



## Faculty

Every staff member has been selected by the director and has proven themselves as qualified educators. Our dance instructors are certified by test to teach by *Dance Masters of America* and the *Cecchetti Council of America*, the gym coaches are members of *USA Gymnastics and AAU* and are safety certified.

We are proud to say that not only is our faculty highly qualified in their areas of expertise but truly understand their impact on all of their student's ethical, moral, emotional and mental development. We stress quality of instruction and the importance of meeting the needs of all of our students through professional excellence and our dedication to teaching.

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### **KATHI HALBERT – Director**

Kathi has owned and operated her own dance and gymnastics program for the past 52 years. She teaches all major disciplines of dance and is a certified Women's Cecchetti Level VII ballet instructor. Her studio also offers a full acro/gym program with competitive teams through AAU and USAG including levels 3 through 10. Kathi is also a certified Stott Pilates instructor for mat work and reformer.



She was Administrator of Dance Masters of America's Teachers Training School at Kent State University and the University at Buffalo for 15 years and the ballet instructor for Dance Masters of America's Teachers Training School West and East. Over the past 24 years Kathi has served on Dance Masters of America's Executive Board and National Board of Directors serving in many different capacities. She is currently National Area Director, Scholarship Chairman and Recording Secretary of DMA. As a National Certified DMA examiner she is instrumental in creating syllabus and testing materials to promote the education of the dance teacher. Kathi has been the Chairman to the Ohio Council of Cecchetti for the past 11 years. She is Principal, Examining Chairman and Past President of Ohio Dance Masters. She has taught master classes and adjudicated at national, regional and state conventions across the country.

Her dancers have been seen dancing on cruise lines, commercials, theme parks, dinner theaters, musicals, dance companies and various productions as her gymnasts gone on to colleges to compete in gymnastics at a collegiate level. Her goal is to educate and instill the love of dance and gymnastics in the souls of her students and all those she teaches.

Kathi is a graduate of Kent State University and formerly a fourth grade teacher at Poland North Elementary. She is married to Ken Halbert, and is blessed to have in her life Ken, Katie, Kevin, Paula, Charlie, Maggie, Keith, Kelly, Lucy, Elliott, and Fiona.

## **KATHI HALBERT – Director** (continued)

### **Memberships & Certifications**

<b>Dance Masters of America: National Director</b>	<b>Ohio Dance Masters: Past President Principal Examining Chairman</b>	<b>DMA's Teacher's Training School: Administrator / Post-Graduate</b>
<b>Cecchetti Council of America: Level VII Women's Certification</b>	<b>Stott Pilates: Mat and Reformer Certification</b>	<b>USA Gymnastics: USA Gymnastics Safety Certification</b>
<b>Kent State University: Bachelors degree in Elementary Education</b>		

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### **CHRIS BEDNARIK:**

Chris is a former member of the KDGC competitive team for 6 years and has taught gymnastics, Kindercise and all levels of competitive teams at Kathi's for the past 36 years. She is a graduate of Kent State University where she was a member of their collegiate gymnastics team. She holds a bachelor's degree in Health and Physical Education. Chris is safety certified and a member of the USA Gymnastics Association.



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### **SARAH BEST:**

Sarah Best is a former member of the competitive gymnastics team here at KDGC. She competed for ten years and reached level seven. While competing, Sarah received 3<sup>rd</sup> place on vault, 2<sup>nd</sup> place on uneven bars, 1<sup>st</sup> place on balance beam, 3<sup>rd</sup> place on floor exercise, and 1<sup>st</sup> place all-around at nationals which were held at the Disney Wide World of Sports complex in 2008. She has been a part of our coaching staff for the last 7 years. Sarah is a graduate of Youngstown State University and is now a pre-school teacher for the East Palestine School District. She is engaged to Zak Leger and they will be getting married in June of 2019.



## BRICE BIGGIN:

Brice competed for four years on Kent State's gymnastics team and was co-captain his junior and senior year. He served as assistant coach for five years, and has been the head women's gymnastics coach at Kent for the past 25 years. Brice was named North East Regional Assistant Coach of the year in 1989, Mid American Conference Coach of the year in 1992, 1994, 1996, 2001, 2003, 2007, 2008 and 2014. He was North East Regional Coach of the year in 1996 and 1997 and he was the Central Regional Head Coach of the year in 2001. In 2011, Brice was named National Coach of the Year by the National Association of College Gymnastics Coaches after Brice and his assistant coaches took Kent State gymnastics to Nationals for the first time in school history. Brice has a bachelor's degree in Physical Education and a Master's degree in sports administration from Kent State. Brice is one of our optional program coaches.



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## JAMI BYLER:

Jami has been a "*Dance Fit*" instructor since March 2010.

Dance Fit is a fun way to work out while you dance to hip-hop, salsa, merengue, samba, African and belly dancing music. Whether you're a born-dancer or have two left feet, anyone who tries Zumba gets hooked! Get a full-body workout and burn from 500 to 1,000 calories per class while having a blast!

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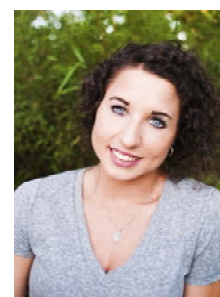
## MEGAN JOHNSTON:

BIO AND PICTURE COMING SOON

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## ERICA KERR:

Erica is 22 years old and was a competitive gymnast at Kathi's for many years. This is her 5th year coaching with us. Erica graduated from Poland Seminary High School in 2014 and from Youngstown State University in 2018 with a degree in Exercise Science on the track to physical therapy. She is a personal trainer at Fine Tune Fitness in Poland. Erica is engaged to Mark Ramunno and they will be married next June.



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## PAUL MILETTA:

BIO COMING SOON



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### LAUREN MUIR:

This is Lauren's 5th year on the teaching staff at Kathi's Dance & Gym Center. She graduated in 2012 playing the lead role of Woody in "Toy Story 2". While dancing at Kathi's she completed her Cecchetti VI exam, attended Cecchetti Summer Intensive at Hope College in Michigan for three years, and just recently passed her Cecchetti Teacher's Grade IV exam. She was in the junior membership program with Ohio Dance Masters for 7 years and was president her last year. She received college scholarships from both Cecchetti Council of Ohio and Ohio Dance Masters. Lauren graduated in the Spring of 2016 with her Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and was married in September of 2016 to Thomas Muir.



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### JENNIFER MULLALLY:

Jennifer Mullally is an Exercise Science student at Youngstown State University. She has danced at Kathi's Dance and Gym Center under Kathi Halbert for 15 years performing in shows such as *Alice in Wonderland*, *Grease*, and as Rapunzel in *Tangled*. Mullally is a dancer for Easy Street Productions and has choreographed for Top Hat Productions. She has been featured in Riz-Biz Productions instructional dance video *Jazz Dances for Kids and Teens*. Mullally has trained in the Cecchetti method of ballet receiving her Advanced Level Seven certification. She recently has been certified by Dance Masters of America as a member and teacher in Ohio Dance Masters. She is also the assistant director of Junior Membership for ODM. Jennifer is now in charge of the tap program at Jones Dance Academy.



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### ERIANNE RAIB-PTICHKIN:

Eri has spent the last fifteen years as a premier tap teacher in the Youngstown area. She has studied intensely under some of the most prestigious tap instructors in the world including Lady Diane Walker, Gregg Russell, Jason Samuel Smith, Mike Minery, and Brenda Buffalino. In 2006 and 2008, Erienne was an intern with the American Tap Dance Foundation in NYC for the New York City Tap Festival, where she had the opportunity to assist and study many master teachers. Eri holds certifications from Dance Masters of America, Ohio Dance Masters, Aerobics & Fitness



Association of America, the National Exercise Trainers Association, and Red Cross CPR. She has a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Applied Science in Exercise Science from Youngstown State University. In addition to teaching at many regional studios, Eri is a part-time faculty member of Youngstown State University's Theatre & Dance Department teaching advanced tap. Ms. Eri is also the Artistic Director of the Jewish Community Center of Youngstown's School of Dance, where she teaches students from 4 months to 75 years old. Ms. Eri resides in Liberty with her husband Andre and their two year old son, Nikolai and newborn son, Theodore.

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## ANGEL RICCIULLI:

BIO AND PICTURE COMING SOON

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## MARY VADALA:

Mary is a 24 year faculty member of KDGC. She began her dance training at 5 years of age under the direction of Ken & Jean Phifer in North Versailles, Pennsylvania. Mary has studied with the Pittsburgh Ballet Theater, the Pittsburgh Youth Ballet under the direction of Jean Gedeon, and the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts. In 1991, Mary held the title of Dance Masters Miss Dance of Pennsylvania. Mary is a member of Dance Masters of America, Ohio Dance Masters and Cecchetti Council of America. She has completed her Cecchetti Teacher's Grade VI and Student's Grade VI certification. Mary is a graduate of Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana and has a bachelor's degree in Dance/Pedagogy Concentration. While attending Butler University, Mary performed with the Butler Ballet in ballets such as Sleeping Beauty, Les Sylphides, The Nutcracker, Cinderella, La Bayadere, and Diane and Acteon. Mary lives in Brookfield with her Husband of twenty-two years, Rocco, their goldendoodle, Buddy and their cat, Tutu.



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## MALLORY WARDLE:

BIO AND PICTURE COMING SOON

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## Guest Faculty

## AMANDA PETERSON:

Amanda is a 2008 graduate of Kathi's Dance and Gym Center from Edinburgh, PA. While at Kathi's, Amanda passed her Cecchetti VII exam and was part of Company Jazz and Lyrical. She was able to participate in many exciting dance ventures including Dance Masters of America Junior Membership, Easy Street Productions and a Bob Rizzo dance instructional video entitled "Jazz Dances for Kids and Teens." Amanda won fourth runner up at Miss Dance of Ohio in 2007. Amanda was a recipient of the Peggy Klinke Scholarship which allowed her to study at many amazing summer dance intensives. Her love of dance led her to college at Slippery Rock University where she graduated in 2012 with a major dance and a minor in business. She is very thankful for the opportunity to continue to guest teach at Kathi's and is excited for her future. Amanda currently is living in New York City and is pursuing a career in dance.



## **RENEE ROGERS:**

Renee has been on staff at KDGC since 1999 and is a true professional in every way. Renee has been the resident choreographer for Easy Street Productions for the past 12 years. Her thrilling choreography has decorated the stage in such shows as Miracle on Easy Street, Joseph, Annie, Easy Street Goes Hollywood, That's Entertainment, Ritz Rock Reunion, The Kids and I, Beauty & The Beast, Forever Plaid, High School Musical and Hello, Dolly! Renee has toured the US dancing with numerous dance conventions, and has choreographed and performed professionally, in addition to local work with area theaters and charity events. Appearing in several dance instruction videos, most recently with RizBiz Productions, Renee is a highly regarded dance instructor as well as a popular guest teacher/choreographer at studios and conventions across the states. Renee graduated from YSU with a BS in Exercise Science and just completed her Masters degree in exercise physiology from the University of Pittsburgh where she is now continuing with her doctoral work.



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## **MEGAN CLELAND:**

Megan has now moved to Nashville, Tennessee but will still be teaching at times here at Kathi's. She graduated from high school in 2006 playing one of the lead roles as Don Lockwood in "Singin' in the Rain". During her years dancing at Kathi's, Megan took many gymnastics and dance classes including hip hop, completed her Cecchetti V exam, assisted and taught at the studio and participated in the Junior Membership program for Dance Masters of America. Megan was the 2006 recipient of the "Peggy Klinke Scholarship" and with that scholarship studied in Las Vegas, Nevada with many teachers at the National Dance Masters of America Convention. Throughout her high school years she participated in the "Easy Street Productions" in their Christmas and spring shows. Last summer, Megan attended Dance Masters Teacher's Training School in Buffalo, NY. She has passed her Cecchetti I Teacher's exam and also is a member of Ohio Dance Masters.

