

# Inspire Faculty



**Carlos Garland** was born on July 4, 1988 and was raised in Jacksonville Florida. He started dance at the age of 13 at Lavilla School of the Arts. Then graduated from Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, where he received a Merit Award in the NFAA (National Foundation of Advancement of the Arts) in hip hop. Carlos attended Jacksonville University, double majoring in dance and computer science. Also during this time, he performed in the *First Coast Nutcracker* as lead the Russian Doll and has

consistently over the years since then. He has a previous background in Taekwondo of 7 years and reached a second degree black belt.

Carlos has been the winner of the Mille Lewis America's Models and Talent Competition in dance. He and his dance crew, "*Systematic*", has won BET's *106th and Park* dance competition twice in a row and has been in national and international commercials. Carlos is a member of and has danced with *Rasta Thomas' Bad Boys Of Dance* and has performed in their hit show "*Rock The Ballet*". With the company he has toured Europe, Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. Carlos was also a top 20 finalist on the Fox TV dance show "*So You Think You Can Dance*" Season 10. He has also danced with the cast of "*Spiderman Turn Off the Dark*" in their final *Gypsy Of The Year* performance. He is a member of iLuminate (as seen on *America's Got Talent*) and has performed as the main character in their hit off-broadway show, "*iLuminate, Artists of Light*". He has been on instructor faculty at Broadway Dance Center and Steps On Broadway in NYC and still teaches there when in the area. He is currently a traveling instructor/choreographer for many schools and companies as well as a performer in Universal Studios and Walt Disney World.



**Heather Parker** began dancing at the age of two in metro Atlanta under the direction of Pamela Mitchell Lambert. As a member of a competitive dance company for 14 years, Heather won numerous awards as a dancer and student choreographer. In her teenage years, she was given the opportunity to assist and teach classes and quickly fell in love with being able to pass on her love of dance to younger

students. Heather is trained and teaches in the disciplines of Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Lyrical, Contemporary, and Hip Hop. Throughout her childhood Heather was very active not only in dance but also in the dramatic arts, pageantry, and modeling. Heather is a graduate of Barbizon School of Modeling, holds several pageant titles, has modeled throughout the metro Atlanta area for children's fashion shows, and has performed on Good Day Atlanta. While a student at the University of West Georgia, Heather began her professional career in the Atlanta area dancing for promotional events, and as a dancer, singer, and show supervisor for Six Flags Over Georgia. Heather has choreographed for multiple competitive studios, dance teams, and independent groups at the University of West Georgia. Now, Heather continues to teach and choreograph at her own studio where she has been owner and director for seven years. In such a short time she has provided a premier dance education center where students have graduated and received scholarships at the collegiate level, won hundreds of high scoring and top honors throughout the dance competition circuit, and has been awarded numerous choreography awards. Heather loves nothing more than to teach and choreograph for dancers of all ages and looks forward to each and every day in which she can continue to encourage today's youth through the art of dance.



**Christopher Robbins** is from South Carolina. A Member of Actors Equity Union and SC Artist in Residence. He has performed for television and stage shows since he was 7 years old and his entertainment spectrum ranges from Singer; Dancer; Actor. Chris has worked with artists/choreographers such as Donny and Jimmy Osmond, Darius Rucker, Justin Timberlake, Kelly Rowland, Jennifer Holiday, Kristine W, The Pointer Sisters, Lee Greenwood, Caroline Lewis Jones, Gil Stroming, Adrienne Canterna, Jean Whitaker, Joe Lanteri, Pamela Bolling, Pam Chancey, Kim Wolfe, and Jaime King. He has worked for companies as a choreographer or performer such as Opryland Productions, Gaylord Productions, Victoria's Secret, Hardrive Productions, Celebrity Cruise Lines, Pzazz Entertainment, OnStage Productions, Walt Disney World Productions, and Tokyo Disney Productions. Chris was in The Walt Disney Productions of "Beauty and the Beast" and "Tarzan Rocks." He was the full time Swing for "Legends in Concert" based out of Las Vegas for 8 years. He has been the Grinch for the City of Savannah for the past 2 years and in the Ballet "The Nutcracker" as Cavalier at the Lucas Theater in Savannah as well. He has been employed by Encore DCS, Dance Masters of America, Dance Troupe Inc., Star Systems, StarPower Talent, Inspire, Revolution, Imagine, and Showstopper Dance Competitions. Chris was hired by Club Tango in Charleston, SC, Club Kryptonite, Eighty Eight's, Club Mykonos, Tunnel UltraLounge, 2001 Nightclub, Broadway at the Beach, Senor Frogs, Zulu Lounge, Pulse Ultra Lounge, Legends in Concert, Victoria's Secret International, and The House of Blues in Myrtle Beach, SC as a dancer, director, singer, and choreographer. He is the Ballroom couple winner at "Dancing with the Horry County Stars" televised program in 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, and 2016. Chris worked for Hardrive Productions as Production Assistant/Executive Assistant to the President/CEO Pamela Bolling where he facilitated shows for Celebrity Cruises and many other companies. Chris has won many awards in national competitions for his choreographies, among them the "Judges Critics Choice Award" at the New York City Dance Alliance. Many of his coached students have pursued professional work on Broadway, television, movies, Radio City Rockettes, BadBoysOfDance, and assistants to NYCDA, Jump, Nuvo, Dance Makers, Pulse, CoDance, and WILD faculty. Chris currently is finished on the movie "1 Chance 2 Dance" filmed in LA as the choreographer and played the

role of the choreographer and played the



**Maddie Kurtz** received her early dance training at the D'valda and Sirico Dance and Music Centre in Fairfield, CT, under the direction of Angela D'valda Sirico, Steve Sirico, Jessica Stafford, and Jason Marquette. As a member, and eventually captain, of the renowned D'valda and Sirico Dance Company, Maddie competed and performed nationally, showing her versatility in choreography ranging from ballet, modern, and lyrical, to jazz, tap, hip-hop, and musical theater. She then completed a B.A. in Dance and Religious Studies at Colby College, focusing primarily on modern, contemporary, and ballet. Throughout her training, Maddie has attended some of the nation's most prestigious summer programs, including the Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, Peridance Capezio Center, The American Dance Festival, and the Bates Dance Festival. Her most recent performance credits include works by contemporary dance leaders, such as Julia Burrell, James Hansen, Heidi Henderson, Annie Kloppenberg, Paul Matteson, and Kendra Portier. She has taught at and choreographed award-winning competition numbers for studios throughout the Northeast, and in addition to teaching dance, she is a certified yoga and Pilates instructor. Maddie is currently an M.F.A. candidate and Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Department of Dance at SUNY Brockport. Maddie is an adjudicator with several dance competitions, and is also on the roster of Dance Competition Judges with Impact Dance Adjudicators.



**Marisa Dolan** Started dancing in Jacksonville, Florida training in ballet, contemporary, lyrical, jazz, modern, and hip-hop. Marisa studied dance at Jacksonville University and was a part of a contemporary/hip-hop company called A Rhythm Nation. As a freshman, she traveled with Jacksonville University students to perform a show on the ABC Island, Curacao. Marisa attended the Gelsey Kirkland Academy of Classical Ballet Summer Intensive in New York City and got to work with Gelsey Kirkland herself. She was then accepted to

the Broadway Dance Center's Professional Semester Program and moved to New York City. She has been on Good Morning America and danced with the Broadway cast of *Spiderman: Turn off the Dark* in their final *Gypsy of the Year* performance. Also in New York, she was a part of JT Lotus Dance Company and performed in many shows throughout New York and surrounding areas. Marisa has since then moved to Orlando, FL. She is currently dancing at Universal Studios Orlando in The Marilyn Monroe show and other seasonal events. Marisa is continuing to teach and work as a freelance dancer.



**Erin Demers** has been a professional in the dance industry for fourteen years. She has been fortunate to train with some of the greatest including the University of South Carolina dance faculty, Columbia City Ballet, Gaye Baxley of Madeleine Walker Coastal Ballet, Hilton Head Ballet Theatre, and numerous others on the convention circuit. An avid student, Erin believes that training and being a student should never stop as long as one is in this industry!

Though currently on staff with three studios, Erin has had the good fortune to travel to many studios throughout the South Eastern United States to teach, choreograph, and judge. She has choreographed for multiple pageants, most recently for the Miss Georgia Southern Pageant. Erin lives to teach dance and hopes that her love radiates outwardly! She is so excited to be a part of the Inspire staff!



**Diana Ford** was born in Costa Rica. She began her dance training in Miami, Florida, under the instruction of Pepe Bronce, Vivian Tobio, Maria Eugenia Lorenzo, and Manuel Castro. While furthering her dance education at New World School of the Arts College, she performed as a soloist with the Pepe Bronce Flamenco Company, and began working in the commercial dance industry. Diana also had the privilege of performing alongside dance icon Mikhail Baryshnikov. Upon graduating from NWSA with a BFA in dance, she spent a summer as a scholarship student at the Martha Graham Dance

Center, and was a featured performer in an off-broadway production of *Rumba Dreams*, both in New York City. Soon after, Diana was invited to join Miami Contemporary Dance Company and was a featured company dancer for 7 years. She also danced with the Cuban Classical Ballet of Miami, and did a variety of commercial work, including television work for Univision. Diana has also performed on several TV shows alongside artists such as Pitbull, David Bisbal, and Willy Chirino, and was a dancer for the MTV VMA's in Miami. She has taught and choreographed for several dance schools and studios throughout South Florida, and is currently the assistant dance director at Miami Arts Charter School. Diana is a member of the National Dance Education Organization and the Florida Dance Education Organization.



**Charlie Lazar Womble**, originally from Los Angeles, California, started dance at the age of 3. He was the recipient of the National Society of the Arts Award, received an Honorable Mention Scholarship Award, and the Mary Fife Memorial Award in Classical Ballet. After graduating High School in 1997, he relocated to Atlanta where he danced with the Atlanta Ballet, and also performed in the Corps. Mr. Womble took on principle roles in the Nutcracker, Don Quixote, and Romeo & Juliette.

Mr. Womble earned his Bachelor of Art in Fashion, with a Minor in Musical Theater at Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD). During his studies, he performed with the Savannah Ballet and Savannah Performing Arts Ballet Company. He also utilized his talent with the Sankofa Dance Theater, specializing in Modern and African Dance. From 2001-2004 Lazar danced for Disney Theme Parks and Disney Cruise Lines in Orlando Florida. While there he performed lead roles in Tarzan and Beauty & The Beast. He also danced in musical performances featuring National Recording Artists such as Moriah Carey and Brittany Spears. He has also taught at a number of studios in Georgia & Florida. their fullest potential.



**Britney Stevenson** is a teacher and moving artist living and working in the Charlotte, NC area and the surrounding. She received a MFA in Dance Performance and Choreography from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts in 2016. During her time in New York, she had the pleasure to work with great minds like Phyllis Lamhut and Rashaun Mitchell as well as perform works by Sean Curran, Vita Osojnik, Bridget Struthers, Kyle Mullins Moving Arts, Angie Moon Dance Theater, and Asia Dance Duo in the Jack Crystal Theater,

Dixon Place, and Peridance. Before her time in NY, she grew up attending Northwest School of the Arts in Charlotte, North Carolina in addition to dancing competitively at Carolina Dance Academy for ten years. She then pursued her dance career at Columbia College earning a BFA in Dance Performance and Choreography in 2013. She is very excited to enter into her first year of judging and can't wait to share the joy of dance with all of your beautiful dancers!



**Kara Gillcrist** is originally from Boston, Massachusetts. After winning the Regional Grand Championship in tap, she moved to Atlanta. Kara performed in the 1996 Olympic Games and numerous regional and national talent competitions. She danced alongside greats including: Tina Turner, Gloria Estefan, Celine Dion, Liza Minelli, Travis Tritt, and Savion Glover. Currently, Kara teaches at numerous Metro Atlanta dance studios, including Atlanta Ballet, and teaches master dance classes across the country.

She is also lucky enough to travel across the United States teaching and judging national talent competitions. Recently, Kara choreographed Shrek the Musical and Les Miserables. She also teaches and choreographs local theatre programs. Her choreography and artistry has won numerous awards including "Top Tap", "Entertainment", and "Precision" awards. Kara is proud of her Bachelor's degree in Exercise Science and Master's degree in Early Childhood Education and teaches Pre-K in the Georgia school system.



**NaShayla Jones** was born and raised in Marietta, Georgia. She began training in ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop modern and musical theater at very early age. NaShayla grew up a "competition kid". During her competition years she was able to assist and be the mentee to many notable choreographers. She later went on to graduate from the University of Alabama where she earned a B.A. in Dance and social work. During her time at Alabama, NaShayla was a member of the Alabama Repertory Dance Theater, the university's pre-professional dance company. While a member of the company she was selected to perform at The American College Dance Festival. NaShayla was also given the privilege to be an American Ballet theater counselor for three years.

In recent years, she has worked for the Universal Dance Association as a head instructor, rehearsal director, and judge. NaShayla has judged for well-known competitions both regionally and nationally, and now takes her own students to competitions every year. NaShayla has received numerous choreography awards for her work in Contemporary, Lyrical, and Jazz. She's had the opportunity to work with many studios throughout the south and east coast as a guest instructor/ teacher. NaShayla currently choreographs for studios, competitive cheerleading squads and dance teams, pageants, and industrials. She loves and believes in the art of dance and cannot wait to see it expand.



**Vanessa Zabari** originally from Columbus Ohio, began her training at the Pinnell Dance Center with Jeri Pinnell. Graduating with high honors, she received her BA from the University of Akron. She continued her dance and choreography studies upon her relocation to Atlanta. She presented her early work in Atlanta at numerous dance spaces and founded Fluid, The Artistic Movement, a series of co-operative showcases, which allowed choreographers to outsource their work. She

worked for Dance Canvas, teaching tap and jazz at the Mayor's Arts School Program increasing youth participation in the arts through dance. Ms. Zabari, has judged for various dance competitions while currently teaching Tap and Jazz classes throughout the Southeast. She currently is co-founder of Atlanta Tap Project as well as manages and runs the Vanessa Zabari Master Dance Institute.



**Brittany Noltimier** is currently performing and teaching all around the Orlando area. Brittany dances, sings, and acts at Universal Studios and Islands of Adventure, Legoland, and Seaworld. She works for Event Show Productions, TellAVision, Metropolis, Shows in a Box, and Spotlight Entertainment dancing, stilt walking, as a magician's assistant, and performing in variety acts for corporate events. Brittany teaches recreational and competition dance at various studios in the Orlando area. She is a teacher and judge on the national tours of various dance competitions including Inspire National Dance Competition. Brittany graduated from Oklahoma City University and received a Bachelor of Performing Arts in dance performance. She started dancing and teaching at her mom's dance studio in Devils Lake, North Dakota and continues to share her love for dance educating and performing all across the country.



**Nicole Campbell** is a professional dancer, choreographer and instructor currently based in Atlanta. Hailing from metro Detroit, she received her B.S. in Dance from Wayne State University after her childhood training at Robert Lee School of Dance and Churchill High School's Creative and Performing Arts program. Performance credits include Hannibal Buress, Maksim Chmerkovskiy, JTDance, Gotta Dance Contemporary, Melodic Nocturne Dance Tribe and halftime shows for the Detroit Lions and Detroit Pistons. Nicole's choreographic works have been presented in concerts for artLabJ and MoreDances Contemporary Dance Company in addition to receiving frequent top honors in competitions.



**Kamali Hill** is an Atlanta choreographer and dance educator. She received her dance education from the Dance Institute of Washington, National Ballet Institute for the Arts and Virginia Commonwealth University where she received her BFA. As a choreographer, she is honored to have worked in the United States and abroad with notable companies and choreographers; Otis Sallid, T. Lang Dance, Broadway Dreams Foundation, Moscow Ballet, Dissonance Dance Theatre, Sans Limites Danse and Athens Dance Video Project to name a few. She is a passionate dance educator who is proud of her students' accomplishments, having been accepted into prestigious learning institutions such as Jeffrey Ballet School, Dance Theatre of Harlem, The Alley School, University of Maryland and Rutgers University. Kamali is extremely grateful for the opportunities God has given her and more excited about the journey ahead.



**Courtney Eierman** originally grew up, trained and competed in Atlanta, GA. She graduated in 2013 from the University of Central Florida with a major in business management and a dance minor. During her college years she founded the largest dance organization at the University of Central Florida - The Knights and Damsels Dance Company. She has taught, choreographed and performed throughout Florida. Courtney's choreography has won numerous awards at both the regional and national competitive level. She is most widely known for her unique Contemporary style. Courtney has a true passion for dance and loves to challenge and push students to



**Liz Dukes** began dancing at Burns Dance Studio in Aiken, SC where she studied tap, jazz, and ballet. It was during her years with Burns that she was introduced to the competitive dance world and spent many years traveling to conventions and competitions with her team. Liz attended Winthrop University and earned a Bachelor's degree in Dance Education. She later earned a Master's degree in Divergent Learning of the Arts from Columbia College. Liz is the dance instructor at Fort Mill High School where she also coaches the award winning dance team and choreographs the school musicals. She spent 13 years directing the competitive teams at Carolina Dance Academy and Crown Charlotte Dance Center. When she is not dancing, Liz enjoys spending time with her daughter, Lillie, and cheering on her beloved South Carolina Gamecocks!



**Kristen Brister** has over 20 years of dance experience, and has studied and taught many different dance styles in her hometown of Memphis, TN. Kristen received the bulk of her training from Nadine Smith & Jackie Chartrand at NVS Dance, one of Tennessee's top 3 dance schools. Under their direction she won numerous local and national championships in Jazz, Tap, and Pom. Kristen also studied Vaganova style ballet under Nora Curran at the Allegro Ballet Academy, and was also a member of the Oakland Youth Ballet. In high school, she found her place as Director of Pre-Dance and Director of Enrollment at a studio in Cordova, TN. Her students have received top honors at competitions and they have performed all over this area. During college, Kristen joined the faculty of a local studio and was trained under Susu Hale Prout, owner of a nationally renowned Children's Dance Program. Kristen's love of teaching the smallest dancers as well as working with the company dancers is shown every day. She is known for her positive spirit and outgoing personality. Kristen is a graduate of the University of Alabama with a BA in Dance. While at the University she thrived in her dance education classes and was invited to teach dance at many of the area public schools. She is thrilled to join the judging team at Inspire and can't wait to share her knowledge with your students.



**Aliye Hancock** has been dancing since the age of 13. She may have gotten a late start but through hard work and dedication, she progressed quickly. She trained in Columbia, SC at South Carolina Performing Arts Center under the direction of Kimberly Langley. As a competitive dancer, Aliye won many scholarships, titles, and awards. Aliye graduated from Winthrop University Magna Cum Laude with a degree in Dance Performance. During college she held the position of assistant director of SCPAC's junior competition team and found her passion was in teaching and sharing her love for dance. She has been a guest choreographer at many studios, taught countless master classes, choreographed for Furman University's dance team, as well as judged for national dance competitions all over the U.S. Aliye currently now holds the position of Company Director with Rhythmics Performing Arts, Inc., in Lexington, SC. Throughout her career, she has traveled across the U.S. performing and furthering her dance education with such top names as Mia Michaels, Joe Lanteri, Desmond Richardson, Jason Parsons, and Debbie Allen, just to name a few. Aliye's creative choreography has won her numerous awards and recognition. Her students have received countless scholarships, overall awards and special recognition and have gone on to dance professionally across the United States. Aliye lives in Lexington with her husband, Matt, and her aspiring 4-year-old ballerina, McKayla.



**Erika Hogan** is originally from Sumter, South Carolina. At the age of 2, Erika began taking dance classes and has not stopped since! Erika has trained extensively in tap, jazz, ballet, modern, contemporary, and acrobatics. Erika received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Dance Performance, a Bachelor of Science Degree in Fitness and Wellness, and a Master of Science Degree in Kinesiology/Health and Physical Education from Winthrop University.

Erika has performed with Royal Caribbean Cruise lines, the Southern Sports Awards, the Winthrop Dance Theater, Columbia City Ballet, Nickelodeon Productions, and she was inducted in the Dance Hall of Fame. Erika has also appeared in the television shows Army Wives, Heartland, and Outbreak along with several movie appearances. Erika is a sought after choreographer that has choreographed professional shows at Carowinds, Royal Caribbean, Pageants, and more! Erika is a Studio Owner and Artistic Director.



**Christopher Gonzalez La Corte**, a graduate of Wake Forest University in NC, is the Artistic Director of "The Explore Composite" in Orlando, FL and a recent Adjunct Faculty and Guest Artist in Dance at Seminole State College. As a choreographer and theatre director, he has produced at numerous venues in and around Orlando, The American College Dance Festival (GA), Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theatre's Voices of Now Program (Washington, DC), Wake Forest University (NC) and regional showcases throughout the East Coast. He has debuted works at the Orlando International Fringe Theatre Festival, Creative City Project Orlando, WFU's Alumni Conference and worked alongside various directors to assist in the choreography of live theatre performance. As a performer he has had the opportunity to perform work by various choreographers from around the world, and is currently a company member of COBY Project, an improvisational dance company in Orlando. He is currently on faculty at several dance studios in Florida and most recently served as a PNC Grant Teaching Artist for the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, integrating the arts into VPK classrooms in Orange County, FL. Chris has adjudicated for Dr. Phillips Magnet High School for the Arts, South Eastern Theatre Conference, and NC State Thespians and served on college theatre programs panels, as well as arts integration and arts professional development for academic instruction. He is a former Pulse Protégé and Intrigue Dance Convention staff member.



**Valerie Tissue** attended Western Carolina University where she received a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a concentration in Acting. Valerie appeared in many main stage productions including: 1776, Barefoot in the Park, 1940's Radio Hour, Midsummer Night's Dream and more. Valerie starred in many of TWV's summer stock productions including Wizard of Oz (Dorothy twice!), Grease (Rizzo), Fiddler on the Roof (Hodel), Anything Goes (Purity) and Hatfields and McCoy's (Roseanne McCoy), to name a few. After graduating from WCU, Valerie stayed on at TWV to be Road Manager/Performer in a nine-month children's tour, which traveled all over West Virginia and parts of Pennsylvania playing to elementary, middle, and high school students. Valerie's career then took her to Fort Myers, FL and the Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre where she performed in Funny Girl and Showboat. Next she was off to Battle Creek, MI to play one of her favorite roles Annie Oakley in Annie Get Your Gun.

Valerie has taken master classes from Luigi, Twyla Tharp, Mandy Moore, Bob Rizzo, Anthony Morigerato, Denise Wall, Mia Michaels, Wade Robson, Brian Friedman, and other amazing teachers. In 2006, Valerie opened her own studio and within the first 10 years had won a National Title! Mrs. Valerie's choreography, along with her wonderfully talented students, has also won many awards including: "Best Choreography", "Most Entertaining", and multiple First Place awards. She has attended the Dance Teacher Summit in New York City and plans to make it an annual trip! Most recently, Valerie attended The Acrobatic Arts Teacher Training and Certification program, and is now a certified AcroArts instructor. Valerie, her husband, John, and their three children now live in Sylva, NC. Valerie is proud to say she is a mother, wife, business owner, instructor, and judge all wrapped up in one!

