icing on the Cake” explored finding the balance between her two extreme stages of OCD, while Joseph’s piece, “Shifting Home,” revolved around compounding fractions, culminating various experiences into a greater, larger end product. Katie Mattar’s “Yup, That’s the Bandwagon Effect” was about experiencing surfaced pleasures and satisfaction with social conformity, and “Learnings,” choreographed by Hanna Stangebye, journeyed through the monotony of everyday life and explored the possibilities of enrichment.

# Los Angeles SIP Trip by BFA Senior Dani Mattar

I had never been to the West coast before the Los Angeles Student Investment Project (SIP) trip and have always looked forward to the day that I made my first visit there. I was not prepared for what LA had in store for me throughout those four days! It was even better than I had ever imagined. I had heard about the good, the bad, and the ugly of this city, but my experience was absolutely nothing but positive. It was a life changing experience, and I can definitely imagine residing there in the near future for my performance career.

My future plans for my dance profession for the past year have been to perform full-time in both the concert and commercial world of dance. I never had any specific detailed plans about when or where I wanted to accomplish these goals, but it was a sudden interest of mine last year when I was a junior in the Department of Dance. I had already been exposed to concert dance and understood to some degree what it would be like to dance with a company due to membership in Western Dance Project, participating in the DanceWorks Chicago residencies, and experiences with multiple guest artists. However, I felt somewhat clueless about the commercial dance world and what it might be like to be a part of an agency.

The LA SIP trip gave me many opportunities to learn about the commercial industry and experience the West coast dance scene. We took classes at three popular studios including International Dance Academy, The EDGE, and Debbie Reynold's Dance Studio. These studios featured incredible choreographers such as Mandy Moore, Marissa Osato, Jennifer Hamilton, and Stacey Tookey, with whom we had the opportunity to take class. We were also given two opportunities to meet with agents from both MSA and MTA talent agencies. I was able to ask any questions regarding the commercial world and agency processes, and I became more confident about my career choices after I graduate.



## Department of Dance Public Events for 2013-2014

### Fall 2013 Semester

Fri Sept 27	Chuthis and new work for WMU dancers by Peter Chu in concert, Chenery Auditorium, 8 pm*
Fri Oct 11	Department Entrance and Scholarship Auditions
Sat Oct 12	7 pm - Open rehearsal with Gabrielle Lamb, National Choreography Competition 2013 winner, Studio B
Wed-Sun Nov 13-17	Orchesis Concert, Dance Studio B, 8 p.m. evenings; 2 p.m. matinees Sat & Sun*
Fri Nov 22	Noon Dance Showing, American College Dance Festival & Winter Concert Adjudications, Multimedia Room
Fri Dec 6	Western Dance Project & guests at Art Hop, Epic Center, downtown Kalamazoo
Sat Dec 7	Fall Showcase: 3800 choreography final projects and performance by first year students, Studio B, 2:00 & 7:00 pm

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### Spring 2014 Semester

Thu-Sat Jan 30-Feb 1	Winter Gala Dance Concert, Shaw Theatre, Gilmore Theatre Complex*
Fri Jan 31	Great Works Dinner
Fri Mar 21	Noon Dance Showing, MMR
Thu Mar 27	Junior Jury Dances, 8:00 pm, Dance Studio B
Thu-Sun Apr 10-13 Thur/Fri/Sat	Graduating Presentations in Dance, Dance Studio B* at 8 pm & 2 pm Sat/Sun

\* Indicates there is an admission charge. Dance Studio B is located on the third floor of the Dalton Center.

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## Faculty and Staff

Amy Avery—Part-time Instructor  
Jane Baas—Department Chair  
David Curwen—Associate Professor  
Sharon Garber—Professor  
Dorothy Giovannini—Ballet Accompanist Coordinator  
Kirsten Harvey—Assistant Professor  
Carolyn Koebel—Modern Accompanist  
Helen Lukan—Ballet Accompanist  
Jeff Moehle—Modern Accompanist Coordinator  
Whitney Moncrief—Assistant Professor  
Nina Nelson—Professor  
Debra Norton—Part-time Instructor  
Carolyn Pavlik—Associate Professor  
Patricia Plasko—Education for the Arts  
Megan Slayter—Assistant Professor  
Stacey Tyler—Office Coordinator  
Kathryn Williams—Part-time Instructor

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### Entrance and Scholarship auditions:

Friday, October 11

Friday, November 8

### Entrance Audition Only:

Friday, February 22

Please encourage your students to audition for our program next year  
by registering online at [www.wmich.edu/dance/audition](http://www.wmich.edu/dance/audition)

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