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Dallas Black Dance Theatre
Celebrates Success of Students

Over 48 Seasons

Dallas, Texas – **Dallas Black Dance Academy** is now offering a hybrid class model this fall allowing students to learn dance techniques at DBDT studios or use the Zoom virtual platform. The Academy begins its 48th season of classes celebrating the success of its students.

Academy alum **Alysia Johnson** was recently honored with a 2021 **Princess Grace Honoraria Award in Dance**. Ms. Johnson trained at Dallas Black Dance Academy on scholarship for 12 years, including while attending **Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts**. She says the Academy not only taught her excellent dance skills but discipline and how to be humble. “I am interested in dance education. I felt lucky that many of my DBD Academy teachers were also Dallas Black Dance Theatre company members,” said Alysia Johnson. “Because of the great teachers I had at Dallas Black Dance Theatre, I would hate for someone not to dance because they feel their bodies do not look right. We need people in the front of the room who are diverse.” Alysia is a company member at **Hubbard Street Dance Chicago** where she also teaches contemporary modern and improvisation.

Alysia is one of four Academy alums who attended **The Juilliard School** in the last decade. Two other former academy students were also honored by the Princess Grace Foundation. **Jared Brown**, a dancer with Shechter II, received the Princess Grace Award for Dance in 2019 and was named a Presidential Scholar in 2016. **My’Kal Stromile**, a Boston Ballet company member, was a 2019 Princess Grace Award nominee and a 2014 Presidential Scholar. He trained at the Academy for two years before joining DBDT II while still a student at Booker T. Washington HSPVA. In all, DBDT has had nine academy students named as Presidential Scholars in Dance.

“Dallas Black Dance Theatre and its official school Dallas Black Dance Academy have an established comprehensive program that helps to create well-rounded dancers/artists like

Alysia, Jared and My’Kal,” said **Dallas Black Dance Academy Director Katricia Eaglin**. “Students train in classic dance forms of ballet modern, jazz African and tap weekly giving them a strong foundation. Students work with varying choreographers throughout their training, experience world renowned teachers during our summer programs and are also provided opportunities to choreograph. This is the recipe for success for DBDT and DBD Academy.”

Dallas Black Dance Academy is offering classes during the fall in the evenings and on Saturday. You can register now for student and adult classes in Ballet, Modern, Pointe, Jazz, Tap, African, Hip Hop, Yoga, and Parent & Me. There are a limited number of in-studio spots to maintain social distancing. Students can also take virtual classes on the Zoom virtual platform.

Registrations are still being accepted for fall classes. For more details visit <https://dbdt.com/academy/> or email academy@dbdt.com. You can also call 214-871-2376 ext. 101.

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ABOUT DALLAS BLACK DANCE THEATRE: *Dallas Black Dance Theatre is an internationally recognized professional dance company that engages the cross-cultural community through contemporary modern dance presented from the African American experience. The National Endowment for the Arts designated the 45-year-old company as an American Masterpiece Touring Artist in 2008. The company also received the Texas Medal of Arts Award for Arts Education in 2017.*

As a result of COVID closures, Dallas Black Dance Theater’s 44th season was entirely virtual, with many of its stage performances reimaged on film across the Dallas landscape. During the summer of 2020, Dallas Black Dance Theatre became the first professional dance company in the world to consistently present paid-only virtual performances as a new business model developed after the closing of live performances during the pandemic.

*In 2021, Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival commissioned Darrell Grand Moultrie to choreograph the new work LIKE WATER for Dallas Black Dance Theatre as the inaugural recipient of the **Joan B. Hunter New Work Commission**. LIKE WATER enjoyed its world premiere at the prestigious dance festival.*

As Dallas' oldest and largest professional dance company, Dallas Black Dance Theatre ranks as the 10th largest minority arts organization in America and the fourth largest black dance company in the nation.

***Ann Williams** founded Dallas Black Dance Theatre in 1976. **Melissa M. Young** took the helm as Artistic Director in 2018 after starting at the company as a dancer in 1994. **Zenetta S. Drew** has led the administrative side of the company since 1987 as Executive Director following a volunteer assignment for the dance company.*

The mission of Dallas Black Dance Theatre is to create and produce contemporary modern dance at its highest level of artistic excellence. Dallas Black Dance Theatre fulfills this mission through performance and educational programs that bridge cultures, reach diverse communities, and encompass ever-expanding national audiences.

*The virtuosic dancers of Dallas Black Dance Theatre have mesmerized 5 million arts patrons across 16 countries, including two Olympic Cultural events. Five performing companies comprise Dallas Black Dance Theatre and its training Academy. Dallas Black Dance Theatre consists of 14 full-time salaried dancers performing a mixed repertory of modern, jazz, African, and spiritual works by national and international choreographers. **DBDT: Encore!** features 10 artists of rising excellence from across the nation who support Dallas Black Dance Theatre's growing local and regional educational outreach. 2.7 million students, grades K-12, have experienced the dance company's performances and educational outreach programs.*

***Dallas Black Dance Academy**, the official school of Dallas Black Dance Theatre, celebrates 48 years of delivering dance instruction to a community of diverse backgrounds. The academy was the first in the nation to train a student who received the Presidential Scholar Award in Dance in 1980. More than 500 students participate weekly in 50 dance classes, including ballet, jazz, tap, modern, and African. Classes are held at Dallas Black Dance Theatre's studios and are open to students ages four to adult. The academy has three performing ensembles: **Allegro Performing Ensemble**, Dallas Black Dance Theatre's premier academy ensemble, **Senior Performing Ensemble**, and **Junior Performing Ensemble**.*

*Dallas Black Dance Theatre's permanent home in the historic Moorland YMCA building in the Dallas Arts District includes dance studios, training facilities, and administrative offices. Dallas Black Dance Theatre is a resident company of the **AT&T Performing Arts Center**, and its performance home is the **Dee and Charles Wily Theatre**.*

For more details, visit www.DBDT.com and www.dbdt.com/academy.



Photograph by Xavier Mack.





Photograph of Alysia Johnson.



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