



Our instructors specialize in everything from choreography and technique to teambuilding and have led some of the most successful dance programs in history. Read about our Guest Speakers below:

Ron Kellum – Keynote Speaker

Ron Kellum is a seasoned director and producer with experience ranging from sports entertainment to circus, theater, film and television.

Ron was the Artistic Director of Cirque du Soleil's show VOLTA from 2018 to 2020. On top of managing the cast and crew, his role was to oversee the evolution of the show and to maintain the highest standards of artistic quality. Prior to directing VOLTA, he has also worked as the Artistic Director on the company's internationally acclaimed success KOOZA.

In addition to his work with Cirque du Soleil, Ron also serves as a Senior Producer for e2k, Co-Director for the *NFL Pro Bowl* in Hawaii and Co-Producer for the *NFL Pro Bowl United Way Thanksgiving Half-Time Show*. Ron has an extensive background in cheerleading, having hosted the National Cheerleading Championships for ESPN Network and coached many pro cheerleading teams and tryouts. Ron began teaching cheerleading camps at the United Spirit Association in 1984, where he first met and worked with Paula Abdul. He also produced the Cannondale Pro Cycling Team Launch at Paramount Studios, as well as several high-profile press and VIP events for Monster CES in Las Vegas.



His directing and choreography credits include *Iron Man 2*, starring Robert Downey Jr. as well as the musicals *Ain't Misbehavin*, *Chicago*, *A Chorus Line*, *The Color Purple*, *Dreamgirls*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Once on This Island*, *Rent*, *Smokey Joe's Cafe* and *5 Guys Named Moe*.

As a performer, Ron has appeared on Broadway in *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Chicago* and toured nationally in *Aida*, *Dreamgirls*, *Fosse* and *Chicago*.



Anda Udris

Anda's passion to help any athlete she works with shows in her injury prevention skills, return-to-play programming, and customized strength and conditioning curricula. She aims to educate coaches and promote a holistic approach to athletic performance.

Anda's educational background includes a MS in Human Health and Performance with an emphasis in athletic training from Oklahoma State, where she completed a thesis reviewing the functional movement of over 380 athletes. She is also a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist with a BS in athletic training and a minor in biomedical sciences from Missouri State University. She prides herself in understanding the athletic psyche as she was a DI track and field athlete, who not

only worked with a collaborative team of physicians, athletic trainers, strength coaches, and dieticians but learned from them as a clinician.

She has worked with a variety of athletes including but not limited to football, basketball, soccer, lacrosse, rugby, dance, and cheerleading. Her 14-year experience with Varsity Spirit and her involvement with various national championships has prepared her for her current position as one of the athletic trainers for the USA National cheer and dance groups composed of sixteen teams, junior and premier. Anda utilizes her medical background combined with her knowledge of human performance to address every aspect of athletic performance and continues to promote cheer and dance, educate coaches and athletes, and emphasize a multi-professional environment.



Amanda Gaines

Amanda Gaines is entering her 10th season as the coach of the 19x UDA National Champion and 3x World Champion University of Minnesota Dance Team. Growing up training and competing in all styles at her studio and high school dance team in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Amanda went on to attend the University of Minnesota, where she was a captain and choreographer of the dance team her senior year. After graduating, she jumped right into coaching, and continued choreography with high school, colleges and all-star programs around the country. She's taught camps, clinics, master classes and judged all over the world, and is excited to share her passion for dance with coaches!



April Hamner

April Hamner is in her 18th year as a dance educator and 11th year as a Pure Barre teacher. She received her License in Massage Therapy in 2005 and has completed over 1000 hours of continuing education in anatomy and physiology since then. Enthusiastic about the education that Pure Barre provides, she continued her journey with the company as a Master Teacher trainer for Pure Barre corporate and now leading the Pure Barre New York community with 14 studios as their Training and Technique manager. As a former dance team dancer and now coach she was driven to bring the technique of muscular endurance training into the dance world. As former head coach of Valor Christian High School dance team and now assistant coach of the 7x national championship team Hofstra University she has been able to cultivate trainings that will allow these athletes to take their capabilities to the next

level in a safe and effective way. She is so excited to share this passion and knowledge with other coaches around the nation.



Jenny Eustice

Jenny Eustice is entering her 13th year as the Dance Team Coach for the University of Iowa. In both 2017 and 2020 the Iowa Dance Team placed 3rd at UDA College Nationals in the division 1A Pom category. The Iowa Dance Team has been a perennial finalist, placing in the Top 10 in the past 12 years. The Iowa Dance Team competes in the Pom, Jazz, and Game Day divisions. Eustice is a former Minnesota Vikings cheerleader and a Minnesota Swarm Performance Team member. She is a former dancer (captain) and assistant coach of the four-time UDA National Champion University of Minnesota dance team in Minneapolis.

While at Minnesota, she earned a Bachelor's of Science degree in Nutrition, a 9-12 teaching license in Life Science Education, and a Master's of Life Science Education. Her coaching background also includes the multi-time Minnesota State Champion Wayzata High School dance team.

She has choreographed for nationally-ranked college, high school, and all-star dance teams. Eustice has 15 years of studio training in ballet, jazz, tap, hip-hop, and modern from the Dance Shoppe in Plymouth, Minn.

Currently, Eustice is an Assistant Principal at Iowa City West High School in Iowa City, Iowa. Eustice was the Universal Dance Association (UDA) ESPN dance analyst for the National High School Dance Team Championship for nine years. She is a former UDA staff member and choreographer for UDA summer camps.



Bonita Saldano

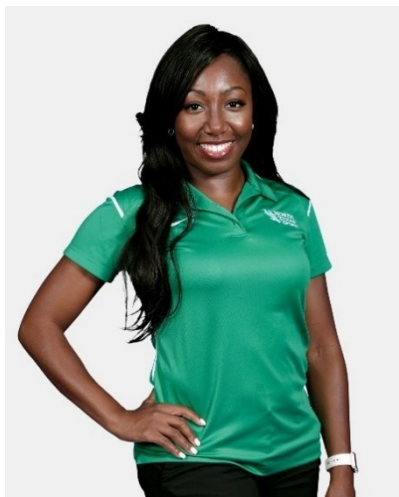
Combining her unique flavor, dynamic performance, and distinguished resume, Bonita Saldaña's influence is recognized from the streets to the stage. Hailing from Phoenix, Arizona, her professional career originated as a member of the Phoenix Mercury Hip-Hop Squad and the Phoenix Suns Dance Team.

Also known as, "Bgirl Bonita", she has performed with artists such as: Jason Derulo, P. Diddy, Black Eyed Peas, Sean Kingston, Fergie, and Jamiroquai. She has been a member of three of the most legendary, world-famous and credible names in Hip-Hop dance: The Rock Steady Crew, The Groovaloos and The Beat Freaks. Bonita has been featured on Disney's Shake It Up, Nickelodeon's Fresh Beat Band, American Idol, Dancing with the Stars and MTV's Made. Additionally, she has performed in corporate events for NIKE, ADIDAS, Sketchers, Dillard's, Toshiba, Red Bull, AT&T and many more.

Bonita has been an instrumental teacher for the Universal Dance Association for 15 years, helping establish their summer hip-hop choreography and adjudicating their national events. She adjudicates for Worlds, NDA National Events, Amp Dance Competition, and Hip-Hop International. She has worked with ICU and USASF helping establish their Hip-Hop curriculum for coaches and program development worldwide.

Her distinctive dance choreography can be seen on collegiate, high school, and studio teams across the USA. Her knowledge and credibility in Hip-Hop have taken her to places such as Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, London, Montreal, Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, Australia, Reunion Island, and Barcelona.

Bonita is currently living in Phoenix, Arizona with her business partner and husband, Gabriel, raising their two dancing daughters, Amoriah and Valentina all while rigorously leading her business and living out her calling. Bonita is a successful female entrepreneur as the owner of a local dance studio in Phoenix, Arizona, The Studance Lab. With her expertise in curriculum development, teacher training, and overall culture implementation, The Studance Lab is one of the newest and fastest growing dance schools in the Valley. As an online feature for Gusto Headquarters and Step X Step Dance, Bonita's accomplishments and ingenuity has also led her to guest speaking opportunities at national and local events including Adelante Mami. Bonita is excited to continue sharing her knowledge and expertise with students near and far!



Brittani McLaurin

Brittani is a South Florida native that resides in the DFW area with her husband and maltipoo. She is in her fourth season as the dance team director at the University of North Texas and previously spent three seasons as the head coach of the Florida State University Golden Girls. Brittani has danced professionally, for the Dallas Cowboys Rhythm and Blue Dancers, and has over 10 years of post-collegiate dance and coaching experience. In addition to coaching, she is the Varsity Dance State Director for Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico.



Chelsea Pierotti

Chelsea was trained as a studio dancer in the Denver area, and spent summers training with ballet companies, finishing her performance career as a professional ballet dancer. Chelsea was also a successful high school dance coach for over a decade winning multiple State Championship titles. Outside of coaching, Chelsea has a Ph.D. in Sport Psychology and is a full-time instructor at the University of Colorado at Boulder. As a mental performance coach, Dr. Chelsea provides digital courses and memberships to help dance educators learn and thrive. You can check out her podcast a Passion for Dance at <https://chelseapierotti.com>



Laila Hardman

Laila is an established and respected teacher, choreographer, judge, and business-owner. She has dedicated her career to studying current best practices in the dance industry to provide the most-informed dance education and mentoring to her students, coaches, and employees. She is currently on tour with NRG Dance Project Dance Convention where she teaches classes on safe stretching and conditioning.

As a choreographer, Laila has worked with studio teams, dance teams, commercial productions, NFL half time performances, and fashion shows—earning her over 20 choreography awards. She was also nominated for a Heartland Emmy award for a commercial she co-choreographed for Starz/Encore. Laila has set choreographed and produced many collegiate, NBA and NFL dancer performances. Her work has been seen on Extreme Makeover UK as part of the “Dream Team” and patented “Air Guitar Aerobics” in Europe.

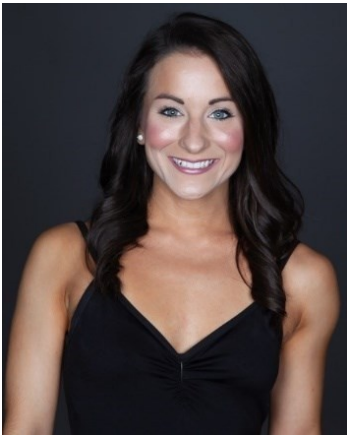
Many of Laila’s former dancers can be seen on Broadway, in music videos, featured in commercials, dancing on NBA and NFL dance teams, or on tour with artists such as Rihanna and Taylor Swift. As a mentor and teacher, she has served as a private dance coach for several Disney Mickey Mouse Club members and worked as the Associate Artistic Director for the award-winning Starstruck Dance Academy in Denver, Colorado. She also founded Extreme Dance, London and The London Dance Project while teaching for the world-renowned Pineapple studios in London. Most recently she was Owner and Director of The Dance Project SLC in Cottonwood Heights, Utah.

Among her many accolades, Laila is also the Owner and Director of the professional dance company “Urban Fairytalez”. She is 500-hour ERYT Certified Yoga instructor and holds a certificate in Biomechanics and is the Educational director for mUvmethod. Laila is a respected international dance judge with a broad range of experience among many different companies in the US and Europe.



Karen Lew

Karen Lew, is currently the Vice-President of Varsity University, Varsity Camp Administration and the Director of Safety for Varsity Spirit. Karen is an educator and certified athletic trainer. She has held numerous positions in higher education before coming to Varsity University full-time. Her passion is cheerleading safety and the overall well-being of athletes. Her research areas include concussion education, injury prevention and emergency action planning. Karen holds a Doctorate of Health Sciences. In addition to her work with Varsity, she is actively involved in athletic training education and is a member of the Louisiana Athletic Trainers' Association Hall of Fame. Karen also serves as the chair of the USA Cheer Safety Council, where she is directly responsible for initiating safety practices in cheerleading and making recommendations to member organizations.



Mariterese Altosino

Mariterese Altosino, a Chicagoland native, received her Bachelor of Arts in Dance as well as Business and Entrepreneurship from Columbia College Chicago. Post graduation, Mariterese danced with Giordano Dance Chicago for four years, during this time she worked with world-renowned choreographers such as Ray Leeper, Peter Chu, and Marinda Davis and performed works by Ray Mercer, Christopher Huggins, Jon Lehrer and Gus Giordano. Altosino continued her professional career with the South Chicago Dance Theatre, Banks Performance Project, and participated in a choreographic residency with Choomna Dance Company of Seoul, South Korea. Mariterese is now in her first season as a company artist with Water Street Dance Milwaukee. Altosino teaches and choreographs at a variety of local studios in addition to coaching a high school dance team and an all-star dance team. Altosino is a veteran instructor with Universal Dance Association (UDA) and has been instructing summer camps at the high school and collegiate level for a total of ten years. Through UDA, she has taken her passion for dance internationally to teach, judge, and choreograph in Ecuador, Germany, Norway, Slovenia, Austria, London, and China.



Rochelle Mapes

Rochelle Mapes earned a MA and BFA in Dance from Cal State University, Long Beach. She taught at the Orange County School of the Arts (Commercial Dance Conservatory) for 18 years and currently is on faculty at the American Ballet Theatre Gillespie School. As a performer, she has danced with such musical artists as Gladys Knight and Wayne Brady, performed on the FX television show *Nip/Tuck*. She continues to dance with the bi-coastal (NY/CA) contemporary BARE Dance Company under the direction of Mike Esperanza and spent almost a decade as a dancer, choreographer, and rehearsal director for RhetOracle Dance Company with Nate Hodges. As a master teacher, she has taught for the Dizzy Feet Foundation's National Dance Day, Dance aTAK convention, USA, numerous studios/schools, and was a member of the USA Dance Staff for 17 years. Most recently, Rochelle has discovered a new love for teaching virtual master classes and freelances regularly working with dancers around the world. In addition, she judges for USA Dance, USA-Japan Nationals, and The Dance Worlds.



Tara Yantis

Tara Yantis is a coach, choreographer, consultant and adjudicator based in Kansas City. Tara is in her 12th season as the Head Coach and Creative Director of the 4-Time National Champion Saint Thomas Aquinas Spirits Dance Program. Tara is also a co-founder of the Kansas State Dance Team Coaches Association and was influential in the state deciding to create its first-ever State Championship for dance in 2020.

For the last 14 years, Tara has traveled the country as a Head Instructor and adjudicator with NDA. She has received 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 for NDA at the London New Year's Day Parade, helping facilitate performances seen by 300million+ viewers worldwide.

A graduate of Washburn University, Tara was captain of both the game day dance team and the nationals competition team, leading her team to multiple finals appearances and national rankings at the NCA/NDA Collegiate National Championship in Daytona Beach, FL. She was also an arena football cheerleader for 4 years, serving as captain and choreographer for the team. Tara and her husband Brady are raising a joyful toddler named Jack and are pup parents to Penny Lane. You can follow [**@coachtara_**](#) on Instagram for inspiration and motivation.



Toya Ambrose

Toya Renee Ambrose is a former NBA dancer, for both the Chicago Luvabulls and the Memphis Grizzlies. Also a graduate of the University of Memphis, she was a scholarship member of the University of Memphis Pom Squad. Toya is formerly the Spirit Coordinator of the University of Connecticut (UConn) spirit teams, and also former Head Coach of the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Dancing Flames. Through her company T.R.A. Choreography LLC, Toya and her staff choreograph competitive teams all over the world - most recently in Japan, Slovenia, Finland, and Mexico. She is also co-founder of Tone Society (with Shandon Perez), a program that helps dancers bridge the gap between being a performer and a choreographer. Together, their goal is to "change the tone" of the industry, inspiring creators to support one another in the industry. In addition to being a judge on the national and international scene, Toya resides in Chicago, IL, and is married to attorney Garvin G. Ambrose and their greatest adventure is being foster parents to three baby girls.



Tasha Hinex

Tasha Hinex is a 5 time National Championship coach, teacher and choreographer. She worked 13 years with the National Dance Alliance as a Head Instructor and Choreographer, teaching high school and college pom camps across the United States. This opened numerous doors including judging NDA High School Nationals, NDA All-Star Nationals and many regional competitions. She also had the opportunity to teach and judge the JCDA (Japanese Cheer Dance Association) in Japan. Through the National Dance Coaches Association, she was nominated for Collegiate Coach of the Year and is an advocate for expanding the dance team coaches community. Tasha starting coaching for Oklahoma City University Pom Squad in 2009 and continues to teach, choreograph and clean jazz, pom, hip hop and modern routines for local studios, high schools and colleges.



Valerie Potsos

Valerie Stead Potsos is in her 20th season as Head Coach of the nationally ranked University of Michigan Dance Team. She is the Director/Owner of Dancer's Edge Studio in Dexter, Michigan. Recently, she traveled to Vienna, Austria to choreograph and train three dance teams with the Vienna Vikings. She has choreographed for NAIA College Teams, High School Teams and All-Star Teams. She has also choreographed for professional corporate sponsors including Ford Motor Company and much more.

Dancer's Edge was named as one of the "Top Studios on the Move" in Dance Spirit magazine. Her articles on coaching and dance have appeared in Dance Spirit, American Cheerleader and in Motion Magazines.

She is a Seminar presenter, and curriculum consultant for Varsity University, UCA/UDA (Universal Cheer and Dance Association) and AACCA (American Association of Cheer Coaches and Administrators) on topics such as Motivation, Leadership, Teambuilding and many more.

Her students have auditioned for America's Got Talent and have been featured on the show in 2015. Along with judging local, state and national competitions, she has judged Studio, High School and College Dance Nationals as well for various organizations. Previously, she coached The Royal Oak Kimball Dance Company and The Royal Oak Kimball Varsity Dance Team for 8 years.

As a dance educator for 30+ years and an adjudicator for 20+ years, she was also a member and captain of The University of Michigan Dance Team. Valerie graduated with a B.A. from the University of Michigan and has additional graduate studies in Secondary Education from Michigan State University. Valerie resides in Dexter, MI with her husband three children.