

SHANNON BARRETT



Shannon has been in the dance industry for 27 years. Born and raised in metro Detroit, she started to study dance shortly after she learned how to walk. Under the direction of Cathy Carevic, she studied numerous forms of dance including tap, jazz, ballet, pointe and gymnastics. During her studies, she was chosen at a young age to be part of the studio's performance company. In her high school years, Shannon was a member of the Varsity Pom Pon team. Shannon has worked as a dance and cheer coach, dance instructor and choreographer in the metro Detroit area for more than 13 years. She has single handedly transformed competitive Tap Dance programs into platinum, & overall winning pieces that also won entertainment & showstopper awards in a matter of months. Her

students have competed on local, regional and national levels. Her group, trio, duo and solo pieces have won high awards as well as overall awards at competitions throughout the U.S. Shannon has received choreography awards for entertainment value, intensity and technique. Her students have gone on to study with Alvin Ailey, earn college degrees in Dance Education, become members of the Detroit Tap Repertory and even become dance teachers! Shannon enjoys age appropriate choreography that pushes the envelope in a creative way. She is very excited to be on the judging panel for Dance Force Xpress this season and cannot wait to see all of the talent on stage!

JILL CASSIDY

Jill Cassidy is from the Detroit area where she works as a choreographer, dancer and fitness instructor. Jill has lived Los Angeles where she trained with top choreographers and worked on film, television and stage. She has worked with artists such as Shirley MacLaine, Debbie Reynolds, George Clooney, Usher, Miley Cyrus and Tracy Ullman. Her award winning choreography can be seen nationally and internationally, most recently traveling to Helsinki, Finland. On top of studio and company work, Jill works with high school and college dance programs including Harvard University, Oakland University, Wayne State University and Grand Valley State. She has worked with companies such as Xbox, Chevy, Comerica Bank, General Motors, Match.com, House of Marley, Ziebart International and local Detroit radio stations Radio Disney AM910 and Channel 955. Jill was choreographer for the television series The Wannabes which aired on Starz and is currently a dancer/choreographer on tour for the show Your Generation in Concert. She works with talent at Motor City Casino and is the founder/producer of the live stage show, Motor City Choreography Collective. Jill also holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications.



BERNADINE CRUSE



Bernadine Cruse has taught tap, jazz and Broadway styles to children and adults in the Motor City, aka Detroit, Michigan. Her dance career has taken her across the country, from Los Angeles to Las Vegas, New York City, Orlando and more. Performance credits include roles in adaptations of Annie, Grease, The Music Man, and West Side Story. Her trained dancers have gone on to stage and screen, have been principal dancers on Disney Cruise Lines, at Disney theme parks, and the New York City Rockettes. Her students have gone on to become successful studio owners that have produced scholarship winners across the country. Her students have performed in New York City, and have won numerous high scoring awards for their hard work.

Bernie has won several special awards for her choreography throughout her career, including the prestigious Al Gilbert Tap Excellence Award. She has had the privilege of studying with Mr. Gilbert himself, as well as “So You Think You Can Dance” choreographer Mia Michaels, Greg Russell, Roland Dupree, Jackie Sleight, Mallory Graham and more. She has inspired dancers to believe in themselves and that you can do anything, if you set your mind to it. “Dance from your heart everyone and believe all things are possible”!

NATALIE COOPER



Natalie Cooper has danced since of the age of three and has been trained in ballet, tap, jazz, gymnastics, pom, hip hop, and breakdance. With her dance background she competed through high school and taught at several competitive studios creating and guiding multiple National champion numbers. Natalie received the Al Gilbert Tap Award for excellence in tap in the spring of 2016 and has received numerous Top Teacher Awards. Natalie also danced for the NBA Detroit Dance Team Automotion, NBA Phoenix Suns, and the WNBA Phoenix Mercury Hip Hop Squad. She has been in several commercials, modeled, and emceed and sang the National Anthem for the WNBA. Natalie has a B.F.A. in Theatre with an emphasis in performance from Miami University. While at Miami, she received the Outstanding Contribution to Theatre

award and was also nominated for the Kennedy Center ACTF Irene Ryan National Scholarship for her role as Fatimah in The Boys From Syracuse. After graduation Natalie was in several improv theatre shows with Cabaret Dada in Cleveland, Ohio. She was also the United States debut of the one woman show Brownie Points. As of late, Natalie earned her Master of Arts in Teaching from Oakland University and is currently the Theatre Director and Performing Arts Center Coordinator at Swartz Creek High School directing multiple shows per year.

ALEXIS GLEASON

Alexis Gleason has been dancing for over 21 years. Over the last 5 years she has been teaching in the Metro-Detroit Area. Alexis has trained and choreographed in many styles including contemporary, jazz, tap, lyrical, ballet, pom-pon, modern, and partnering. Her choreography and students have won platinum awards and overall awards. In addition, her students have received scholarship opportunities to perform at a national level. Alexis is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Dance and Dance Education at Oakland University. During her academic career, she has had the opportunity to train under Russian ballet instructors, as well as many graduates of Juilliard. Through her love of dance, Alexis is devoted to inspire creativity within dancers, and is looking forward to sharing her knowledge and training with today’s competitors.



MELISSA GRUENBERG



Melissa started dancing when she was 3 years old. There she was trained in a wide variety of styles; jazz, tap, ballet, pointe, modern, gymnastics, hip hop and lyrical. Melissa competed in many regional and national competitions, and began teaching classes at the school. After high school, she continued to teach dance in studios around the Detroit area, while she attended Wayne State University as a Dance Major. During her time at Wayne State, she was part of the WSU Dance CompanyONE for two years, as well as the rehearsal assistant to the company. After two years at Wayne State, Melissa took time off from school to pursue professional dance opportunities. During this time she was part of the professional Chevrolet Touring Dance Team, where she performed nationally. In 2006 and 2007 Melissa attended and worked for the American Tap Dance Foundation in New York City. In 2009 she moved to Chicago, IL where she worked at the Dance Academy of Libertyville as the tap dance director. She was also the dance director at the Academy of Music and Dance in Chicago. During her time in Chicago, Melissa received her B.A. in Movement Choreography from Columbia College Chicago. Melissa recently moved back to Michigan and is pursuing professional teaching and directing opportunities within the Detroit area, where she hopes to inspire and motivate young dancers!

MADALYN GELETZKE



Madalyn is joining us all the way from New York! She was born in Livonia, Michigan where she started taking dance at age 3. She has extensive training in ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop, lyrical, musical theater and contemporary from top name choreographers such as Travis Wall, Brian Friedman and Mandy Moore. As an accomplished dancer in the competitive field, she has won countless awards, scholarships, titles and top honors at regional and national dance competitions and conventions. She has performed around the country, in performances such as Walt Disney World and Halftime Shows featuring Jake Owen and The Goo Goo Dolls. Currently, she lives in New York City where she continues to broaden her dance education.

CHRISTIE SILLES

Christie began dancing at the age of 5 and first became involved with pompon in high school. She was a member and co-captain of her high school pompon team, as well as a member of both the Mid American Pompon All Star Team and the UDA All Star Team. Following high school, Christie was selected to join the Mid American Pompon Staff where she served as a summer camp instructor. In college, Christie was both a member and captain of the Miami University Dance Team. After college, she was a cheerleader for the Detroit Fury (AFL) and began coaching high school varsity pompon. After coaching for six years, she then became a dancer, co-captain, and eventually assistant coach for the Detroit Ignition Dance Team (MISL). Currently, Christie is one of the corner coaches for the Detroit Lions Cheerleaders.





MELISSA JONES

Melissa started dancing at the early age of 2, and started competing at the age of 9. She helped to start her high school's first dance team. In college, she was on the dance team at Grand Valley State University and was selected as captain both her junior and senior year. During her senior year of dance camp, she was offered a position to be an instructor with the National Dance Alliance. She traveled the country teaching dance camps for junior high and high school dance teams. She says that traveling and teaching “was an absolutely amazing experience!”. Currently, Melissa works in child welfare.