

thewashingtonballet

EDWAARD LIANG, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



2024
2025

ANNUAL REPORT

NOTES FROM LEADERSHIP



On behalf of The Washington Ballet (TWB), thank you for your support throughout the 2024/25 season. This milestone year—brought extraordinary moments to our stages and community, marking a transformative period for the organization.



The season showcased the artistic vision driving TWB forward, opening in October with *when WE take flight* at the Warner Theatre. This program highlighted the remarkable range of our Company dancers through contrasting works by George Balanchine, Gustavo Ramirez Sansano, and contemporary choreography. We then brought the magic of the holidays to Washington with 35 performances of our uniquely DC version of *The Nutcracker*. In February, *transcenDANCE* at The Kennedy Center featured powerful works by Jennifer Archibald and Ulysses Dove. The season culminated in April with *ALICE (in wonderland)*, a fantastical, family-friendly production that brought Lewis Carroll’s beloved characters to life through vibrant costumes, playful puppetry, and inventive choreography.



Our school continues to thrive, serving more than 3,800 students across our NW and SE campuses. We were especially proud to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Dance DC with our founding partners Eaton Elementary School and Sitar Arts Center, reaffirming our deep commitment to serving all corners of the District.

We are pleased to share that TWB achieved its first budget surplus in over a decade this year, a testament to the dedication of our entire team and the strategic processes we’ve implemented. This financial milestone strengthens our foundation as we continue our mission and build on the organization’s eight decades of excellence.

As you will see throughout this report, this anniversary season was filled with artistic achievement, community impact, and organizational growth all made possible by supporters like you.

Jason Palmquist, Interim Executive Director
Edwaard Liang, Artistic Director
Jean-Marie Fernandez, Board Chair

Photo Credit: Ceylon Mitchell

2024/25 AT A GLANCE

TRAINING THE FUTURE

1,504
students attended
TWB’s NW & SE
campuses

34
Dance DC Merit
Scholarships
totaling \$103,000

\$395,000
in scholarships/
assistance to nearly
170 students

11.3%
of students at
THEARC receive
sliding scale tuition



Sonia Bartolomeo

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Dance For All activates non-traditional venues to bring free performances, demonstrations, and hands-on dance classes to communities in all eight of DC’s wards. Since launching in Spring 2019, this core initiative has built deep partnerships with organizations like Public Libraries, the National Arboretum and the Hirshhorn and CityCenterDC, allowing TWB to present 23 welcoming and accessible dance experiences for audiences across the city.

Dance DC provides in-school dance residencies and workshops for DC Public and Charter Schools and neighboring schools in Maryland. Grounded in the National Core Arts Standards for Dance, the program embeds creative movement into subjects like science and math, leveraging dance to inspire student engagement and strengthen academic performance.

STUDENT MATINEE PROGRAM

The Student Matinee Program served 21 participating schools from DC, Maryland, and Virginia with 194 adults and 1,612 students in attendance for a total of 1,806 attendees. This marked Artistic Director Edwaard Liang’s first Student Matinee.

SCHOOL OF BALLET

Established in 1944, The Washington School of Ballet (TWSB) is a globally recognized institution acclaimed for excellence in classical dance instruction. TWSB serves more than 1,500 students and over 1,000 adults annually, offering a full range of classes that span creative movement, pre-ballet, training for boys, and a structured program for children to young adulthood, along with extensive adult classes.

The school’s Professional Training Division draws highly talented students worldwide for intensive training under renowned faculty. Many graduates go on to perform with some of the world’s most elite companies, including the New York City Ballet, The Joffrey Ballet, and American Ballet Theatre.



2024/25 Upper Division Graduating Seniors

- Nadia Jeremiah**
University of Maryland, College Park
majoring in English
- Georgia Minor**
Brown University
majoring in Dance and STEM
- Roya Nock**
Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University
BFA in Dance Performance and Ed.M in Dance Education
- Ella Pryce**
Vanderbilt University
- Claire Richards**
Tulane University
majoring in Dance and Legal Studies
- Layla Rethy**
University of Southern California
majoring in Physics with a minor in Dance
- Carolina Sapriza**
University of Michigan
majoring in Psychology with a minor in Dance

2024/25 Professional Training Division Graduates

- Liam Agnew-Huertas**
Continuing study with TWSB’s trainee program
- Noe Clattenburg**
The Washington Ballet, Studio Company
- Cecelia Johnson**
American Contemporary Ballet
- Sofia Lutman**
Plans to study business at Michigan State or American University
- Paul Lytle**
Soloist with Maryland Ballet Theater
- Ceci Moffit**
Yale University
- Samantha Priolo**
Nashville Ballet 2 as a Trainee
- Gabriel Saad**
Philadelphia Ballet II
- Jillian Schene**
- Sophia Rose Sheahan**
Corps de ballet with World Ballet Company

TWSB HIGHLIGHTS

Expanding Access

During the 2024/25 season, the Washington School of Ballet served more than 3,800 students through youth and adult programs, supporting dancers of all ages. Students ranged from early childhood through adult students, across beginner to advanced pre-professional levels representing students from all eight wards of the city as well as 30 states and 11 countries.

Across both campuses, youth programs served 1504 students during the school year, with over 500 additional students participating in summer programs. Nearly 400 students danced on the mainstage during *The Nutcracker*, and 106 students performed in *ALICE (in wonderland)*. Trainee showcases, class showings, and repertory projects gave students regular opportunities to perform, develop technique, and explore new choreography.

Adult programs offered an accessible entry point to ballet, with 32 classes a week focusing on fundamentals and progressing through Intermediate levels. Adult students participated in year-round training, masterclasses and conversations with Artistic Director Edwaard Liang, and the annual Adult Concert. The program gained national visibility through a feature in Glamour magazine, reaching more than 2.6 million readers worldwide.

Special Performances

Throughout the year students were active in community performances including THEARC Gala, Taste of the Harvest Festival, Winter Walk of Lights at Children’s National Medical Center, and the DC Youth Got Talent Black History Showcase. Students also participated in special learning opportunities such as an international exchange with Canada’s National Ballet School and masterclasses with guest artists including Alfred L. Dove and Christina Johnson. The SE Campus was recognized as THEARC’s Partner of the Year, and a Level III student was cast in New York City Ballet’s *Coppélia* at the Kennedy Center.

Faculty Updates

Pamela Bjerknes, Principal of the SE Campus, stepped down from her role on June 1, 2025 after seven years of dedicated service. During her tenure, “Mrs. B.” she served in key leadership roles and found joy in watching students grow through the discipline, artistic and creative thinking ballet provides.

“The arts matter, they’re a bridge from the past to the future and they remind us that beauty and inspiration continue to thrive and bring us together in a time of enormous change and conflict.”

James Gale
Board of Directors Member and Lisa Barry, Board of Ambassadors Co-Chair

“The Washington Ballet brings out the human in us.”

Gilles Delellio
Company Dancer



WARD-BY-WARD ACTIVITIES

The Washington Ballet's education and community programs reached audiences and students across all eight wards of the District during the 2024/25 season.



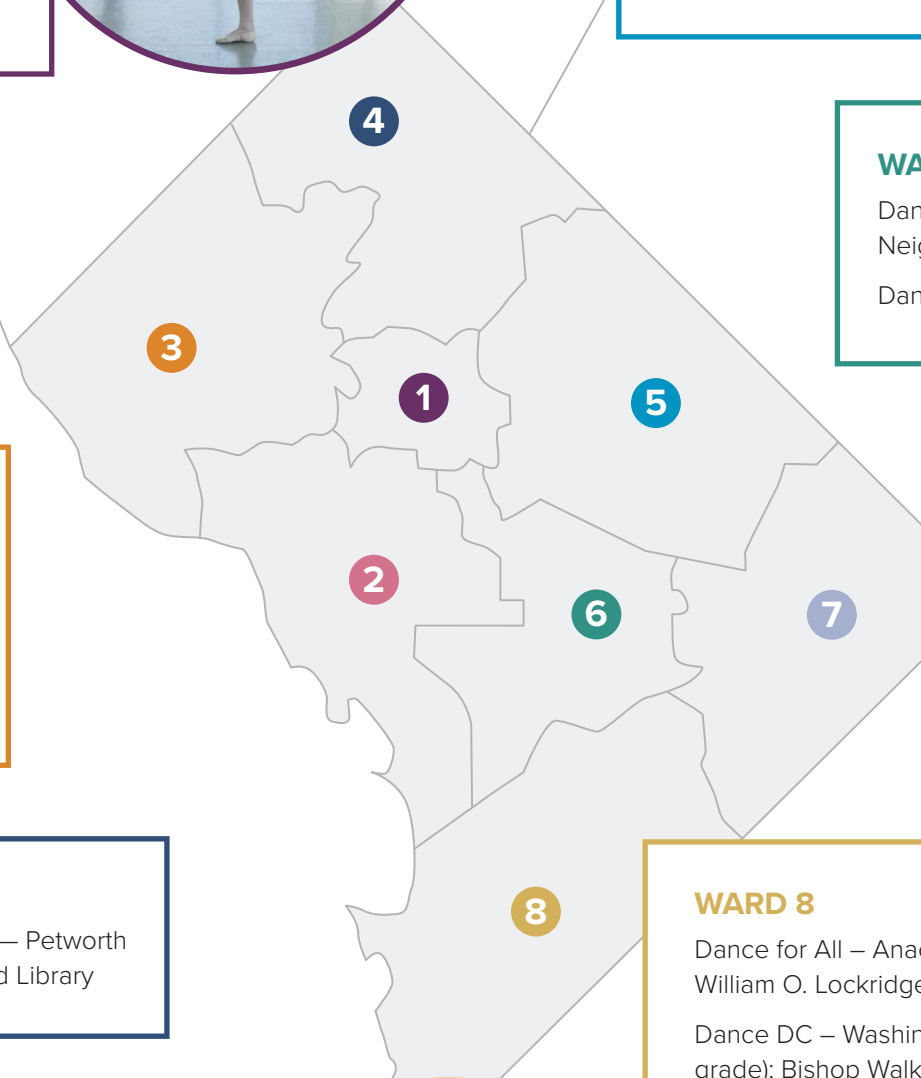
WARD 1

Dance DC — Sitar Arts Center;
Sacred Heart School



WARD 2

Dance for All — National Building
Museum; MLK Library



WARD 3

Dance for All — Tenley-Friendship
Neighborhood Library; Chevy Chase Library;
Palisades Neighborhood Library; Cleveland
Park Neighborhood Library
Dance DC — Eaton Elementary



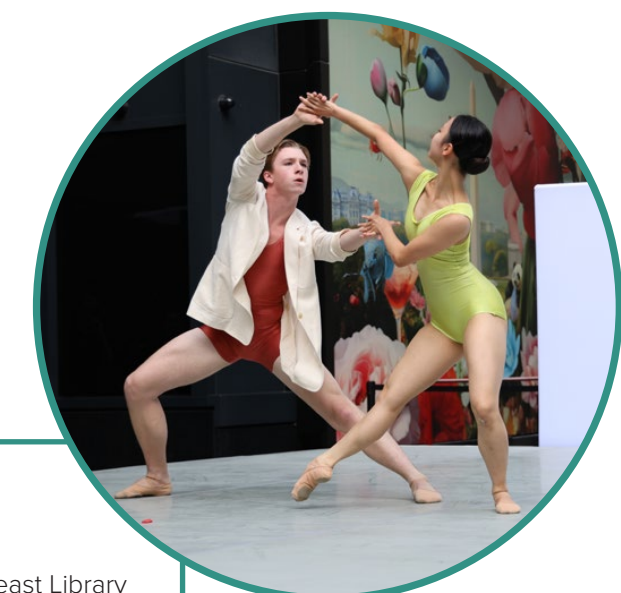
WARD 4

Dance for All — Petworth
Neighborhood Library



WARD 5

Dance for All — Lamond Riggs
Neighborhood Library; Woodridge Library



WARD 6

Dance for All — Southwest
Neighborhood Library; Northeast Library
Dance DC — KIPP: Grow Academy

WARD 7

Dance for All — Dorothy I. Height/Benning
Library
Dance DC — KIPP: Arts and Technology
(ATA); KIPP: LEAP Academy (SE);



WARD 8

Dance for All — Anacostia Neighborhood Library;
William O. Lockridge/ Bellevue Neighborhood Library
Dance DC — Washington School for Girls (6th
grade); Bishop Walker; Washington School for
Girls (EXTENDED DAY); KIPP: Discover Academy
(Kindergarten/Ballet); KIPP: Pride Academy



Photos by Joy Asico, Nosrat Tarighi, xmbphotography, Kelsey Arrington, Sonia Bartolomeo

PERFORMANCE SEASON

The 2024/25 performance season included major productions across multiple venues, beginning with pre-season performances at Wolf Trap and Dupont Underground. The season officially opened at the Warner Theatre with *when WE take flight*, a mixed repertory program featuring Balanchine's *Stravinsky Violin Concerto*, *18 + 1* by Gustavo Ramírez Sansano, and *Murmuration* by Artistic Director Edwaard Liang. The holiday season marked the return of Septime Webre's *The Nutcracker* at the Warner Theatre, accompanied by signature community events including WASH-FM's Christmas Choir Competition, Military Appreciation Night, and Family Day. The season continued at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts with *transcenDANCE*, a contemporary mixed-repertory program featuring works by Ulysses Dove, the world premiere of Jennifer Archibald's *LucidNOISE*, and Liang, and concluded with Liang's *ALICE (in wonderland)*, a family-friendly production that celebrated imagination, storytelling, and theatrical design.



Sonia Bartolomeo



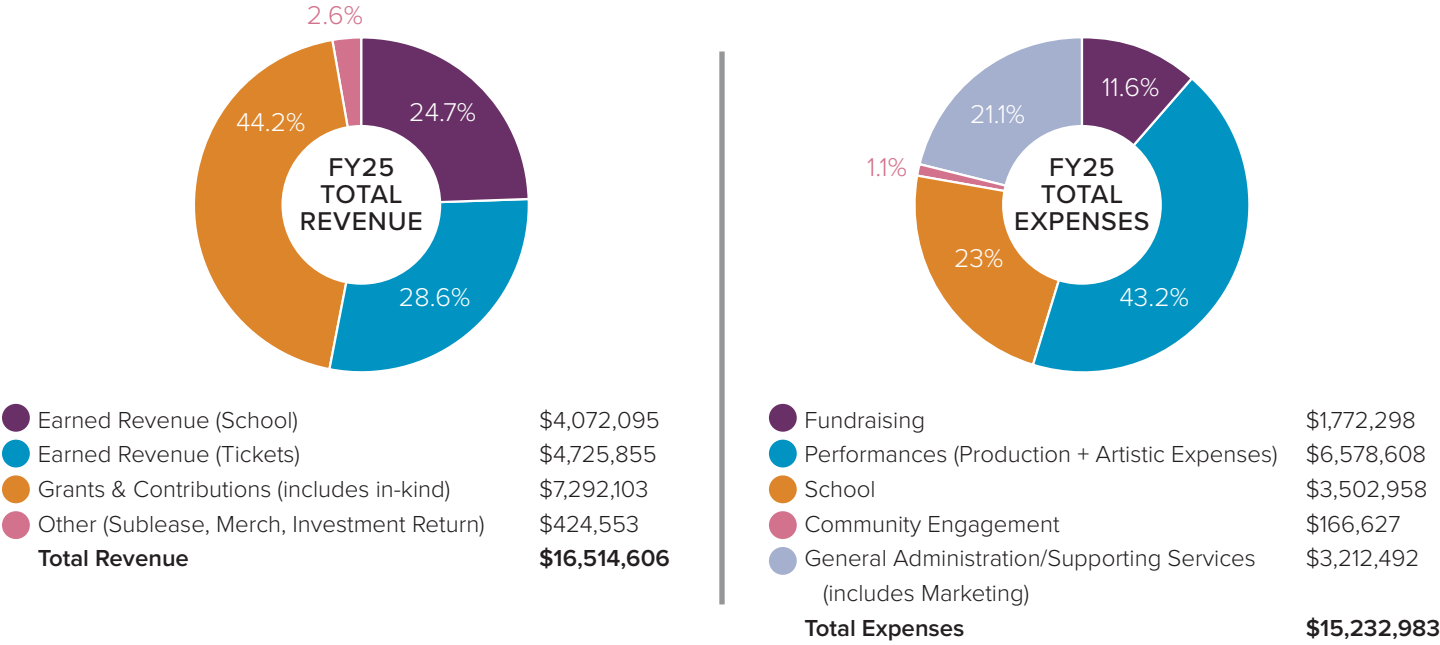
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* Mike Goldstein sadly passed away on April 26th, 2025. Michael Goldstein was a dedicated member of our Board of Directors for nearly 40 years, including significant service as pro bono general counsel. His insightful leadership and unwavering support were invaluable to our organization. A scholarship fund named in his honor was founded in 2025, and has already raised over \$50,000. Recipients of the scholarship will be selected based on both merit and need, focusing on aspiring pre-professional dancers in the Trainee Program who demonstrate an exceptional proficiency in dance.

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THE Nutcracker
tea party

Co-chaired by Rachna Goyal and Randi Rosenberg



The Nutcracker Tea Party supports the educatin and community engagement efforts of The Washington Ballet, the premier ballet school in the nation’s capital. TWB would like to thank the following supporters who helped raised over \$400,000 to fun merit and need-based scholarships:

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