

THERESA KAHL- OWNER-DIRECTOR-INSTRUCTOR

No stranger to the dance community on the Western Slope, Theresa has been instructing, choreographing, and educating all aspects of dance through local dance studios and schools for over 25 years. She has trained extensively in all styles of dance and has worked and continues to work with some of the nation's leading master instructors and choreographers. In addition to being highly active working with all levels, ages and styles of dance at Absolute Dance, Theresa is a regular guest with Colorado Mesa University as well as a mentor to local high school poms teams. Her commitments to dancers in the Grand Valley are endless. Former students who have trained with her have gone on to receive scholarships to prestigious universities and dance programs across the states including Edge Performing Arts Center, Orlando Ballet, Boston Ballet, Alonzo Lines, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Pacific Northwest Ballet and have started to develop careers of their own in dance, dancing for companies such as Shen Wei, Orlando Ballet, various contemporary companies and other commercial work. Her approach to teaching is technical, personal, artistic, and stylistic. Her objective as a teacher is to build dancers that are technically strong, versatile, independent in thinking, and above all, love to dance! She strongly believes there is a place for everyone in dance and applies this to all levels of dancers to create a positive, inspiring atmosphere. Theresa teaches pre- school, jammin, ballet, jazz, jumps and turns, lyrical, combo, hip hop, and performance/competitive classes.



JENNI ADAMS -INSTRUCTOR

Jenni has been dancing since the age of 4, studying at various gymnastics and dance academies throughout the Vail Valley. At age 18, she started teaching and artistically directing at Red Rocks Academy of Dance in Eagle, Colorado where she taught a multitude of dance classes including: all levels of hip hop, beginning to intermediate jazz, and beginning ballet. While teaching throughout the Vail Valley, Jenni was offered a full ride scholarship to Colorado Mesa University through the help of the Guardian Scholars Program. Throughout her studies, Jenni also continued her love of teaching dance, instructing hip hop to beginning ballet and everything in between here at Absolute since 2012. In May of 2015, Jenni received her BA in Theater Arts with a concentration in Dance from Colorado Mesa University and has since been working and teaching in the area.



ELLIANNA BELMONT- STUDENT INSTRUCTOR

Ellianna was born and raised here in GJ, and has danced with Absolute for 8 years training in ballet/pointe, hip hop, tap, jazz, contemporary, and modern. She had the opportunity of being the assistant choreographer in Central High school's musical production of "Cinderella" and has helped teach the dance class at Central high school. She has also been assistant director of Absolute Dance's summer camps for the past few years. She was given the deer solo/duet in Absolute Dance's production of "Snow White" and the Doll solo/duet in their production of "The Nutcracker." She is currently a junior at Central and is super excited to be teaching a class on her own.



CAMERON CUNNINGHAM-INSTRUCTOR

Cameron Cunningham is a student at Colorado Mesa University and has been dancing since she was four years old. She grew up studying ballet, jazz, and contemporary at Ironwood Dance Company, Ashland School of Dance, Minnesota Conservatory of the Arts, and Minnesota Ballet. Cameron has competed in numerous competitions in the Midwest and has experience teaching both to and teens. She has studied modern with, and has performed for, James Wallace. She has performed for Ann Saunders at Colorado Mesa University and has choreographed for the Universities Student production. Cameron is looking forward to continuing her passion for dance and instructing at Absolute Dance.



ELLIE DIEKMAN- INSTRUCTOR

Ellie grew up dancing in the Grand Valley, training in ballet, jazz, modern, and contemporary. Throughout high school she attended several competitions in Denver, Salt Lake, and Las Vegas, as well as performance opportunities with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, High Desert Opera, and David Taylor Dance Theater. In addition to training in Grand Junction, she spend a summer at the David Taylor Dance Theater summer intensive, as well as several trips to New York and Los Angeles. She graduated from Chapman University with a Bachelor's Degree in Dance. In addition to various performance experiences during university she presented a research paper titled "Nutritional Deficiencies in Adolescent Dancers" at the International Association of Dance Medicine and Science's annual convention. After spending the last 3 years teaching English in Japan and the Netherlands, she is excited to be back in Grand Junction, teaching dance.



DINA DUCKWORTH - INSTRUCTOR

Dina Duckworth is a graduate of North Carolina School of the Arts in dance. She began classical ballet at the age of six. She has studied dance with the School of American Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Jiliana, and at the Nathalie LeVine Academy of Ballet in St. Louis. She has danced with the Aspen Ballet Company, the St. Louis Ballet Company, and the Metropolitan Ballet of St. Louis. Dina is also a choreographer, stage manager and a certified Polestar Pilates instructor. She has done stage and production management for HBO, USCAF, Aspen Dance Festival, Wheeler Opera House, Aspen Community Theatre, and Danse Arts Theatre Company. Dina has taught intermediate/advanced ballet and pointe classes most recently at the Glenwood Dance Academy as well as Crystal River Ballet.



TRUMAN HALEY- INSTRUCTOR

Coming soon...



TARYN HILL -INSTRUCTOR

Taryn is a graduate of the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in Hollywood, California where she studied Musical Theatre. She has worked in several theatres throughout Southern California, including Disney's El Capitan in Hollywood. In addition to being a dialect coach, Taryn also teaches preschool and is a firm believer in the importance of Arts Education.



KATHY LYBARGER-

Kathy has recently moved to the beautiful city of Grand Junction from Alliance, Nebraska where she was the owner and instructor of the 7th Street Dance Studio for the past 35 years. Teaching Tap, Ballet, Jazz and Pointe during those years, she also attended many workshops to continue her education in New York City, Las Vegas, Denver and Omaha. In 1994 Kathy and 12 of her students were part of a Cultural Exchange program touring southern China teaching various dance styles in Guangzhov Middle School, Hunan Normal University, Foshan University and presented many performances during the tour. More recently, Kathy was the Production Choreographer from 2006 thru 2013 for the Miss Nebraska Scholarship Pageant. During the years of owning the studio, she sponsored workshops with choreographers from Los Angeles including Darryl Retter and Linda Bernabi-Retter. After presenting an annual recital, 3 productions of "The Nutcracker" and many local performances, she has sold her studio to her very first student who will continue to operate it. Kathy is very excited to join the Absolute Dance family!



ALLY MITCHELL-INSTRUCTOR

Ally Mitchell is a native dancer of Western Colorado. She started out dancing in her mother's dance studio in Paonia, CO until they relocated to Grand Junction. She studied Ballet with Trudy McCreanor at Colorado West Ballet, and Ann Saunders of Colorado Mesa University. She studied Jazz with Theresa Kahl, and Melonie Buchanon Murray at Colorado Mesa University. She also studied Tap with Chris Bonelli and Tony Coppola. Ally loves teaching kids of all ages and adults, you will find in her classes she connects with her students and helps them find their love for dance and movement.



GEORGIE REIGEL- INSTRUCTOR

A native of Georgia, Georgie comes to Grand Junction from Kalamazoo, Michigan, where for the last five years she served as an instructor at Ballet Arts School of Dance, teaching multiple levels of modern, jazz, and tap. She was the founder and Artistic Director of Ballet Arts Contemporary Dance Company. She was also an instructor at the Academy of Theatre Arts at The Kalamazoo Civic Theatre, and taught for the Kalamazoo Public Schools' Education for the Arts program. Georgie received her MA from Shorter University and her BSEd in Dance Education from the University of Georgia, where she was a member of CORE, Non-Stop Dance Company, and the Young Choreographer's Series. She was the Instructor of Dance at Shorter University for 16 years where she taught Ballet, Jazz, Modern, Tap, and Composition. She also taught at Rome's Dance Center, and was the founder and director of a pre-professional modern dance company Allegro, for 18 years.



DYLAN SAUNDERS-INSTRUCTOR

Dylan is a Senior at Grand junction High School this year. Dylan has dances with Absolute Dance now for 9 years now. He started his dance experience with Hip Hop, and gradually worked himself through various styles of dance. Since then Dylan has appeared in countless Absolute Dance performances including "The Nutcracker" where he has played an Arabian, the Snow King, a party goer and the infamous Mouse King. He has more recently been seen in Absolute Dance's "Alice's Wonderland" where he played Tweedle Dum and the Mad Hatter. Dylan has shown an interest in teaching from his experience of subbing many dance classes over the years at Absolute Dance; he has subbed many Hip Hop classes as well as Voice and Acting classes. Dylan hopes to bring his Hip Hop knowledge to his students and for them to feel comfortable enough to just move and react to the music that beats inside of them



HAILEY SIMONSEN-INSTRUCTOR

Hailey Simonsen is a Student at Colorado Mesa University. She started dancing when she was four years old with Crystal River Ballet School. She grew up studying ballet, pointe, jazz, and contemporary. Hailey studied under Dina Duckworth, Danielle Yost, and Michelle Edgar Enos at Glenwood Dance Academy while in high school. She also took classes and taught dance at the Meeker Recreation Center in high school. She has studied ballet, pointe, modern, improvisation, and jazz while in college. In the past few years, she has performed in many student choreographed works, along with work done by Marilyn and Sekou Sylla, Christine Rohde, and Gabriele Cahill.



VICKIE THURGOOD-INSTRUCTOR

Vickie grew up in Lander, Wyoming where she trained in ballet, jazz, modern, tap, and clogging. Since the age of 9, Vickie has traveled to competitions in Casper, Denver, and Las Vegas. She has been dancing for 16 years and has had the opportunity to perform in Washington D.C., New York City, and at Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Vickie moved to Grand Junction in 2005 to continue her education in dance at Mesa State College where she got to perform choreography by Tony Coppola, Jay Franke, Holly Lampe, and many others. She graduated in 2008 with a degree. She also has been teaching Bodyflow and Floor Barre at Crossroads Fitness for two years. Vickie is excited to get back to teaching dance and working with kids again.



Nicole Wilkinson

A Grand Junction Native, Nicole began her dance training at the age of 4 where she studied Ballet, Jazz, Tap, and Contemporary. During her adolescent years she spent summers studying at St. Louis Ballet, Tuscon Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, Broadway Dance Centre and The Edge. In late 2006 Nicole joined David Taylor Dance Theater before moving to Atlanta, Georgia to dance with Georgia Ballet and later David Norwood. She has been fortunate enough to work with countless choreographers across the country and dance a variety of repertoire. Nicole enjoys passing her knowledge and love of dance onto students of all generations.

