



2026
ADULT
INTENSIVE
HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

03

Mission Statement & IDEA Statement

04-06

Academy Staff, Faculty & Contact

07

Summer Calendar Events

08

Registration Information

09-10

Academy Procedures

- Academy Rules & Policies
- Arrival & Departure
- Attendance
- Class Attire
- Evaluations/Private Lessons
- Lunch

11

Health & Wellness Program

12

Lodging Information

HOUSTON BALLET MISSION STATEMENT

To inspire a lasting love and appreciation for dance through artistic excellence, exhilarating performances, innovative choreography, and superb educational programs.

In furtherance of our mission, we are committed to maintaining and improving our status as:

- A **classically trained company with a diverse repertory** whose range includes the classics as well as contemporary works.
- A company that **attracts the world's best dancers and choreographers** and provides them with an **environment where they can thrive** and further develop the art form.
- An **international company** that is accessible to broad and growing local, national, and international audiences.
- A company with a **world-class Academy** that provides first rate instruction for dancers.
- A company that offers **high-quality dance educational programming** prioritizing historically underserved communities in Houston and the surrounding area.
- A company with **state-of-the-art** facilities for performances, rehearsals, and ongoing operations.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Statement

Houston Ballet is dedicated to creating meaningful change by cultivating a space that honors what is unique in all of us. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) are instrumental in the fulfillment of our mission and values. We recognize our responsibility to be an inclusive and open organization for students, artists, staff, trustees, and volunteers of all backgrounds.

Join us, together we are Houston Ballet.



MEET THE ACADEMY



Stanton Welch
Artistic Director,
Member of the Order of
Australia



Julie Kent
Artistic Director



Sonja Kostich
Executive Director



Jennifer Sommers
Academy Director



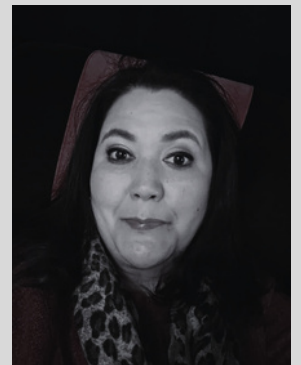
Yahudi Castañeda
Academy Artistic Operations
Associate Director



Katie Wesche
Academy Administrative
Associate Director



Kaitlyn Louis
Associate Director
of Student Life



Carla Cortez
Academy Communications
Manager



Jamie Cegelski
Academy Programs Manager



Reagan Quandt
Academy Artistic Operations
Coordinator



Kaitlyn Watson
Academy Administrative
Coordinator



Angela Flores
Academy Student Support
Coordinator

ACADEMY ARTISTIC STAFF



Susan Bryant

Principal Instructor

Susan Bryant, a former Houston Ballet soloist, retired from the Houston Ballet in 2005 after enjoying a long and illustrious career. Before joining the company as a member of the corps de ballet, she received her ballet training from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and the Houston Ballet Academy. During her 20 year career she danced under the direction of both Ben Stevenson O.B.E and current Artistic Director Stanton Welch AM. She had the honor and pleasure of performing many featured roles in ballets by Ben Stevenson OBE, Sir Fredrick Ashton, George Balanchine, Ronald Hynd, Jiri Kylian, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Paul Taylor, Anthony Tudor and Stanton Welch AM. Upon retiring from the stage, she was invited by Mr. Welch to join the Houston Ballet Academy as a Teaching Artist where she continues to share her passion and knowledge with her students. Presently Mrs. Bryant teaches, coaches and rehearses the Professional Program students.



Kelly Myernick

Principal Instructor

Kelly Myernick received her early ballet training at The Susquehanna School of Ballet in Oneonta, New York and later Springs City Ballet in Colorado Springs, Colorado. In 1996, she became a student at Houston Ballet Academy, receiving the Michael Wasmund Memorial Award upon graduation. She enjoyed a 13 year career with Houston Ballet, retiring as a First Soloist in 2014. Through her career she danced a wide variety of classical and contemporary roles, originating the roles of “Gamzatti” in La Bayadere and “Myrtha” in Giselle in Houston Ballet productions. Her broad experience in contemporary repertoire led her to her current position with Houston Ballet Academy, teaching contemporary repertoire, choreography, and ballet technique. Her teaching education includes an intensive with Netherlands Dans Theatre and workshops in Countertechnique, Gaga technique, and Anatomy for Dancers. Ms. Myernick is a frequent guest speaker and teacher in the community for organizations such as Hope Stone, Inc. and Houston Ballet’s Education and Community Engagement department.

ACADEMY CONTACT INFORMATION

Summer Program classes are held at the Margaret Alkek Williams Center for Dance.

Margaret Alkek Williams Center for Dance Address:

601 Preston Street
Houston, TX 77002

Administrative Offices Phone Number:

713-523-6300

Please send all Academy Questions to:

hbacademy@houstonballet.org

Houston Ballet Summer Programs Webpage:

<https://www.houstonballet.org/about/academy1/summer-intensive-program/>



ADULT INTENSIVE EVENTS CALENDAR

October 1, 2025	Spring Mini Adult Intensive Registration Opens!
January 1, 2026	Summer Adult Intensive Registration Opens!
February 27, 2026	Spring Mini Adult Intensive Registration Closes!
March 6, 2026	First Day of Spring Mini Adult Intensive
March 7, 2026	<i>Sylvia</i> Performance @ 7:30 pm (Optional Addition)
March 8, 2026	Last Day of Spring Mini Adult Intensive S.O.A.R. Workshop: Spring into Action! @ 1:30 pm (Optional Addition)
May 19, 2026	Summer Adult Intensive Registration Closes!
May 26, 2026	First Day of Summer Adult Intensive (5-Day)
May 29, 2026	First Day of Summer Adult Intensive (2-Day)
May 30, 2026	Last Day of Summer Adult Intensive (5-Day & 2-Day) <i>An Evening with the Stars</i> Performance @ 7:30 pm (Optional Addition)

All dates and times are subject to change.

REGISTRATION & TUITION

Spring Mini Adult Intensive Tuition	\$350	Required at the time of registration for the Spring Mini Adult Intensive Program
Summer Adult Intensive 5-Day Tuition	\$550	Required at the time of registration for the 5-Day Summer Adult Intensive Program
Summer Adult Intensive 2-Day Tuition	\$350	Required at the time of registration for the 2-Day Summer Adult Intensive Program

Tuition for the Adult Intensive Program is due at the time of registration.

Registration will close one week before the first day of the program, or once capacity is reached.

Houston Ballet accepts checks*, cashier's checks, cash, or credit cards. Payments may be mailed, hand-delivered, completed online, or phoned into the Academy office. *If a check is returned for any reason, a \$25 fee will be charged. The fee must be paid in cash within one week from the time the owner of the account is notified.

Withdrawal Policy

If a student wishes to withdraw from the Spring or Summer Adult Intensive, the Academy Office must receive a completed Withdrawal Form available [HERE](#). Verbal or emailed notification of withdrawal will not be accepted.

Please refer to the refund policy at the bottom of the page.

Refund Policy

All fees and tuition are nonrefundable and nontransferable after February 15, 2026 for the Spring Mini Adult Intensive and after April 15, 2026 for the Summer Adult Intensive. The Academy is not liable or obligated in any way to process any refunds or issue any tuition credits.

It is recommended to purchase tuition insurance from a third party, such as [A+ Program Protection](#).

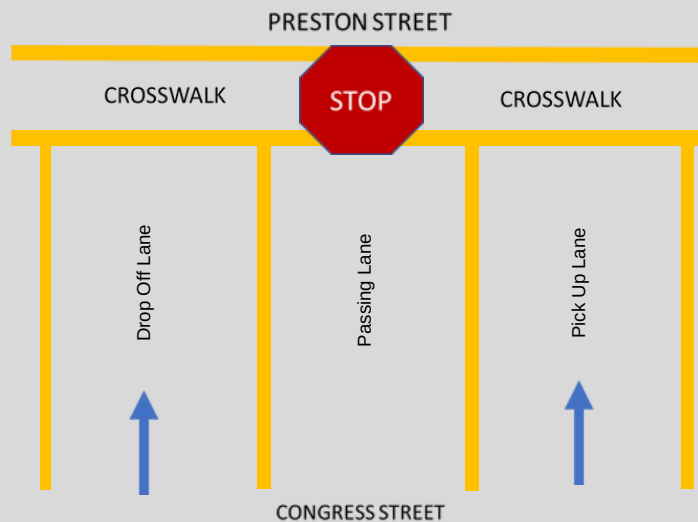
ACADEMY PROCEDURES

Houston Ballet Academy Rules & Policies

Houston Ballet Academy rules and policies can be found [HERE](#). We recommend reviewing this document in addition to the Summer Program Handbook.

Arrival & Departure

- Parking is unavailable for students at the Center for Dance
- Nearby parking options include
 - Lyric Center Garage
 - Theater District Parking
 - Alley Theater Parking Garage
 - More information on nearby parking options is listed [HERE](#).
- If being dropped off or picked up, students may use the driveway, entering from Congress Street.
 - Students being dropped off should use the far-left lane
 - Students being picked up should use the far-right lane
 - Middle lane should be left clear for vehicles to pass through



Driveway Policies

- Students will not be allowed into the studio until 15 minutes prior to the start of class.
- If picking up a student, it is recommended to arrive no earlier than the end of the student's last class.
- Do not drop off or pick up on the roads next to the Center for Dance.
- Parking is not allowed in the driveway
- Do not walk up the ramps, but use the sidewalks.

Always follow instructions provided by HPD officers, security guards, and class monitors at the Center for Dance and all City of Houston driving/parking regulations.

ACADEMY PROCEDURES

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in all classes.

Houston Ballet Academy does not recommend joining technique class if you are over 15 minutes late. If you still would like to join class, please complete a thorough warm up.

Students who miss the first technique class of the day may not be permitted to participate for the remainder of that day. This is for the safety of the student.

Class Attire

Adult Intensive students should wear comfortable clothing that they can move in, such as tights, t-shirts, leggings, leotards, etc. Ballet slippers must be worn in all ballet and repertory classes.

We recommend that hair should be pulled away from your face and that no jewelry should not be worn in class. Students may bring a small bag and a water bottle with a secure lid into class.

Evaluations & Private Lessons

There are no formal evaluations/assessments given during the summer program. Adult Intensive participants may sign up for private sessions with Houston Ballet's Health & Wellness team for personalized body conditioning sessions.

Lunch

Adult Intensive students have the option to bring lunch or leave the building for lunch break on full class days. Students will not have access to a refrigerator to store food or a microwave to heat food. Vending machines are located on the 1st floor of the CFD.

Various lunch spots are available within walking distance of the CFD. Below are a couple of options:

- Lyric Market
- Barnaby's Cafe
- Bravery Chef Hall
- Post Market

HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAM

Aki Kawasaki



Head Strength & Conditioning Coach

Originally from Ibaraki, Japan, Akihiro Kawasaki holds a B.S. in Exercise Science from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. As a student athletic trainer, he worked with several sports teams including the national championship winning football team at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (MGCCC). Kawasaki previously served as a personal trainer and strength and conditioning coach for Olympic athletes on the national team of Japan. He is currently the head strength and conditioning coach at Houston Ballet and Houston Ballet Academy. Kawasaki holds certifications in Functional Movement Systems (FMS) – level 2, Y Balance Test (YBT) of FMS, Fundamental Capacity Screen (FCS) of FMS, Rossiter – level 4, Yamuna Body Rolling – Face, Feet, Table Treatment and Animal Flow and Spatial Medicine. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/3taRxxwE>.

Private/Semi-Private Body Conditioning Sessions

This summer, we will be offering 30-minute and 60-minute semi-private or private body conditionings sessions with Aki Kawasaki exclusively to our Adult Intensive students. To sign up and pay for a session, follow the steps below. **30-minute session are \$60 each.**

1. Click [HERE](#) to access the appointment scheduler
2. Log onto your Mindbody account
3. Click on the Adult Intensive BC tab
4. Click Choose your own dates
5. Change the last date to 6/1/2026
6. Click Search
7. Click Book for the date and time that works best for you
8. Select the best start time for you
9. Click Book Appointment
10. If you would like to make your session an hour long, click Continue Shopping to add another 30-minute session
11. To pay for the session, click Check Out and follow the onscreen prompts



Health & Wellness and Adjunct Class Offerings (classes may vary)

Body Conditioning
Gyrotonics
Pilates
Yoga

Hip Hop
Jazz
Modern
Musical Theater

LODGING INFORMATION

For students who are traveling from outside the Houston area, below are options for accommodations within walking distance to the Margaret Alkek Williams Center for Dance.

Reside Houston Downtown

401 Louisiana Street Houston, TX 77002

<https://www.sonder.com/>

Distance: across the street

Club Quarters

720 Fannin Street Houston, TX 77002

<https://clubquartershotels.com/>

Distance: 0.5 miles

Homewood Suites

710 Crawford Street Houston, TX 77002

<https://www.hilton.com/>

Distance: 0.9 miles