



2025 NDA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

JUDGES



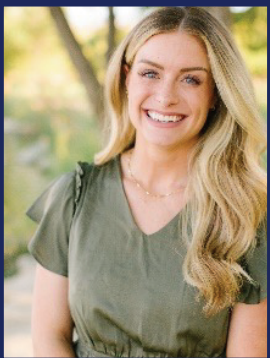
BRIAN CAO

Brian Cao has been involved in the spirit industry for over 25 years on the school, all-star, collegiate and professional levels. He has been affiliated with NCA/NDA for the last 27 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 & judging opportunities have taken him all around the world, including to the United Kingdom, Canada, 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 the Pacific Northwest, 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 major cheer and dance events, and is a 7-time judge and current Pom Panel Director for The USASF Dance Worlds.



CHRISTINA LEONE

Christina Leone is in her 21st year coaching at the high school level and is currently the head coach at Rock Canyon HS in Colorado. Her teams have earned numerous regional and state titles, are perennial finalists at UDA Nationals. 6x Colorado State Champions, Rock Canyon has earned seven national medals at the NDTC since 2020. In 2018, they were selected as the Varsity Brands American Spirit Leader Award winner. Christina was a 2023 NHSACA Coach of the Year Finalist and previously was named the Positive Coaching Alliance Double-Goal Coach (2015) and Colorado Coach of the Year (2016). A veteran adjudicator, she regularly judges for the USASF Dance Worlds, National Championships at the High School, All-Star, & Collegiate levels for UDA, NDA, USA, GSSA, Dance Summit, Jamfest/Jamfest Japan and currently serves on numerous industry committees. Christina is an avid fan of figure skating, all Colorado sports, loves being a volleyball and soccer mom to her two daughters as well as traveling and spending time with her husband & family.



LYNDSLEY ROMNEY

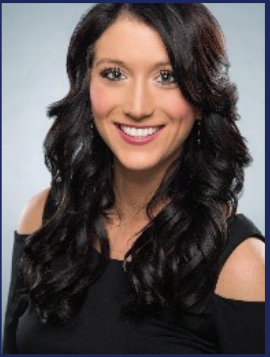
Lyndsey is from Salt Lake City, UT and has trained in jazz, lyrical, contemporary, hip-hop, and ballet. She was able to learn from teachers such as Bonnie Story, Joey Dowling-Fakhrieh, Jacki Ford, Thayne Jaspersen, and Caroline Lewis Jones. By the time Lyndsey turned 12 she started performing with Odyssey Dance Theater learning from Derryl Yeager. As she entered middle school she started to receive scholarships to dance conventions like NYCDA, Hollywood Connection, JUMP, and NUVO. In High School she was apart of her schools Drill Team at Hillcrest High School and captain her Jr. and Senior year. Lyndsey attended college at Southern Utah University and graduated from there with a degree in Exercise Science and worked as a Physical Therapist Assistant. Some of her accomplishments include: Being a backup dancer in Disney's High School Musical, receiving first place in the 5A State dance division in Utah, performing in NYC, traveling to Japan to teach dance, and working for NDA for a total of thirteen years. She has been married for 8 years and has three little girls who are her everything. Lyndsey loves to spend time outdoors with her family either skiing, camping, hiking, mountain biking, or occasionally river rafting.

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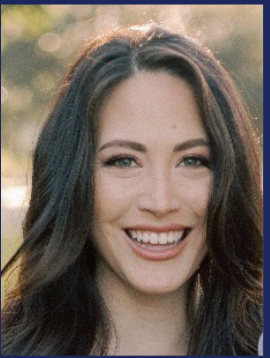
NICHOLE JOSEY

Nichole Josey has an extensive background in performance and dance. Starting at a young age 2 she began taking studio dance and continued through high school. During this time she was apart of several competition teams, performance groups, and her high school dance team. In 2013 Nichole began her first season as an NBA Dancer with the Detroit Pistons Dancers and completed 4 seasons as an NBA dancer with them, ending in 2017, but continuing to work in game operations with the Detroit Pistons until 2020. After a few years away, Nichole joined the Cleveland Cavaliers as part of the Powerhouse Dance Team for the 22-23 season and now is back with the Pistons Dancers completing her 6th season in the NBA. She has performed with artists such as Kelly Clarkson, Silento, Run DMC, Kid Rock, CeeLo Green, Flo Rida, Gloria Gaynor, B.o.B, and several others. Nichole has been working with NDA for 10+ years and as a judge for 8. Beyond dance, Nichole works as a Digital Marketing Manager and is currently pursuing her Doctoral in Organizational Leadership.



ASHLEY MITCHELL

Ashley Mitchell has over 20 years of dance experiences, including: training, coaching, choreographing and performing. Her training has primarily focused on the pom and hip hop style but she has a huge love and understanding of all dance styles. As a dancer she performed at the University of Kentucky and on her competitive high school dance team. She coached a highly competitive and regional, state and nationally ranked high school team for 18 seasons before retiring from coaching to focus more on her family and judging. She has experience with both UDA and NDA companies and truly looks forward to another amazing competitive dance season.



NICHOLE HUDSON

Nichole is a former competitive studio dancer and school cheerleader; starting her dance training at three years old. She has been a certified USASF Cheer and Dance Legality Official and Deductions Judge for twelve years. This has allowed her the opportunity to work for numerous event producers both nationally and internationally, such as NDA and NCA, UCA, JamFest, American Championships, Power Dance, Spirit Cheer, GSSA, Cheersport, Coastal Cheer and Dance, Future Cheer, and ICC. She has had the privilege of serving on the judging panel for several prestigious post season events like The Summit, The D2 Summit, and has served as a legality official at The Dance Worlds for the last eight years.



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MICHELLE ALLISON

Michelle Allison, Artistic Director of Curtain Call Dance Center, Indianapolis, IN, received a B.S. in Dance Performance from Ball State University. Michelle is director of the Performing Companies, The Nutcracker & Dance Against Cancer at Curtain Call where she teaches dance, choreographs & develops curriculum and continuing education. Currently she is also involved in local musical, show choir, marching band and winter guard choreography. Michelle judged The Dance Worlds since the inaugural year and is currently the Panel Director for the Jazz and Kick Categories for the USASF. From 2010-2021 Michelle choreographed the Colts NFL Cheerleader auditions and halftime shows, has been a frequent guest judge/master instructor with JCDA Tokyo, JPN since 1994 and is a veteran judge of NDA and other Varsity school and college competitions. She spent 13yrs teaching for NDA, choreographed and field produced bowl games & parades; has judged NDA Regionals, Dance All-Star & College Nationals since 1992.



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, high kick and has extensive training in pom. As a dancer, she studied alongside world-renowned dancers in NYC and the Minnesota Conservatory of Arts. 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 workshops with teams and coaches. Jessika's has extensive experience judging state, national, and international competitions, including over 10 years with The Dance Worlds.



MELISSA KIDD

Melissa Kidd is the owner of Dance Technician in Cincinnati Ohio, a private strength training facility for dancers rooted in Pilates. Melissa also teaches dance at a private high school. She has trained under members of Cincinnati Ballet, Boston Ballet and New York City Ballet. She has also performed and trained with the Manhattan Dance Project the years of it's inception. Melissa holds several certifications in early childhood dance education and currently teaches a certification program for studio and program owners. She enjoys splitting her time judging, teaching master classes, consulting high school/collegiate teams and doing private strength training across the US.



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ANTHONY DAVIS

Anthony Davis (LeFlore) is from Houston, Texas and holds a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Dance from Sam Houston State University! During his time in undergrad, he trained & studied at the American Dance Festival, and been on scholarships through the Gus Giordano Dance School in Chicago, as well as the Ailey School in NYC. As a performing artist, he has danced on stages such as American College Dance Association, Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP), the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., Jacob's Pillow in Massachusetts and the Lincoln Center in NYC. Anthony is currently a 9th Year Staff Member, and 6th Year Head Instructor with UDA, and has been working high school, and college camps since 2017. Previously, he was on the coaching staff for the World Renowned All-Star program Dancin' Bluebonnets where his teams won numerous National and International titles through, Encore Grand Nationals, The Groove Nationals, NDA All-Star Nationals, jamFest Super Nationals, and The Dance Summit.



MAGGIE WHITE

Maggie Allain White graduated from Louisiana State University receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Sports Administration and Business. She has been judging dance competitions since 2012, notably including the Dance Worlds, Dance Summit, JAMfest Japan, JAMfest Dance Super Nationals, UDA National Dance Team Championship, UDA Louisiana State, NDA College Nationals and NDA High School Nationals in person and virtual events. Maggie's dance accolades include being a member of the NFL New Orleans Saints Professional Cheerleading Team, Dance Team Consultant for teams across the U.S. having her teams rank in the top 5 at National events, USASF Certified Legality Official, USASF Certified Judge and Varsity All-Star Certified Judge. Outside of judging dance competitions, Maggie enjoys spending time with her husband and being a mom.



MORGAN SCHULTE

Morgan has over 20 years of experience in the dance industry as a teacher and choreographer. She danced professionally in the NBA for six seasons with the 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 attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where she earned degrees in Exercise Science and Dietetics, and has a Masters' degree in Nutrition from Saint Louis University. She fuses dance with her other passions of health and wellness as a speaker on these topics throughout the country. She is a coach at Orangetheory Fitness as well as through her own nutrition and wellness company, Motivate.



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KRISTEN BERNAL

Kristen Bernal grew up in South Georgia and began dancing at age three. By seven, she was competing, and her passion for dance only deepened over the years. After continued training at various conventions and competitions, she was selected in high school for the inaugural Apprentice class of the Tremaine Performance Company. Kristen went on to attend Valdosta State University, where she earned a Fine Arts Degree in Dance and was a member of the NDA National Champion-winning Red Hots Dance Team. After college, Kristen joined NDA staff for eight years. She has also choreographed for various studios and high school teams and coached at the collegiate level. Kristen currently resides in Atlanta, Georgia with her husband and their 10-month-old daughter and continues to share her passion for dance serving as an Assistant Coach for the Georgia Tech Goldrush Dance Team.



JARRIN WARREN

Jarrin Rolle Warren has been in the dance industry for over 30 years. She is a recognized dance coach/director, instructor, and choreographer with works ranging from pee-wee to collegiate and professional. She has judged for numerous dance companies and competitions nationally and internationally and has received choreography awards in hip hop, pom, team performance and jazz. Some of Jarrin's accomplishments include dance performance assistant of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, halftime performance coordinator/choreographer for the New Jersey Nets, dance camp instructor/choreographer Japan, dance assistant for the Aloha Bowl Hawaii, production assistant of Thanksgiving in Paris, France and she helped create and lead NDA's verbal judging program. Jarrin has judged COPBrands Mexico and COP Virtual Games Mexico, The Dance Summit for five years, and The Dance Worlds for twelve years.



KRISTANY MALONE

Kristany is an eastern Kentucky native who's collegiate and professional dance career has allowed her to train and perform alongside some of the top talent across the United States. She started training under Jody Burton Shepherd at Dance Etc. Studio of Dance in Prestonsburg, KY where she spent 15 years learning jazz, lyrical and ballet. Kristany was then a four year member of the University of Kentucky Dance Team where she competed in Pom and Hip Hop at UDA College Nationals and performed at all home Football and Men's Basketball Games. After graduating from the University of Kentucky and being named the University of Kentucky Dancer of the Year in 2016, Kristany was selected for NYC's Broadway Dance Center Professional Semester and performed in their 2017 showcase at Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre in New York. She then spent a winter season dancing with RWS Entertainment Group at Cedar Fair Theme Parks. She spent two seasons dancing for the Dallas Cowboys Rhythm and Blue Dancers. While in Dallas, she had the opportunity to kick off Oprah's 2020 Vision tour in a performance with Daybreakers. Kristany currently teaches in the University of Kentucky College of Fine Arts. Kristany is super excited about using her experiences and connections to equip the next generation of dancers!



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CAROLINE KOCH

Caroline was crowned Miss Dance Drill Team before teaching dance team summer camp around the country. While on the Hip Hop Coalition at ASU, Caroline was cast in High School Musical for Disney. She has been featured in productions like The Lion King to Disney's Christmas Day Parade, taking the stage with the likes of Selena Gomez and Justin Bieber. After completing her apprenticeship from The Jabbawockeez on the Monsters of Hip Hop tour she danced across the globe with Seabourn. Caroline's career in entertainment continues as both talent and producer, working with some of today's biggest acts from music festivals to red carpet events.



WANDA WEIR

Wanda Brown Weir is the former 3 year Director/Choreographer of the NBA Washington Wizards Dance Team. Prior to joining the Wizards Dance Team as a dancer Wanda was a cheerleader for the NFL Washington Commanders for two seasons. Wanda is the former captain/choreographer of the multi-championed Towson University Dance Team and former coach of the George Washington University "First Ladies" Dance Team. Since 1999, Wanda has adjudicated numerous state, national and international dance competitions. Currently, Wanda is the Owner/Creative Director for Premier Dance DC and Head Coach for Catholic University. Wanda is a sought after dance fitness consultant, speaker, motivational coach & commercial actress/model with two young daughters, who are also actresses, whose credits including Broadway, HBO, BET, Nick Jr and feature films.



SHELLY WARREN

Shelly Warren is the current Golden Girl Spirit Squad Director at The Villages High School in Middleton, Florida and Quality Control Director for the judging panels at The USASF/IASF Dance Worlds. In addition, Shelly is a veteran national and international judge and works as a choreographer and competition consultant for high school, college, studio, and all star programs across the USA. She is the rehearsal coordinator for the halftime and pregame performances for the Citrus Bowl held annually in Orlando, Florida, and has served as the rehearsal director for pregame at the ACC Championship Game. Shelly worked for Universal Dance Association (UDA) for 22 years in various roles: head instructor, choreographer, program committee member, and college camp instructor, and has obtained national titles as a dancer, coach, and choreographer in Pom, High Kick, Hip Hop, and Jazz. She continues to pursue her dream of educating and inspiring dancers through her travels to studios and schools worldwide.



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HEATHER LANGHAM

Heather Langham is a 13 year veteran of The Radio City Rockettes and resides in New York City. After retiring from the Rockettes in 2022, she has focused her energy on working with dance teams on improving their kick technique as well as developing strength programs the teams can use throughout their season. Heather graduated from Arizona State University and was co-captain of the first nationally competitive ASU Dance Team. She has worked for the National Dance Alliance for over 25 years as a Head Instructor, choreographer and adjudicator at both the college and high school level. She has over 20 years of experience as an adjudicator at multiple events including: The Dance Worlds, NDA Nationals, NDA All Star Nationals, NDA College Nationals, COP Brands, USA All Star Nationals and many other state and regional competitions.



LINDSEY HULL

Lindsey Hull is from Birmingham, Alabama, where she resides with her husband and two daughters. She holds a degree in Human Sciences from Auburn University and boasts forty years of dance experience, encompassing dance team and dance studio training, teaching, and coaching. Formerly, she served as the coach for the UAB Golden Girls and the nationally ranked Mountain Brook High School Dorians. Presently, Lindsey owns and operates Dance Connections, offering dance lessons from preschool to collegiate levels in the Birmingham area. Additionally, she acts as a choreographer and coach for two local middle school programs. As the founder and director of the Magic City Sparks, a performance dance team for students with special needs, Lindsey passionately contributes to fostering inclusivity in the dance community. Lindsey also collaborates with various local programs and individual dancers as a tryout/audition consultant. She served as a Universal Dance Association instructor for seven years, and for the past two decades, she has remained an integral part of Varsity Brands, fulfilling roles such as competition coordinator, announcer, and judge.



JENNIFER WHITFORD

With over 25 years of coaching and judging experience, Jennifer has dedicated her career to inspiring and uplifting others through dance. Born and raised in Alabama, she honed her craft at prestigious institutions including Sheffield School of the Dance, Dothan School of Dance, Jen-Deb School of Dance, and Birmingham Dance Theatre. She furthered her education at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. For the past 27 years, Jennifer has been an integral part of Varsity Brands, Inc., serving as an Instructor, State Director, Coach, and Judge at regional, national, and international competitions. Her passion for excellence extends to her own choreography and consulting business, where she has earned numerous regional, state, and national titles. Currently residing in Yardley, PA, Jennifer works as a Upper Elementary Montessori Educator and leads the dance team at The College of New Jersey as Head Coach, continuing to inspire the next generation of dancers.



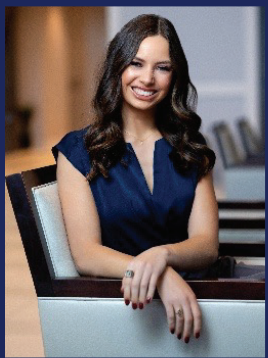
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BETTINA FIELDS

Bettina Fields has over 20 years of experience working with dance teams and coaches across the nation. She has served on many professional dance judging panels over the years as well as having completed extensive advanced judging courses, which include the USASF legality safety course. She previously served as the head dance team coach of Eastern Kentucky University. Under her direction, ECU was named NDA College National Champion Runner-up for consecutive years in the division 1 Pom category and placed top 3 in the team performance division. Her teams have been recognized for immense dedication to the spirit program and university. Before coaching at ECU, she was the previous coach for both a middle school team and all-star program, where she led them to their first ever UDA National Championship titles. Under her direction as program director and head coach her teams performed in pom, jazz, and hip-hop in youth, junior, and senior categories. She later continued to help lead many other teams to National Championship and World Titles and recognitions. Bettina graduated from Eastern Kentucky University with highest honors Phi Kappa Phi, including her most recent Ed.S degree in supervisor of instruction. She currently resides in London, KY where she teaches middle school science. She enjoys mentoring, and networking with other coaches, teams, and studios across the country as she continues to share her love of dance with others.



MEGAN BROOMFIELD

Megan Broomfield is a current Doctor of Physical Therapy student at Duke University School of Medicine in and a veteran Universal Dance Association head instructor. She is a former Iowa State University Dance Team member, earning 2 NDA national titles and serving as the workout captain during her time on the team. She is also a former World Champion ICU Premier Pom team member and a 4x Missouri State Dance Champion. In addition to earning her doctoral degree, Megan works as a NASM certified personal trainer and also choreographs for teams around the country through VIRoc Dance. She plans to become a physical therapist specializing in working with dancers after earning her DPT, and continues to judge, teach, and choreograph routines for studios, college dance teams, and high school dance teams while pursuing this.



JESSICA PETTIT

Jessica Pettitt brings over 15 years of experience in the dance team industry. She graduated with a BFA in Contemporary Dance from Radford University where she also was a 3-year member and captain of the Radford University Dance Team. Jessica spent 6 summers as a UDA instructor traveling across the US and abroad. She was a Varsity Spirit Dance State Director for the Southeast from 2014-2017 and the Brand Manager of UDA from 2018-2024. During this time, she oversaw score sheet development, judges education, and scoring at UDA College Nationals and the National Dance Team Championships. She has extensive experience judging at regional, national, and international championships and has been a dance analyst on ESPN, CBS, and the Olympic Channel since 2017.



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SAMANTHA BROWN

Samantha is originally from Golden, Colorado but currently lives in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She has been with NDA and Varsity for 9 years as a head instructor and travels around the country to teach technique and routines to high school dance teams. Samantha also choreographs for EnVision providing strong competition routines in the pom, jazz, gameday, and hip hop categories. She graduated from the University of Northern Colorado with a Bachelors in Mathematics and she spent 4 years on the UNC Sugar Bears Dance Team. She also attended the University of Texas Arlington to receive a Masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction for Secondary Mathematics. She is currently a high school math teacher and spent 6 years as a high school dance team coach. When she is not teaching, coaching, judging, or choreographing, you can find her spending time with her two young boys on the golf course or on the ski slopes.



ALYSSA WALLER

Alyssa graduated from Baker University with a degree in elementary education. Alyssa has trained in all dance styles since the age of 2, though her favorites are pom and jazz! Her training included studio and school dance programs and led her to compete in college where she received individual 1st Team All-American honors, multiple conference and regional titles, and a national title with her team. She was a member of the National Dance Alliance Staff, and has choreographed routines for studios, musical theater programs, high school teams, and college teams throughout Kansas for seven years. Alyssa is a former high school head coach and has now returned to her alma mater as an assistant coach and choreographer for Baker University.



LUISE MALDONADO

Luise Maldonado is a seasoned professional in dance and digital marketing, with over a decade of experience as an educator, choreographer, and event coordinator. A BFA graduate in Dance from Sam Houston State University, she has inspired countless performers through innovative choreography and leadership roles, including her tenure as a Head Instructor for the National Dance Alliance. Currently, she serves as a Marketing Associate for Spotlight Events, Inc. and USASF, where she creates engaging content and develops strategies to amplify the organization's digital presence. Luise's unique blend of artistic vision, technical expertise, and marketing savvy positions her as a distinguished judge, ready to celebrate and evaluate talent with a keen eye for excellence.



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TARA YANTIS

Tara (Schroeder) Yantis, based in Kansas City, has been involved in dance education for nearly 25 years serving as a coach, choreographer, consultant, leadership program creator, advocate and adjudicator. "Coach Tara," as she is known throughout the country, is passionate about championing the Spirit industry as well as helping coaches and student athletes cultivate the teams they've always dreamed of. A fierce and out-spoken advocate for the Spirit industry, she was recently named the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) Kansas Coach of the Year for Dance. Tara is in her 15th season as the Head Coach and Creative Director of the 8x National Champion and State Finalist Saint Thomas Aquinas "Spirits" Dance Program. The program has been designed to be extremely inclusive providing opportunities to both entry level student athletes and the most elite competitors, an innovative and successful structure that has subsequently been modeled by numerous teams across the country. She is also co-founder and Executive Director, Operations, of the Kansas State Dance Team Coaches Association (KSDTCA), is co-chair of the Spirit Advisory Committee to the Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA), Dance Chair of the Kansas Coaches Association (KCA), represents Kansas with the National Dance Coaches Association (NDCA) and was influential in her home state deciding to create its first-ever State Championship for dance in 2020. An in-demand consultant and conference speaker, Tara most recently completed an 8-city coast-to-coast speaking tour in 2023 and spends the off season judging high school and college competitions. For the last 17 years, she's traveled the country as a Head Instructor, adjudicator and conference speaker with Varsity Spirit and is a recipient of NDA's Excellence in Leadership award. She was the inaugural recipient of the NCA/NDA The Work is Worth It™ award, recognizing contributions to the spirit industry. Tara speaks at conferences throughout the country on behalf of Varsity University.



SARAH MILLER BATE

Sarah Miller Bate has studied dance for over 35 years and received a dual BA in Dance and Education from Old Dominion University. She was a 4-time National Dance Alliance (NDA) High School All-American as well as a 4-time NDA Collegiate All-American. For over ten years she worked as a Head Instructor for NDA and won the NDA Leadership Award. After college Sarah danced with Virginia-based modern dance companies Second Wind Dance Company and Todd Rosenlieb Dance Company. She also performed with choreographer Amanda Kinzer's company in NC, KY, Hampton Roads and in NYC for various International Dance Festivals. While recovering from an injury, Sarah discovered Classical Pilates and became certified through the Pilates Center of Virginia. A third generation instructor with direct lineage to Joseph Pilates, she has taught the traditional method for over 15 years, working with Olympic athletes and dancers from The Washington Ballet. She also co-created a barre fitness program with other professional dancers and trained instructors around the country. Sarah has been judging for over 20 years and currently serves as the Dance Director of Rules & Safety for USASF.



CHERYL PAQUETTE

Cheryl is the Adjudication Director at The Dance Worlds and USASF Communications Coordinator. She has been involved in the dance industry for over 30 years and is trained in ballet, tap, jazz, and pointe. A graduate of the University of Missouri, she earned an NDA National Championship title with the Mizzou Golden Girls and was inducted into the Missouri State Hall of Fame in 2023 for her contributions to the team. Cheryl is a former NFL St. Louis Rams Cheerleader and NBA Dallas Mavericks Dancer. In 2017, she was awarded the NCA/NDA Herkie Legacy Award for her commitment to the industry. Cheryl resides in St. Louis, MO and enjoys judging for many national and international Event Producers.

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