

Melissa Young, Artistic Director
Zenetta S. Drew, Executive Director
Dallas Black Dance Theatre
2700 Ann Williams Way
Dallas, TX 75021

May 31, 2024

Dear Ms. Young and Ms. Drew:

On behalf of the Dallas Black Dance Theatre Company dancers, who voted on May 29, 2024 to be represented by the American Guild of Musical Artists (“Union”), the Union is reaching out to discuss next steps regarding bargaining.

Under the National Labor Relations Act (“NLRA”), as of May 29, 2024, the Employer has an obligation to notify and bargain in good faith with the Union over any material changes to employees’ terms and conditions of work prior to implementation. While the Employer may still be contemplating filing objections to the election, an employer that chooses unilaterally to change its employees’ terms and conditions of employment between the time of an election and the time of certification does so at its own peril if the union is ultimately certified. *See, e.g. In Re Overnite Transp. Co.*, 335 NLRB 372 (2001). Under long-settled NLRA precedent, if election objections are found to lack merit, an employer which implements unilateral changes between the time of an election and the time of certification violates the NLRA’s obligations to bargain in good faith with the Union and will be required to make the Union and employees whole for such changes.

We are informed that the Employer has already made one such unilateral change by withholding a benefit historically provided to departing dancers to attend the Big Dance celebration immediately following the end of the season free of charge. Three departing dancers have been informed by Human Resources on May 30 and again today that they now must pursue their own ticket to attend the event. This change appears to be an unfair labor practice in retaliation to the dancers’ choice to select AGMA as their bargaining representative as well as in violation of DBDT’s obligation to bargain in good faith with the Union.

Now that the ballots have been counted, we hope that the Employer will come to the table and bargain in good faith. To start this relationship off on the right foot, we ask that the decision to bar the three departing dancers from the Big Dance event be reversed and their names added to the list of employees allowed to attend the event consistent with past practice. Further, if any other material changes to the terms and conditions of work have been implemented since May 29, 2024, we ask that those be reversed so we have an opportunity to discuss and negotiate with you regarding those proposed changes.

The Union will reach out soon with proposed dates and times to begin negotiating a collective bargaining agreement.

Thank you in advance for your attention.

Best Regards,

Griff Braun

Griff Braun

National Organizing Director

American Guild of Musical Artists

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CC: Amanda Brown

Ivy Yan

