2023 NDA ALL STAR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP JUDGES

HEAD JUDGE – CHERYL PAQUETTE

Cheryl Paquette resides in St. Louis, MO and has been involved in the dance industry for over 30 years. She is trained in ballet, tap, jazz, and pointe and spent 6 years as a company member with the Gateway Ballet. A graduate of the University of Missouri, she earned a National Championship title with the Mizzou Golden Girls dance team. Cheryl is a former NFL St. Louis Rams Cheerleader and NBA Dallas Mavericks Dancer. She was a choreographer and head instructor for the National Dance Alliance, spent 7 years as their Event and Curriculum Director, and has field produced numerous special event half timeshows during her tenure with NDA. In 2017 was awarded the Herkie Legacy Award for her commitment to the industry. Currently, Cheryl is the USASF Dance Adjudication Director and Communications Coordinator and serves as the Pom Panel Director at The USASF DanceWorlds. Cheryl enjoys judging for many national and international Event Producers.

KRISTIN BEST KINSCHERFF

Kristin Best Kinscherff is an Associate Professor and Head of Dance at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville as well as the Artistic Director of the SIUE University Dance Company. She holds a Master of Fine Arts in Dance Performance from the University of Iowa. Kristin is a former company member with The Big Muddy Dance Company (St. Louis, MO), served as the Artistic Director of Turn of Change Dance Collective (Metro-East, IL), and for aTrek Dance Collective (St. Louis, MO). Her choreography has been presented at the American College Dance Association's Gala Concert, SIUE Summer Theater, CHICAGO The Musical (SIUE), FAME (SIUE), National Dance Week, Midwest Dance Festival, Grand DanceFest, Dancing in The Streets, The Gala/Extravaganza for Body Worlds 3 at St. Louis Science Center, the Victoria Ballet Theater, University of Iowa, SIUE, Lindenwood, and Tour Dance Company. She has a certification in Autism Movement Therapy© and developed a dance curriculum for children with special needs. Kristin has served as an adjudicator with UDA, NDA, USASF the Dance Worlds, and Stage 8 Dance.

JESSIKA LEONARD

Jessika Leonard has over 30 years of dance experience, including: education/training, coaching, judging, and instructing. Her training includes ballet, pointe, jazz, tap, baton, gymnastics, and has extensive training in her area of expertise, pom. As a dancer, she studied alongside world-renowned dancers in NYC and received numerous accolades including her acceptance to the Minnesota Conservatory of Art. Jessika has performed and choreographed for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, Walt Disney World, College Bowl Games, and several NFL half-time shows. As an accomplished dancer, she later chose to share her passion for dance by coaching high school and all-star teams, whom consistently made appearances in the state finals and captured national top honors. Jessika now focuses her efforts speaking at conventions and also conducts private choreography and workshops with teams and coaches. Jessika's has extensive experience judging state, national, and international competitions, including multiple years with The USASF Dance Worlds.

RACHEL DOMANGUE

Rachel Domangue, originally from New Orleans, is the former Director of the National Dance Alliance. With an extensive background in high school and college dance team, Rachel's BFA in Performing Arts-Dance from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette has allowed her to network with all facets of the dance industry. She has worked all over the U.S. as a dance team coach, choreographer and studio teacher. Rachel has been honored to judge for Champion Spirit Group, JCDA at the All Japan Cheer and Dance Championship in Tokyo, The Groove Experience, NDA, UDA, and the USASF Dance Worlds. She is currently living in Dallas, Texas, and still works as a speaker, instructor and adjudicator at conferences and competitions across the U.S. Rachel's "day job" is as the Business Operations Director at Glass Staircase, a marketing and branding company that focuses on empowering women and small businesses.

HEATHER LANGHAM

Heather Langham, currently residing in New York City, is a 12 year veteran with The Radio City Rockettes. She began dancing at the age of 2 at her family owned dance studio, Langham Dance Center. She received a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies from Arizona State University in 2003 where she was captain of the nationally ranked ASU Dance Team.During her Rockette career she has had the opportunity to perform on the MTV Video Music Awards, The 72nd Annual Tony Awards, America's Got Talent, The Today Show, The Meredith Vieira Show, Live with Kelly, Martha Stewart and 11 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parades. Heather's impact in the dance world does not stop in the studio or on stage. In 1998, she began working for the National Dance Alliance. She has choreographed for many nationally ranked collegiate teams including: Southern Methodist University, Sacred Heart University, Northern Arizona University, The University of Pittsburg and The University of Albany. Heather also has years of experience in national adjudication and has been on the panel of many prestigious competitions, such as NDA High School Nationals, NDA All-Star Nationals, NDA College Nationals, COP Brands, USA All Star Nationals, and The Dance Worlds.

BRIAN CAO

Brian Cao has been involved in the spirit industry for over 20 years on the school, all-star, collegiate and professional levels. He has been affiliated with NCA/NDA for the last 25 years and has contributed to both NCA and NDA's summer curriculum as a choreographer and consultant. In 2007 & 2008, Brian served as a Co-Show Director for the Thanksgiving in Paradise Halftime Show in Hawaii, and his choreography opportunities have taken him all around the world, including to England, Finland and Japan. In 2010, Brian received the coveted Herkie Legacy Award for his contributions to NCA/NDA, The Work is Worth It Award in 2016, and the NCA Heart & Soul Award in 2019. Brian's dance resume includes performing with several companies in Oregon, including three seasons with the NBA Portland Trailblazers Jam Squad. He currently works as a choreographer and consultant to cheer and dance teams of all levels and was the choreographer for Team England Freestyle Pom in 2018. In his limited free time away from training, he travels the world speaking at conferences, judging for major cheer and dance events, and is a 5-time judge for The USASF Dance Worlds.

QUALITY CONTROL JUDGE – TARA YANTIS

Tara Yantis is in her 12th season as the Head Coach at Saint Thomas Aquinas High School, leading the team to State finals and a National title in hip hop. Tara is the Executive Director, Operations and co-founder of the Kansas State Dance Team Coaches Association, and the co-chair of the Spirit Advisory Committee to the Kansas State High School Activities Association. A 14-year NDA veteran, Tara is a Head Instructor, adjudicator and conference speaker, and has earned NDA's Excellence in Leadership award, was the inaugural recipient of the NCA/NDA The Work is Worth It™ award and was the 2016 national representative at the London New Year's Day Parade, helping facilitate performances seen by 300million+ viewers worldwide. A graduate of Washburn University, Tara led her team to multiple finals appearances and national rankings at the NCA/NDA Collegiate National Championship. She was also an arena football cheerleader for 4 years.

MICHELLE VAUGHN

For over sixteen years, Michelle has not only worked within the commercial dance world but also has been leaving an imprint in the Professional sports world. Her resume includes performing for artists, movies, and shows such as Lil Uzi Vert, Nicki Minaj, Flo Rida, Becky G, J Balvin, La Banda, Latin Grammys, Oscars, and a TV series on Nickelodeon called "Fresh Beat Band". Michelle is a faculty member for the top professional dance team convention that caters to colleges and professional sports teams across the country called Pro Action. She has worked with numerous NBA and NFL teams including the Golden State Warriors, Washington Wizards, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Boston Celtics, Utah Jazz, Miami Dolphins, and many more. Michelle is a nationally ranked choreographer for numerous high schools, colleges, and all-star gyms across the world. Awards including innovative choreography, best in show, and top 5 in the world are a few of her accomplishments in the Dance Team world.
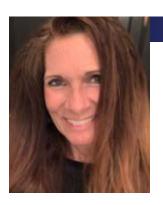
JENNY DURBIN SMITH

Jenny Durbin Smith is a nationally recognized and award-winning choreographer. She is a former member of the UNC-Chapel Hill cheer and dance teams and a former captain for the NBA Dallas Mavericks Dancers.Jenny has been a principal dancer for many national projects and her choreography has been featured on major network TV shows, national television commercials, industrials, films, reality television shows, NFL fields and NBA courts. In addition to being the proud Director of the Dallas Cowboys Rhythm and Blue, the only co-ed hip hop dance crew in the NFL, she is the Director of the Dallas Cowboys Rookie Squad & The Officials, a choreographer with Varsity Pro and travels the country choreographing and master instructing for numerous dance organizations, professional teams and studios. Jenny also proudly serves on the hip hop score sheet advisory boards for NDA and USASF.

ANTHONY MANERI

Anthony Maneri is a hip hop dancer and choreographer from Connecticut. Growing up, Anthony competed on all star hip hop teams and danced for the WNBA's Connecticut Sun. In high school, Anthony trained under the instruction of one of Beyoncé and Britney Spears' former backup dancers, who introduced Anthony to the commercial dance style of hip hop. While in college, Anthony was the Founder, Head Coach and Director of Renegade All Stars where he recruited the best dancers from CT to train with him and his staff. With his all star program, he earned over 20 national titles and choreography awards. Since then, Anthony has worked with many renowned all star, high school, and collegiate teams from all over the country, choreographing their competitive routines for the season. Additionally, Anthony choreographs for NDA's High School and Collegiate Summer Camp Curriculum.

PATTY ADAMS

Patty Adams' knowledge base is extensive, from dance performance ensembles and musical theater to education and curriculum development. Her primary focus has been in the area of hip hop choreography and team preparation for competitive dance events. She has consistently led teams to top-five placements, as well as numerous championships and innovative choreography awards. Having coached at the high school, Division IA College, and All Star levels, Patty holds the role of coach in the highest regard. She is a veteran national and international dance adjudicator as well as a Hip-Hop panel director for The Dance Worlds. As a member of the USASF Exceptional Athlete Committee, Patty is passionate about spreading awareness concerning this population. When not speaking at conferences or judging events, she enjoys her role as executive director of Spirit Ride, a non-profit Therapeutic Riding center that assists children with a wide array of diagnoses reach their goals through equine-related activities.

MORGAN SCHULTE

Morgan Schulte has over 20 years of experience in the dance industry as a teacher and choreographer. Currently she is in her 6th season dancing professionally for the NBA Memphis Grizzlies. She was a 7-year head instructor for UDA camps at the high school and collegiate levels and has traveled internationally with UDA for special events. Morgan judges many competitions for various brands, including The USASF Dance Worlds. She fuses dance with her other specialites of health, wellness, and nutrition as a speaker on these topics throughout the country. She is a kickboxing instructor, Orangetheory Fitness coach, and a dietitian and fitness coach through her own business, Motivate.

QUALITY CONTROL JUDGE – LUISE MALDONADO

Luise' Maldonado, a Texas native, is a graduate of Sam Houston State University where she earned a B.A. in Dance. She is currently serving as the Head Coach of the St. Agnes Academy Tiger Girls Dance Team and is also the Director of Dance. In her career, Luise has earned many national titles as a dancer and coach with all-star, collegiate, high school, and studio teams. In 2018, she earned a World Championship at the USASF Dance Worlds with the Dancin' Bluebonnets Open Jazz Team. Luise' also serves as a NDA staff member for the last 10 years where she has been able to travel across the country and even to Rome in 2019 for the New Year's Day Parade. In 2020, she was awarded Top Head Instructor for the year and is grateful for the opportunities NDA continues to give her.

MICHELLE ALLISON

Michelle Allison Artistic Director of Curtain Call Dance Center, Indianapolis, IN, B.S. in Dance Performance - Ball State University. Michelle directs the Performing Companies and annual productions of The Nutcracker, Dance Against Cancer at Curtain Call where she also develops curriculum, continuing education. Michelle enjoys doing musical and show choir choreography and currently works on staff with the Marching Pride of Lawrence Township. She has judged The Dance Worlds since the inaugural year, is currently the Panel Director for Jazz and Kick Categories for the USASF. From 2010-2021 Michelle choreographed the Colts NFL Cheerleader auditions and halftime shows, has been a guest judge/master instructor with JCDA Tokyo, JPN since 1994, is a veteran judge of NDA and Varsity school and college competitions. She spent 13yrs teaching for NDA, choreographed and field produced numerous bowl games & nationally televised parades and has judged NDA Regionals, Dance All-Star & College Nationals since 1992.

ERIN ALVARADO

Erin Alvarado is in her tenth year as the Pom Squad coach at Texas Tech University. In 2017, she led the Texas Tech Pom Squad to the squad's first national championship in school history in Division 1A Jazz at NDA. Her team has won 6 National Titles in four years -- being crowned 1A Jazz Champions in 2017, 2018 & 2021 and 1A Pom Champions in 2018, 2019 & 2021. While at Texas Tech, her teams have travelled to Shanghai, China to represent the USA in their annual Tourism Festival, performed alongside the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders many times, and are consistently requested to do performances across the United States. Erin is a graduate of West Virginia University with a bachelor's degree in exercise physiology, and a minor in dance. She was a member of the WVU Dance Team, and then coached for three years where the team won two consecutive NDA Collegiate National Championships in 2010 & 2011. She is an adjudicator for NDA, UDA, USA, USASF, PrimeTime Dance and Showbiz Talent. Erin has travelled to Tokyo, Japan to judge for JCDA, and most recently travelled to Australia to judge the AASCF Dance Nationals in 2018 and 2019. In addition to coaching the Pom Squad, Erin currently serves as an Adjunct Dance Faculty member at Texas Tech in jazz, contemporary hip hop, movement analysis, anatomy, pedagogy, and tap. In her free time, Erin is in her second year teaching and choreographing at Revolution Elite Dance in Lubbock, Texas. She also spends time traveling around the world teaching master classes, setting choreography and speaking at various events. Additionally, she has been a guest speaker at Varsity, USASF, state Conferences, is part of the credentialing committee for USASF, is a member of NDCA and spoke at their conference in 2018, is the Category Director for the Contemporary/Lyrical division at The Dance Worlds and assists with NDA Judges Training. In 2019, Erin was voted the National Collegiate Dance Coach of the Year by the National Dance Coaches Association

MAGGIE WHITE

Maggie Allain White graduated from Louisiana State University receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Sports Administration and Business minor. Over the past 25 years, she has trained in various types of dance including pointe, pom, ballet, jazz, lyrical, hip-hop, kick, tap and modern across Louisiana and Texas. Upon her graduation from LSU, Maggie moved to Lafayette where she teaches dance at a local dance studio. Outside of the studio and choreographing, Maggie has been judging dance competitions since 2012, notably including the Dance Summit, JAMfest Dance Super Nationals, NDA Collegiate Nationals, NDA High School Nationals, MA Dance competitions, U.S. Finals, America's Best, Coastal, Freedom Dance live in person and virtual events. Maggie's professional dance accolades include being a member of the NFL New Orleans Saints Cheerleading Team; The Saintsations, Dance Team Coach and choreographer for the LSU Laboratory High School Dance Team and Dancing in the Macy's 85th Thanksgiving Day Parade in NYC. Outside of judging dance competitions, Maggie enjoys spending time with her husband and being a new mom to her son, Liam.

MELISSA KIDD

Melissa Kidd has over 3 decades of training in all genres of dance as well as over 15 years of instruction/choreography experience in over 30 studios/schools across the country. Melissa's training includes training under the Cincinnati Ballet and members of the New York City Ballet and Boston Ballet. She currently owns a fine arts facility in Cincinnati, Ohio. Melissa holds multiple certifications in choreography, technique, judging and early childhood dance education. Dancers that have trained under Ms. Kidd have gone on to dance on cruise lines, Broadway productions, NBA dance teams, NFL Cheerleading, Universities, Hallmark movie productions, music videos, and many more professional positions in the dance industry. Melissa enjoys splitting her time between teaching and traveling judging competitions and teaching master classes. Melissa judges for the all-star dance circuit and the studio dance circuit where she has served as a judging coordinator/trainer. Miss Kidd has also served as a certified legality official at USASF Worlds for several years in a row.

BRIANA BAISDEN

Briana Baisden is seasoned dance adjudicator, serving on dance audition panels as well as state, regional, and National competition judging panels across the country. Trained in ballet, jazz, contemporary, and hip hop, she has received numerous awards throughout her years as a dance student. A graduate of the University of Alabama, she was a member of the University's dance team, serving as captain her senior year. After graduation, she attended Mississippi State University to obtain her Masters degree, while coaching the University's dance team to their first ever National ranking. Following her coaching stint, Briana returned to the sidelines as a cheerleader for the Tennessee Titans for 3 seasons. Currently, she resides in Dallas working as a Human Resources Manager for a Financial Tech firm and just completed her third season as a Dallas Cowboys Cheerleader, where she had the opportunity to dance for Tyce Diorio, Meghan Trainor, Ellie Goulding, Kane Brown and many more.