

ALABAMA DANCE COUNCIL

# ANNUAL REPORT 2025



2025 Dance Across Birmingham Showcase

*Danza Azteca*

Choreographer: Mario Lopez

Photographer: Clark Scott

# OUR MISSION

The Alabama Dance Council is a statewide network of people who are inspired to make, teach, share, and experience all forms of dance as a powerful way to move toward a more just society. We believe that dance emboldens every body to connect, build community, and transform the experience of being human.

2025 New Works Concert

*Praise God*

Choreographer: Katie Crews

Photographer: Clark Scott





# A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

2025 was a year of reflection, transition, and renewed momentum for the Alabama Dance Council.

As ADC welcomed new leadership, we also took time to reaffirm our mission: supporting dancers, educators, and communities across Alabama. Throughout the year, our programs continued to connect artists and students through education, performance opportunities, and professional development.

The Alabama Dance Festival, Dance Across Birmingham, Dance for Schools, and Dancing into Success programs brought dancers together from across the state and beyond. These programs provide meaningful opportunities for students, educators, and artists at every stage of their development.

During the year, ADC also began preparing for the launch of the Alabama Dance Census, a statewide initiative designed to better understand and document the dance community across Alabama. The census will help identify artists, educators, organizations, and audiences throughout the state, strengthening ADC's ability to advocate for resources and respond to the needs of the field.

None of this work is possible without the dedication of our board members, volunteers, partners, and supporters. Together we continue building opportunities for dance to thrive throughout Alabama.

Let's Dance,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kerri-noelle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kerri-Noelle Humphrey, MBA, MA  
Executive Director  
Alabama Dance Council



Recruiters observe student auditions at the 2025 Alabama Dance Festival, part of ADC's ongoing efforts to connect dancers with higher education and professional pathways. Photographer: Samantha Ferguson



Poster from a film featured in the 2025 Alabama Dance Festival Screendance Film Festival, highlighting the intersection of dance and film.



ASFA students perform *Paquita* in the 2025 Alabama Dance Showcase. Choreographer: Marius Petipa. Photographer: Clark Scott



2025 Dance Performance Assessment  
Dunbar Creative & Performing Arts Magnet Middle School  
Photographer: Tanya Parent

## ABOUT ADC

Founded in 1974, the Alabama Dance Council (ADC) serves as the statewide service organization for dance in Alabama. For more than five decades, ADC has supported the growth of dance by connecting artists, educators, students, and audiences through festivals, educational programming, and community partnerships.

ADC works to strengthen dance across the state by providing professional development opportunities for educators, performance platforms for artists, and training experiences for dancers of all ages.

Through collaboration with schools, arts organizations, and community partners, ADC helps ensure that dance remains an important part of Alabama's cultural landscape.

Programs such as the Alabama Dance Festival, Dance Across Birmingham, Dance for Schools, and Dancing into Success bring together hundreds of participants each year and create opportunities for learning, performance, and career development. Today, ADC continues its work as a statewide hub for dance education, artistic exchange, and community engagement.



Festival Community Engagement event at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute with Collage Dance Collective, Miles College Choir, and the Flourish. Photographer: Kerri-Noelle Humphrey



College dance faculty panelists speak with students about higher education opportunities during the 2025 Alabama Dance Festival. Photo: James Atkinson

# Year of Leadership and Forward Planning

2025 marked an important moment of transition and forward planning for the Alabama Dance Council.

The organization welcomed new leadership, beginning a new chapter focused on strengthening programs, expanding partnerships, and building long-term sustainability for ADC's statewide initiatives.

Throughout the year, ADC continued to support its core programs while also focusing on strengthening communication with the statewide dance community and identifying new opportunities for collaboration.

One of the most significant initiatives developed during this period was preparation for the Alabama Dance Census, a statewide effort designed to better understand the dance community across Alabama. The census will gather information about dancers, educators, organizations, and audiences in order to inform future programming and strengthen advocacy for dance across the state.

This work reflects ADC's continued commitment to supporting the dance community while planning for the future of dance in Alabama.

The first installment of Dance Across Alabama celebrates its second year in Huntsville at the Community Dance Festival and Showcase, a community partnership with the E Foundation for Arts and Education.

*La Valicha*

Choreographer: Erika Shultz

Photographer: Dana Bierly



# ADC PROGRAMS

## Membership

ADC membership connects artists, educators, students, and organizations across Alabama. Members receive access to professional development opportunities, festival discounts, networking opportunities, and communication through ADC newsletters and announcements, helping strengthen the statewide dance community.

## The Alabama Dance Festival (ADF)

ADC's annual festival experience, bringing together dancers, educators, and artists for performances, masterclasses, auditions, and professional networking opportunities. The event connects dancers with college programs, professional recruiters, and guest faculty while providing performance opportunities for emerging and established artists.

## Dance Across Birmingham

Dance Across Birmingham offers community dance experiences that invite the public to explore movement and cultural dance traditions. Through classes and performances, the program builds connections among dancers, audiences, and community organizations.

## Fiscal Sponsorship/Technical Assistance

ADC provides support for artists and community-based projects, allowing independent initiatives to receive funding and donations through ADC's nonprofit structure while benefiting from administrative support and financial oversight.

## Dance for Schools

Dance for Schools supports arts education through student performance assessments and professional development opportunities for teachers. These programs provide meaningful learning experiences for students while strengthening dance education in schools.

## Dancing into Success

Dancing into Success is ADC's workforce development initiative designed to connect dancers with college programs and career opportunities in the dance field through panels, workshops, and networking opportunities.

## Movement Matters

Movement Matters is an emerging ADC initiative focused on expanding access to physically integrated dance and increasing awareness of disability in dance. The program explores opportunities for education, collaboration, and community engagement that highlight the role of dance as an inclusive art form.

2025 Alabama Dance Festival  
Breakin' Masterclass with B-Boy Eagle  
Photographer: Samantha Ferguson





# 200+

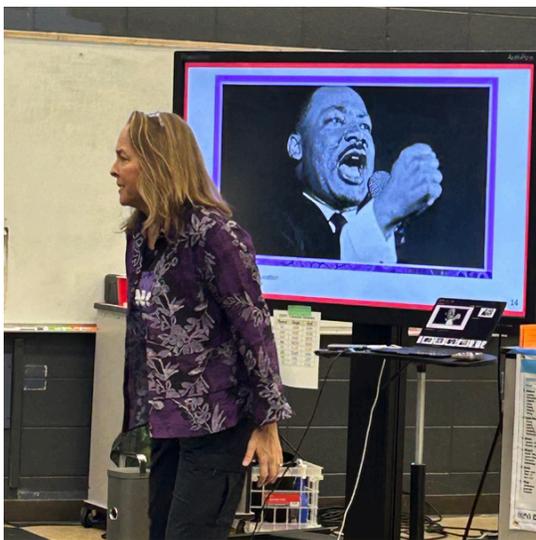
dancers participated in the festival auditions.



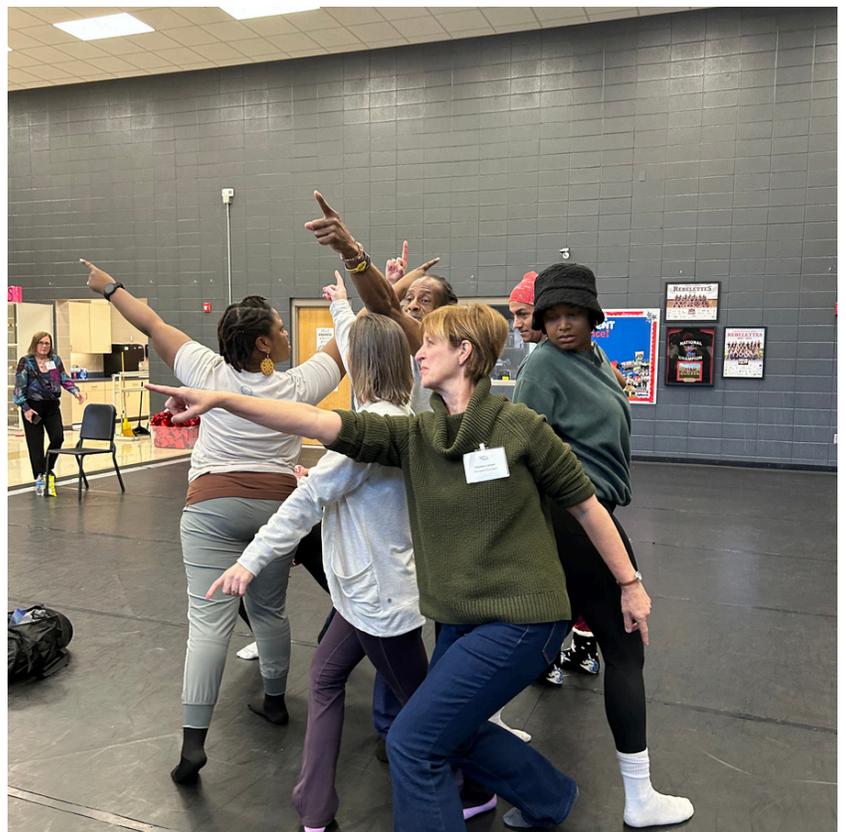
2025 Alabama Dance Festival  
Intensive and College Auditions  
Photographer: Samantha Ferguson



Students participate in a masterclass led by Collage Dance Collective at Girls Inc. as part of the 2025 Alabama Dance Festival community engagement activities. Photographer: Kerri-Noelle Humphrey



Educators and teaching artists participate in a Dance for Schools professional learning workshop led by Anne Biddle. Photographer: Kerri-Noelle Humphrey



# TAKE THE ALABAMA DANCE COMMUNITY CENSUS



**Help us gather valuable insights about our dance community.**

*Your VOICE MATTERS*



## ALABAMA DANCE CENSUS

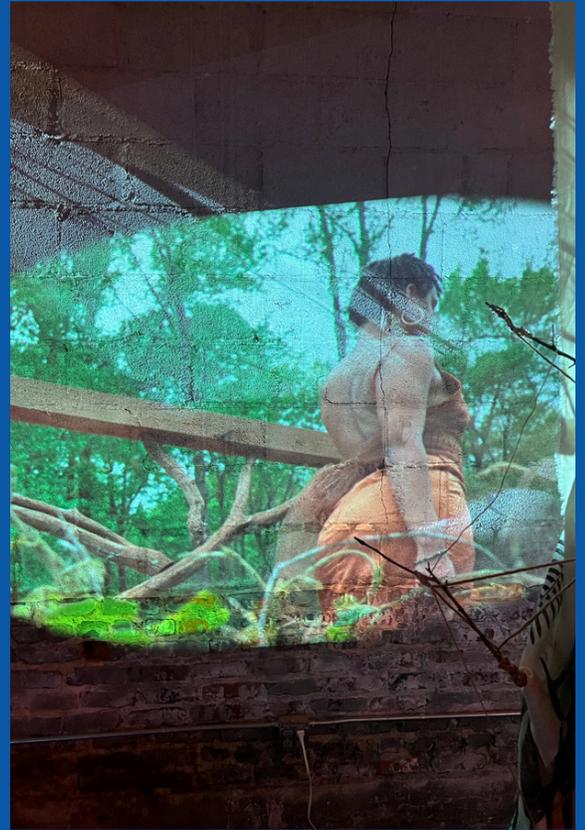
Throughout 2025, the Alabama Dance Council began preparing for the launch of the Alabama Dance Census, a statewide research initiative designed to better understand the landscape of dance in Alabama.

The census will collect information about dancers, educators, organizations, and audiences across the state in order to inform future programming and strengthen advocacy for dance.

MEGA Conference Presentation: Kerri-Noelle presented alongside Huntsville City Schools Fine Arts Director, Dwayne Craft, and Creative Launchpad Director, Chris Carter. Photo: Kerri-Noelle Humphrey

2025 Alabama Dance Festival Participants  
Photographer: Samantha Ferguson





Board President James R. Atkinson, Jr. and board member Sheila Rubin celebrating the retirement of Executive Director Rosemary Johnson. Photo: James Atkinson

Art installation by Celeste Pfau for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Photographer: James Atkinson



At the 2025 festival, the Alabama Dance Council celebrated 50 years of leadership in the state's dance community. Since its founding in 1974, ADC has served as a connector for dancers, educators, and organizations across Alabama. The anniversary year celebrated the many artists, teachers, and advocates who have shaped dance in our state and helped build a lasting network of support. As ADC looks ahead, this milestone also reflects a continued commitment to strengthening dance opportunities for the next generation.



A collection of ADC past festival programs and pictures at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Photographer: James Atkinson



Festival residency rehearsal with Collage Dance Collective Artistic Director Kevin Thomas and community cast members. Photographer: Kerri-Noelle Humphrey

# PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Alabama Dance Council collaborates with artists, educators, and organizations throughout Alabama to expand access to dance education and performance opportunities. In 2025, ADC partnered with organizations and institutions including:

- Alabama Ballet
- Alabama School of Fine Arts
- The Dance Foundation
- Alabama Dance Educators Association
- Gradient Dance
- Bill Bates Leadership Institute
- CJ Wade
- UAB Medicine
- Girls Inc.
- Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

Through these collaborations, ADC expands access to training, performance opportunities, and professional development for dancers and educators across the state.



Cast and crew of All the Feels, one of the creative projects supported through Alabama Dance Council's fiscal sponsorship program. Photo: CJ Wade

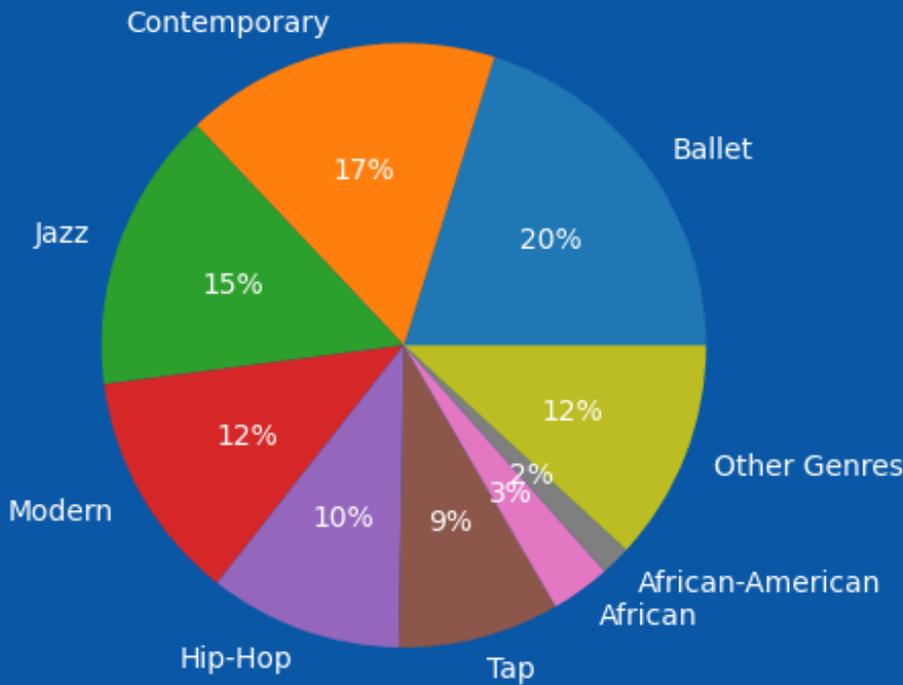


## GUEST COMPANY: **COLLAGE DANCE COLLECTIVE**

A five day residency that included community movement workshops, a school show, public performances, technique/repertory masterclasses for festival dancers. Choreographer: Kevin Thomas Photos: Collage Dance Collective



# DANCE GENRES REPRESENTED



Members reported training across a wide range of dance forms, with ballet, contemporary, jazz, modern, hip-hop, and tap representing the most frequently practiced styles.

Other genres included: Dance/Drill Team, Latin, Ballroom, West African, Indian Classical/Folk, Line Dancing, Breaking, and Irish.

# 575

Artists, educators, students, and organizations connected through ADC membership as of December 2025.

# 20

States: Participants traveled from across the country to participate in ADC programs (Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas)

# \$10,000+

in Fee Waivers: Scholarships and financial assistance helped remove barriers to participation in ADC programs.

# 40+

Artists, educators and technicians receiving direct compensation from ADC programs.

# 240

ZIP Codes Represented  
Communities represented at ADC programs.

# Alabama Dance Council Board of Directors

The Alabama Dance Council is guided by a dedicated Board of Directors whose leadership strengthens every facet of the work we do. Their vision and commitment help shape programs, partnerships, and opportunities that connect dancers, educators, and communities across Alabama. We are grateful for their service and for the passion they bring to advancing dance throughout our state.

James R. Atkinson Jr., President  
Associate Professor of Dance  
Alabama State University  
Montgomery, Alabama

Adrienne Wilson, Vice President  
Associate Professor of Dance  
Auburn University  
Auburn, Alabama

Christina Hicks, Treasurer  
Executive and Artistic Director  
Alabama Dance Works  
Dothan, Alabama

Tyra Jackson Ike-Asogwa, Secretary  
Founder/Co-Artistic Director  
INNERGY  
Mobile, Alabama

James L. Boyd III  
Department of Theatre and Dance  
Troy University  
Troy, Alabama

Angela Dussouy  
Dance Educator  
Davidson High School  
Mobile, Alabama

Katia Garza  
Artistic Director  
Mobile Ballet  
Mobile, Alabama

Laquangela Littleton  
Founder/Director  
Symphony Q Academy of Dance  
Montgomery, Alabama

Cheryl Kaye Marshall  
Student Representative  
Founder/Director  
Alabama Rhythm Tap  
Birmingham, Alabama

Azalea McRae  
Instructor/Social Media Manager  
Downtown Dance Conservatory  
Gadsden, Alabama

Meryane Murphy  
Artistic Director  
Andalusia Ballet  
Andalusia, Alabama

Anne Nelson  
Independent Artist  
Birmingham, Alabama

Sudha Raghuram  
Artistic Director  
Shivalaya School of Dance  
Montgomery, Alabama

Jamorris Rivers  
Faculty  
University of Alabama  
Birmingham, Alabama

Sheila Rubin  
Founder/Artistic Director  
Natyandanda Dance Company  
Birmingham, Alabama

Pia Sen  
Founder/Artistic Director  
Notinee Indian Dance  
Birmingham, Alabama

Ursula Smith  
Founder/Artistic Director  
Ursula Smith Dance  
Birmingham, Alabama

Winston Strickland  
Artistic Director  
M.A.D. Skillz Dance Company  
Birmingham, Alabama

## Ex-Officio Members

Celeste Crawford  
President  
Alabama Dance Educators Association  
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Kerri-Noelle Humphrey  
Executive Director  
Alabama Dance Council  
Huntsville, Alabama

## Board Members Emeritus

Tracy Solomon  
Former Executive Director  
Southeast Alabama Dance Company  
Dothan, Alabama

Teri Weksler  
Former Artistic Director, Southern Danceworks  
Former Faculty, Alabama School of Fine Arts  
Birmingham, Alabama

Yvette Smedley  
Arts Advisor  
Montgomery, Alabama

## Staff

Rachel Gates  
Program Director  
Alabama Dance Council  
Birmingham, Alabama

Alabama Dance Council

Birmingham, Alabama

[www.alabamadancecouncil.org](http://www.alabamadancecouncil.org)

[info@alabamadancecouncil.org](mailto:info@alabamadancecouncil.org)

# Thank You

to our supporters

The Alabama Dance Council's programs are made possible through the support of funders, partners, and community collaborators who share our commitment to strengthening dance across the state.

## **PUBLIC FUNDING**

- National Endowment for the Arts
- Alabama State Council on the Arts
- Alabama Support the Arts License Tag
- SouthArts

## **COMMUNITY AND FOUNDATION SUPPORT**

- The Daniel Foundation
- The Caring Foundation (Blue Cross Blue Shield)
- Cultural and Educational Advancement Foundation
- Alabama Institute for Education in the Arts

## **PROGRAM AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

- Alabama Arts Alliance
- Alabama School of Fine Arts
- Alabama Ballet
- Alys Stephens Center
- AmpUp Arts
- Birmingham Civil Rights Institute
- Girls Inc. of Central Alabama
- LUMI
- Miles College
- The Dance Foundation
- The Flourish
- UAB Sports & Exercise Medicine



**ALABAMA**  
*Dance*  
**COUNCIL**