



Convention Information

IMPROV COMPETITION

After lunch on convention day, dancers will have the opportunity to compete in the individual improv competition within their convention age groups. The first round will consist of the dancers improving for 30-45 seconds in small groups. The judges will select which dancers will move on to the next round, and there will be cash prizes for the winners! Registration prior the event is \$25 per dancer. Registration at the event is \$35.

CONVENTION AGE GROUPS

Youth	10 & under
Junior	11 - 13
Senior	14 & older

Ages for the Dance Connection Convention are determined as of January 1, 2026.

Dancers will attend classes based on their individual age, NOT the age group they compete with.

CONVENTION SHOWCASE PERFORMANCES

On Sunday, throughout the competition day, dancers invited to perform their audition routine from the previous convention day for our Convention Showcase Performances on the main stage for their family & friends! Scholarship finalists and winners from each age division will be announced. All Scholarship Finalists will receive a certificate of recognition for their outstanding performance.

SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES

- ✓ Coaches may register dancers for whichever workshop age level they feel the dancer will benefit from the most. However, all dancers must be in the age-appropriate room during the Audition Combo Class. Any dancers auditioning with the incorrect age group will not be eligible for any scholarships. Exception: a dancer may audition in an older age group.
- ✓ Dancers must attend ALL classes to be eligible for scholarships.
- ✓ All scholarships must be used in the time period printed on the scholarship. All Stage 8 Dance Grand Finale Scholarships must be used at the 2026 Stage 8 Dance Grand Finale.
- ✓ Scholarships are not transferable.

More Information



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stage8dancebrands.com

Louisville, KY | March 28 - 29, 2026



Convention Scholarship Awards

We are excited to announce that in our fifth season of The Dance Connection, we will be bringing our unique convention experience to two new cities: Dubuque, Iowa, and Louisville, Kentucky! During the convention, dancers will have the opportunity to learn from top industry professionals and audition for scholarships and awards. We will be awarding various scholarships to individual dancers, along with a special Program Award. These awards will be announced on Sunday during awards ceremonies throughout the day!

SCHOLARSHIP FINALISTS

Scholarship Finalists will be recognized and receive a certificate of recognition for their outstanding performance. Scholarship recipients are selected from the group of finalists.

CONVENTION SCHOLARSHIP

Full convention tuition scholarship for the 2026-2027 season.

PARTIAL CONVENTION SCHOLARSHIP

50% off a convention tuition scholarship for the 2026-2027 season.

STAGE 8 DANCE GRAND FINALE DIAMOND SOLO BID

The Diamond tier solo bid is valid for a \$150 discount on solo registration for the 2026 Stage 8 Dance Grand Finale in Orlando, FL.

STAGE 8 DANCE GRAND FINALE RUBY SOLO BID

The Ruby tier solo bid is valid for a \$50 discount on solo registration for the 2026 Stage 8 Dance Grand Finale in Orlando, FL.

STAGE 8 AMBASSADOR AUDITION SCHOLARSHIP

Invite and tuition scholarship to audition to become a Stage 8 Dance Brands Ambassador.

STAND OUT DANCER AWARD

Faculty members will choose dancers who excel at their particular style during their individual classes. Dancers will receive a Dance Connection Award.

REBEL ATHLETIC SUPERIOR DANCER MAKEUP AWARD

This award is given to select dancers who were recognized by multiple faculty as a Stand Out Dancer in different classes. These dancers will receive a Rebel Athletic makeup pallet and makeup bag!

REBEL ATHLETIC SUPERIOR DANCER PRACTICE WEAR AWARD

This award is given to select dancers who were recognized by multiple faculty as a Stand Out Dancer in different classes. These dancers will receive a Rebel Athletic Practice Wear Set!

PROGRAM RECOGNITION AWARD

The faculty will choose the program that demonstrates the best sportsmanship and outstanding leadership throughout the event.

More Information

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Dubuque, Iowa - December 13 - 14, 2025 | Louisville, KY - March 28 - 29, 2026



BRANDON BRYANT

Dance Instructor for 20+ years, health and Nutrition life coach Certification, management, and Communications. Brandon has always been focused on making a difference by impacting any and every person he meets. As the runner-up of So You Think You Can Dance season 5, he completed a five-year residency in Las Vegas for Britney Spears: Piece of Me, and travels around the world teaching his curated curriculum. Brandon's Body & Balance is the next step to ensure the true vision of dance and mental health for artists remains a critical value.



TAMI WHATCOTT

Tami graduated from Utah Valley University with a BFA in Modern Dance and a BS in Dance Education. While at UVU she was a member of Synergy Dance Company, Contemporary Dance Ensemble, Ballroom Tour Team, and danced as well as coached for the NBA D-League, the Utah Flash. She is a former instructor for UDA and has had the opportunity to judge, perform and teach both nationally and internationally. Other notable professional companies include Diavolo, Joel Hall Dancers, Noumenon Dance Ensemble, and Myriad Dance Company. She has been trained in ballet, modern, jazz, contemporary, hip-hop, and ballroom. Tami has choreographed for professional NBA teams, dance companies, numerous different studios, high schools, and teams from around the globe.



EMMALINE SEYLER

Emmaline has her Bachelor of Performing Arts in Dance Performance from the Oklahoma City University and serves the cheer and dance industry as a performer, choreographer, teacher, and judge. She is currently a dancer at Epic Universe, Walt Disney World, Universal Studios, and Seaworld, where she has performed in Le Cirque Arcanus, Halloween Horror Nights Nightmare Fuel Wildfire, The Festival of the Lion King, Sesame Street Party Parade, Festival of Fantasy Parade, Sirens Song, and more. Emmaline has taught summer dance camps for UDA as a Head Instructor, performed various roles on judging panels with Stage 8, Varsity, International Cheer Union, Cheer Chile, ONP, and judged tryout selections for many dance teams around the nation. She has had the opportunity to teach and facilitate events such as the Citrus Bowl Pregame Performance and continues to spread her passion for dance through teaching, performing, choreographing, judging, and entertainment management.



KELSEY NELSON LACK

Kelsey has over 25 years of dance experience, from major motion pictures, teaching students across North America, judging at prestigious dance competitions within the United States and creating her own conditioning program for dancers. With a Bachelor of Science in Dance Management from Oklahoma City University, Kelsey's professional performing credits include working with renowned choreographers like Fatima Robinson, Mia Michaels, and many more on projects like Anchorman II: The Legend Continues, Rock of Ages, and Disney's Million Dollar Arm. She has also shared her talents with well-known companies such as HSN, Royal Caribbean International, Feld Entertainment, and Cirque Productions, to name a few. But Kelsey's passion goes beyond performing. She is equally dedicated to providing quality instruction and choreography. With experience at various universities, dance studios, and national conventions, she has continually honed her teaching skills and choreography portfolio. As a Master Instructor for various organizations, Kelsey has the privilege of connecting with dancers from all corners of the country.



LIV RODRIGUES

Liv is a dedicated dance professional from Plymouth, MA and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Dance from Dean College, where she trained under a diverse group of industry professionals as a member of the Dance Company. During her time at Dean, she was also a member of the school's dance team, hip hop team, and tap team. Liv is a former Universal Dance Association instructor with extensive experience in judging, teaching, and choreographing at both national and international levels. Her work has taken her around the world, including teaching aspiring dancers in China, Jordan, Moldova, Italy, and Belarus. She has served as head coach for competitive dance teams at both the high school and collegiate levels, while also teaching at studios throughout New England. Liv's choreography has received recognition at regional and national competitions, earning accolades such as Best Choreography and Judges' Choice awards. In addition to teaching and coaching, Liv is an experienced adjudicator for various dance competitions, offering professional, constructive feedback to dancers of all levels. Inspiring, empowering, and pushing dancers to reach their fullest potential is Liv's passion!



ERIKA NAVARRO

Erika grew up in Southern California, where she trained in a wide variety of styles including jazz, ballet, musical theater, contemporary, lyrical, tap, and pom. She double majored in Dance and Political Science at California State University, Fullerton, where she was a proud member of the university's 18-time National Championship-winning Division I Dance Team. During college, she taught for United Spirit Association, which sparked her love for mentoring the next generation of dancers. After graduation, Erika continued performing professionally and had the incredible opportunity to dance with the Seattle Seahawks as part of their NFL Dance Team. Erika is now the Head Coach for the Lake Forest College Dance and Cheer Team and is leading the program into its inaugural competitive seasons. She also holds a teaching credential in Physical Education and Dance, combining her love for movement with her commitment to education. Beyond coaching and teaching, Erika choreographs award-winning routines, and judges regional, national, and international competitions. Above all, she is passionate about creating opportunities for dancers to grow, shine, and connect both on stage and beyond.