



Company Information 2026 - 2027

At Gulf Coast Dance Alliance (GCDA), our primary goal is to provide exceptional dance education. We take great pride in our award-winning company team and believe that every child deserves the opportunity for advanced training. Being a member of the GCDA Company is a prestigious honor, aimed at offering dancers comprehensive training across all dance genres. Our competitive team is focused on fostering artistic growth and teamwork among dedicated, like-minded individuals. This type of focus leads to an amazing and tight knit team.

As representatives of GCDA, both dancers and parents are expected to uphold the highest standards of conduct. This includes behavior in class, interactions with peers and instructors, social media presence, and overall conduct. Your actions reflect on the entire company, especially when participating in competitions and conventions.

Furthermore, it's crucial for all dancers and parents to trust the process and allow our teachers and choreographers complete creative and technical autonomy. This trust is essential for the growth and success of our dancers and the team.

GCDA strongly supports dancers in enhancing their skills through workshops, intensives, and serving as company assistants at conventions, among other opportunities. However, we request that dancers obtain prior approval from Mrs. Melissa Covo, our Studio Director, before engaging in any external dance training or committing to roles such as company assistants for conventions.

GCDA Company focuses on the holistic development of dancers, rather than emphasizing solos, special roles, or the number of performances. Our priority is to enhance your dancer's training and instill values such as work ethic, discipline, self-motivation, and respect. We aim to deepen their passion for dance while equipping them with essential life skills applicable in various aspects of life. Our goal is to be a positive influence and a stepping stone in their journey, helping them succeed in whatever they choose to pursue.

All dancers are expected to be coachable and open to receiving feedback, whether constructive or otherwise. Decisions within our competitive team are impartial and based on each dancer's competitive spirit and technical progress. There are specific rules and standards at the studio and in dance that dancers will be held accountable for.

Below, you will find an overview of the commitment and pricing expectations for the season.

We appreciate and support our dancers' desire to engage in other activities such as dance team, cheerleading, other sports, or pageants. If a dancer is interested in participating in any of these activities, we request that you arrange a meeting with Mrs. Melissa to discuss and determine if it is feasible to balance both commitments before committing. All extracurricular activities and schedules must be submitted to Mrs. Melissa before May 15, 2026. Based on our experience, we are typically able to provide a full-year dance schedule by August 1st.

GCDA Company Team:

To be selected for the Company Team, your child must commit to the following:

- Juniors/Pre-Teen/Teen/Seniors (Ages 8-18yr-old) – 3 days a week and a total of 9.75 hours or more,
 - 2 Ballet Classes
 - Company Rehearsal Class
 - Hip Hop
 - Modern
 - Jazz
 - Tap
 - Strength & Performance
 - Acro/Gym
- GCDA Season runs June 2026 – May 2027, the total Summer Tuition is \$599.00 and \$365.00 monthly for Fall/Spring. Unlimited Classes for families is \$487.50.
- Pointe Class is an optional 30-minute class following Ballet on Wednesday.
 - There will be an additional \$25 per month fee for company members.
- Company will have at least 8 mandatory weekend rehearsals (Included in Company fee). Dates to be announced in Summer.
- Destro Workshop: There may be 1-2 mandatory Destro weekend-long workshop for all Company team members, led by Resident Artists from Friday to Sunday. The workshop cost has been \$100 for the weekend in the past.
- Attendance Policy - We understand the level of commitment it takes to successfully maintain both a school and dance schedule. Members will only be permitted to have 6 absences for the year (includes rehearsal and class time)! That is a total of 6 absences for the entire year!

- All Medical excuses must be accompanied by a doctor's note.
- If an injury occurs, we will also require a doctor's note to return to dance.

Your child will be considered for solos or duet/trios based on an evaluation by Mrs. Melissa and staff on dancer's commitment, attitude, and ability. Parents will not have a say in choreography or costuming and must entrust all creative decisions to the choreographers. Participation in solos, duet/trios, and small groups is a privilege, not a right, and should be respected as much as group routines. *Please note, solos will be evaluated before competition season to decide what convention/competitions it will be competed at.*

Placing in convention-based competitions can be highly competitive. Our goal is to provide all soloists with a fair opportunity to showcase their talents. After auditions, we will inform you about the specific competitions in which your dancer will be eligible to compete with their solo(s). Please note that not all optional competitions will be approved this year.

The following is the scheduled payment for the season:

- All GCDA Families must have a saved payment method on their account for 2026-2027.
- \$600 Company Fee will be auto debited on June 1st.
- Comp/Conv Fees would be due 60 days before each Comp/Conv and will be auto debited from your saved payment online. So, for example – NYCDA is in October, the payment will be auto debited on August 1st. We will provide cost information for new season as soon as comp/conv releases them.
- Monthly tuition fee will be loaded the month prior on the 27th and auto debited on the 1st of the month. Families have the option to pay before the 1st of the month by check or other form of payments.

Solos, duets/trio and small group fees for mandatory competition/conventions will also be due and auto debited 60 days prior to comp/conv. As parents of Company Team dancers, you will have to sign a contract committing to fully finance your child's class fees, company fees, costumes and any uniform, accessories, etc. needed for the full year. The Company contract this year will be released along with the company acceptance letter (If private audition is necessary).

Please take the time to carefully consider what is most important for your dancer, as we require your full verbal commitment now and a signed contract by April 20th. At GCDA. We prioritize your dancer's training and success above all else.

The Company fee for the 2026/2027 season will remain the same at \$600, due by June 1st. This fee is used to cover the expenses of teacher travel to mandatory out-of-town competitions/conventions and to pay for the GCDA staff during rehearsal weekends throughout the year. *If you decide at any time during the season to quit or asked to leave the studio from breach of Company Contract or behavioral issues, there will be a Quitters Fee to help offset the cost of reblocking and resetting dances.* The money spent for the full dance season will be in the ballpark of \$3,000 -\$7,000, depending on how many solos, duet/trios, group dances, and optional conventions the dancer is in. That is an estimated figure based on all fees required for next season.

- Solos fees will be \$500 (covers choreography (average of 4 lessons) except for guest choreographers).
- Duet/Trio fees are \$550 (covers in house choreography (average of 4 lessons)).
- There will be charges for group routines as well (based on choreographer's prices and how many dancers are in a routine).

We strive to include as many students as possible on our team, but we also want to provide a clear and upfront understanding of the responsibilities that come with being selected. Please note that your child's previous attendance in class and rehearsal will be a significant factor in the selection process for the 2026-2027 season.

SUMMER REQUIREMENTS:

Summer class schedule is set! Summer classes will start June 15th! Dancers will be required to dance on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Placement will be determined based on Teacher and Resident teachers' recommendations. Group choreography will be completed in June and July.

SUMMER DESTRO Experience Choreography:

Six years ago, we made a strategic decision to redirect our energy and resources away from participating in nationals. Instead, we chose to focus on hosting an intensive that offers greater benefits to our dancers than any national competition could. We believe that the investment required for attending a national competition/convention is better utilized by organizing an intensive within the confines of our own studio.

The Destro Experience has consistently raised the bar each year, providing our dancers with an exceptional learning experience.

This summer, our company team will be required to participate in the Destro Experience Choreography. **MANDATORY FOR AGES 8 & UP!**

2026 Destro Choreography costs will be provided by April 30th. There will be a minimum of 1-2 dances per person.

Payment will be split between May 15th and June 15th.

Destro Faculty includes:

Destini Rogers, is an award-winning New York-based dancer, choreographer, and master teacher with roots in the American heartland. Multitalented and versatile, she grew up in Oklahoma City, where she was exposed to a broad spectrum of dance forms — everything from ballet, contemporary and tap to African, hip-hop, flamenco, and Native American Fancy Shawl dancing. She was accepted into the Classen School of Performing Arts, where she was a dance major and began choreographing at age 14. During high school, she also studied theatre and stage production and was honored with the Alvin Ailey Choreography Award. Later, at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond, she honed her skills in dance composition and performance, focusing on ballet, modern, jazz, and musical theater.

Quickly establishing herself as a formidable performer, she was a Top Eight finalist on the inaugural season of “So You Think You Can Dance”. From there, she went on to appear in numerous television commercials, live shows, national and international performances, and video productions. Her many credits include principal dancing roles in commercials for Reebok, music videos for Alicia Keys, and touring with Kanye West, Beyonce, Rhianna, and RAIN.

For more than 15 years, Destini’s choreography has been her greatest source of pride. Her work has consistently earned her students’ high honors in competitions, and many have gone on to dance at renowned institutions including Juilliard, The University of the Arts, The Ailey School, Pace University, the Joffrey Ballet, Marymount Manhattan College, and New York University.

Jonnesha Hawkins-Minter, a graduate from the University of Oklahoma in May 2005 with a B.F.A. in Modern Dance Performance. A member of Dayton Contemporary Dance Company 2 and Houston Met, Founder of TopFlight Dance Company. Having studied under Denise Vail (Martha Graham Dance Company), Derick Minter (Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre), and Sonia Dawkins Artistic director of SD Prism Dance Company, She brings a curricula of modern dance to the classroom, where dancers are tested on vocabulary to be utilized in phrase work.

Jarred Bosch, originally from Biloxi, Mississippi, Jarred Bosch received his BFA in Dance from Marymount Manhattan College. As an educator and choreographer, Bosch has taught at

at Peridance Capezio Center, Physique 57, and has also company class for Broadway Donations and other studios and companies classes in the United States. Alongside receiving top honors at various competitions, Bosch's choreography has also been presented at the Pushing Progress Showcase Series, WaxWorks, Dixon Place and the most recently The Young Choreographers Festival. This Spring, he will be creating a evening length work commissions by ITEArts.

Blake Krapels, a 2011 United States Presidential Scholar in the Arts, trained in New Jersey under the tutelage of Billy Larson and Jamie Salmon. In 2015 Blake graduated with a BFA from The Juilliard School, where he performed repertoire by William Forsythe, Merce Cunningham, Elliot Feld, Jose Limon, and Peter Chu. In addition to his core training, Blake participated in Summer Intensives at Nederlands Dans Theatre and Springboard Danse Montreal. After graduation, Blake spent 4 years with Philadelphia's BalletX where he performed at The Vail Dance Festival, Joyce Theater, Cleveland Danceworks and The Belgrade Dance Festival. He has performed with The Metropolitan Opera, Keigwin & Company, GroundWorks Dance Theatre, Emery LeCrone Dance, Konverjdans, South Dakota Ballet and most recently DanceAspen. While dancing with DanceAspen he worked with Matthew Neenan, Penny Saunders, Cayetano Soto and Yue Yin.

Blake's choreography has been presented at The Kennedy Center, Cleveland DanceWorks 2017, The Peter Jay Sharp Theater, First State Ballet Theater, APAP, DanceAspen, South Dakota Ballet and the Joffrey Jazz and Contemporary Trainee Program. He is currently the co-founder of The Sonder Space, a collaborative dance company based in Philadelphia alongside Andie Yorita and Zachary Kapeluck.

FALL REQUIREMENTS:

Fall schedule is not complete but Company Team dancers will dance 3 days (over 9 hours) during the week. We will also have several Saturday, and occasionally, Sunday rehearsals. The schedules are made and sent out at least one month in advance so you can plan accordingly! More info to come on the Fall schedule! Mandatory classes will include Hip/Hop, Modern/Contemporary, Jazz, Tap, 2 Ballet classes, Acro, Strength & Performance, and Company class.

For the 2026-2027 season, GCDA will continue a residency program that entails having guest artists teach a masterclass and assist in rehearsal of company dances.

OTHER MANDATORY COMMITMENTS:

- Fall Showcase (TBA)
- Spanish Fort Christmas Parade (TBA but is usually the first Saturday in December)
- **Joffrey Auditions – 2 classes required.**
- 2027 Spring Recital, TBD
- It will be mandatory to attend any Fall/Winter workshops or auditions.

Dancers will attend 4 mandatory competitions (at least 1 convention) and the Alabama Dance Festival.

What You Can Expect in Fees:

- \$600.00 Company Membership Fee
- \$1,470 Total Competition/Convention fee for 3 group dances (expect to attend 4 mandatory convention/competitions)
- \$185.00 Typical per optional competition fee (could be slightly more or less depending)
- \$115-\$255 Alabama Dance Festival Grades 6th-12th grade (mandatory)
- \$TBD Estimated cost - Destro Choreography
- \$100.00 Typical Master Class Session
- \$500.00 Solo Choreography Fee (covers choreography- average of 4 lessons, not with guest choreographer)
- \$30 ½ hour Private Lesson Fees for Solos (at least 2 sessions a month)

Fundraisers

In effort to assist with the cost of dance, we will offer the Competitive team to be involved in fundraising. This is optional.

This year we will have several fundraisers:

- Spring into Summer Raffle – all company members required to submit \$50 gift or cash for a drawing in May.
- Company T-Shirt Sponsor Drive
- We are looking and open to ideas for a 3rd type of fundraiser.