



CONTEMPORARY TRAINING PROGRAM

PUSHING  PROGRESS
CONTEMPORARY DANCE



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Accountability. Integrity. Commitment.

ac·count·a·bil·i·ty

əˈkoun(t)əbɪlədē/

noun

the fact or condition of being accountable; responsibility.

in·teg·ri·ty

ɪntərədē/

noun

1. the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness.
2. the state of being whole and undivided.

com·mit·ment

kəˈmɪtmənt/Submit

noun

1. the state or quality of being dedicated to a cause, activity, program, job, contract, etc.
2. an engagement or obligation that is upheld.

Accountability, Integrity, and Commitment are at the core of each choice we make. It is the fundamental training of this program, and every other program created by Pushing Progress. It will define each dancer as they continue to cultivate themselves as creative artists and genuine people in their community. These 3 words define how we train, in and outside of the studio, and shape our growth. They follow us through rehearsal, and are the base for every relationship from fellow colleagues in dance, to collaboration with directors in creation. These words create the way we are seen and heard, on stage and off, and the way we are perceived and acknowledged. They determine who we are.

About the Contemporary Training Program

The intention of the program is to instill tools to empower individual artists for a stronger sense of self discipline and appreciation for their instrument. Through an understanding of ones mental and physical self, each dancer is guided on how to take different concepts from other forms of training and how to assess movement from an energetic and also functional place. Students will be building on the basic tenants learned in previous training and finding a deeper understanding of the human anatomy that facilitates growth in every dancer. Through the work of the program dancers will cultivate a strong artistic voice allowing them to become leaders in the greater creative community.

The objective of the program is to produce dancers who:

- Possess a knowledge of basic functional anatomy for dance.
- Understand awareness of alignment to facilitate efficiency of movement.
- Have developed energetic and mental habits in a constructive way for approaching and learning technique.
- Have learned from chosen guest instructors, who will help to expand on the application of the work presented.
- Can use movement exploration, improv and movement assessment to help develop an individual voice as an artist.
- Develop a level of professionalism that will serve them in the rehearsal process with in the program and as working dance artists.
- Have a basic understanding of necessary professional skills such as resume construction, branding and video editing.

General Information

This 2 year program explores the connection of mind, body and artist over 8 months annually, September - May. This collegiate-level training challenges dancers preconceived ideas of how their mind and body work thorough a breakdown of body mechanics and intense technical study and rigorous conditioning exercises. Students shed old habits and ideas that no longer serve to give space to their true voice and expression as an artist. Training consists of 14 hrs of class work weekly in ballet, contemporary, conditioning, anatomy and more. Completion of this 2-year program has participants confident, technically strong and prepared to continue their journey into a professional creative career. Each year will consist of weekly technique classes in ballet, modern and contemporary mechanics. Weekly conditioning classes including but not limited to yoga, Pilates and GYROKINESIS®. The academic study of anatomy and it's functional application to dance. Personal coaching and mentoring. Movement, improv and composition classes. Monthly guest teachers and seminars. All culminating in a performance at the end of each year.

In year 1 dancers will dig in to find the core competencies that are the foundation of a strong professional dancer. Old habits give way to efficient use of the mind and body. Dancers are trained in yoga, ballet, contemporary and anatomy.

Year II focuses on construction. In this year we build from the strong technical foundation of year I. Dancers begin to explore their own unique artistic voice while continuing the advancement of their technique. Development of dancers in this year includes performance opportunities as well as weekly rehearsal process. Dancers will also receive monthly guest instruction from industry professionals. Past and present faculty include Sidra Bell (Sidra Bell Dance New York), Manuel Vignoulle , Etta Murfitt (New Adventures), Mike Esperanza (Bare Dance Company).



Faculty

Our faculty consists of an accomplished group of artists and teachers. We bring in a faculty of creatives that value a dancers mind as much as their technique. Classes are engaging, dynamic and challenging and provide dancers the gift of learning from artists who are currently in the field.



Calen Kurka CEO/Artistic Director

Raised in Prince Rupert, British Columbia, Canada, Calen Kurka started his training in Jazz, Tap, Ballet, Musical Theatre, Modern, and Chinese Dance. He then later moved to Edmonton, Alberta, furthering his training competitively.

Currently on faculty at Broadway Dance Center in New York City, as an instructor Calen has taught across Canada, the U.S. and Japan, and more recently in Ireland at Dublin's Dance Jam '07. He is currently instructing for Dance Masters of America as one of their Master Faculty, and is also on faculty with Dance Educators of America. His choreography has been recognized as outstanding at many competitions throughout the U.S. and Canada, and has been the recipient of many awards. In addition to teaching in and around New York he's also assisted choreographer, director, instructor, Michele Assaf.

Calen's performing credits include being an original member of the first national tour of Jeff Amsden's widely acclaimed "A Few Good Men Dancin'", and performing with recording artist Carmella in a tribute concert to Cher. He's also worked closely with choreographer/instructor Chris Hale. As a featured performer, Calen's stage credits include having spent a year on contract with Tokyo Disney as a Main Stage performer, and taking on such leading roles as Capt. Von Trapp in "The Sound of Music" and Seymour in "Little Shop of Horrors" in regional stage productions. In addition he can be seen in "The Live! at Broadway Dance Center" video series "Turns and Turn Combos", dancing with choreographer Danny Herman, and heading his own instructional video "Floor Work with Calen Kurka and Chris Hale": A new addition to the "Live at BDC" collection.

As founder and Artistic Director of Pushing Progress Contemporary Dance, Calen continues his journey as an artist, instructor and choreographer. He inspires, and is continually inspired by those who so honestly give of their talent and themselves. He continues, with his company, to create work pushing new movement, strong technique, honesty, emotional commitment, and growth. It is an evolutionary journey with no boundaries, no limits, no ends.

Faculty Cont.



Chris Hale Director of Education

Chris is Director of Education at Pushing Progress Contemporary Dance. Through his work with Pushing Progress Contemporary Dance Chris and his partner Calen J. Kurka are at the helm of a revolution in the way we train in dance. Through an energetic approach to movement and the incorporation of varied methodologies for sustainability and injury prevention they hope to bring a sophisticated level of information into the lives of every dancer who has the drive and passion to grow as an artist.

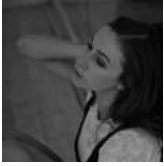


Elani Engleken

Elani is entering her third year with the Pushing Progress Contemporary Dance. She leads work with the Professional Development branch, training dancers in the leadership skills needed to identify and pursue a professional career. Elani also works with dancers in the CTP to unite their physical awareness and technicality with their emotional and artistic expression.



Faculty Cont.



Bryn Cohn

Described as a “dancemaker who does not shy away from much” (DIY Dancer), Bryn Cohn graduated with a Bachelor’s of Fine Arts from California Institute of the Arts in dance performance and composition. In 2011, she founded the New York-based contemporary dance company, Bryn Cohn + Artists, whose work has been presented in premiere venues including Danspace Project, Ailey Citigroup Theater, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Symphony Space, The Martha Graham Theater, Judson Memorial Church, 92nd Street Y, The Theatre at Meydenbauer (Seattle), Abrons Arts Center, Baruch Performing Arts Center and Salvatore Capezio Theater among others. Bryn has been commissioned by Missouri Contemporary Ballet, Billy Bell’s Lunge Dance Collective (of So You Think You Can Dance), Grand Valley State University, the fashion designer Betsey Johnson on a site specific installation and for The Youth America Grand Prix Competition. She has been on permanent faculty for the Pushing Progress Professional Training Program for the past three years, and is the head of the modern and contemporary department at Greenwich Ballet Academy. Cohn teaches at Peridance Capezio Center, and has taught master classes at Velocity Dance Center (Seattle), Broadway Dance Center (NYC), Chop Shop: Bodies of Work (Seattle) and for the Michael Susten Dance Company (NYC).



Anna M. Vollmar

Anna is a choreographer, master teacher, and Pilates instructor who travels the world helping others to understand the language of dance and mechanics of the body in movement. For over 8 years she has worked out of New York City, where she was an original dancer and faculty member of Pushing Progress, a contemporary company and educational program.

She has had the opportunity to perform on many stages all over NYC, as well as in Dublin, Ireland. She has taught at several professional dance studios in New York City, such as the prestigious Broadway Dance Center and Peridance Capezio Center. Anna can be seen in the BDC Live! Video series: Floorwork Volume I & II with Calen Kurka and Chris Hale as a featured dancer. Anna has traveled all over Europe teaching at M.A.S. studio in Milan, Italy, where she was a guest teacher and judge for an international dance conference, collaborated in international workshops in Florence, Italy, and taught guest master slots at Studio Harmonic in Paris, France. She has lived for a time in Monterrey, Mexico, where she was a master teacher and choreographer for Maries Estudio de Danza.

Anna’s passion for body awareness and biomechanics led her to study at the renowned and respected Kane School of Core Integration where she is fully certified in Mat and Equipment Pilates. Currently, she is on faculty with Pushing Progress’ educational programs and is a teacher trainer for the Kane School.

CONTEMPORARY TRAINING PROGRAM

Faculty Cont.



Kathy VanDereedt

Kathy is a professional dancer, teacher and choreographer working out of New York City. She has studied with some of New York's top instructors and choreographers, with a focus on the study of human anatomy and how it translates to movement as the basis for her training. Kathy has performed professionally all over the world in a number of mediums, including concert dance, commercial, music videos, aerial silks, and musical theatre. Her most memorable credits include principal dancer in noesis:KineticCs under the direction of Calen Kurka, dancing a full season and tour with BODYART under the direction of Leslie Scott, multiple performances with Bryn Cohn & Artists, and performing as Veronica in the production of Saturday Night Fever with RCCL. As an instructor Kathy has taught and choreographed internationally at various schools, studios, and colleges, including NYC's famous Broadway Dance Center, and Dance Masters of America. She is also on faculty with :pushing progress workshops and their NYC Contemporary Training Program, and was the ballet director for the Nourish Through Movement Tour, on which she also performed as a principal dancer. Kathy enjoys bringing a fresh perspective to her classes, inviting students of all ages to explore, challenge and dig for a deeper understanding of everything they know about technique, movement, and performance. For more information about Kathy, visit www.kathyvandereedt.com.

Jen Lancaster

is a dedicated teacher, committed to inspiring dancers to delve deeper into their understanding of their bodies and how they move. She believes the first step in educating others is to educate yourself. After graduating from Towson University with a B.F.A. in Dance Performance, Jen moved to NYC to pursue her dance career. She studied at the Ailey School, Broadway Dance Center, STEPS on Broadway and participated in workshops with Parsons Dance Company and Stephen Petronio. She also performed with a variety of choreographers in the city, most notably as an original member of :pushing progress, a contemporary company under the artistic direction of Calen J. Kurka. During this time, Jen also taught at a variety of studios in the tri-state area, constantly improving her teaching methods by utilizing information from her experiences in the city.

Wanting to know more about the body, Jen went to The Swedish Institute and studied to become a NY State Licensed Massage Therapist. With this new found knowledge, she was able to approach teaching dance in a whole new way. By understanding each muscle in the body and how those muscles work together to execute movement, a dancer can make smarter choices as they tackle new movement, work to strengthen and stretch the body and even deal with injuries. Jen has been teaching anatomy and its applications to dance for the :pushing progress Contemporary Training Program for the last four years, helping dancers better understand how their bodies function.

In addition to her work with the Contemporary Training Program, Jen teaches at studios in Connecticut and New York where she focuses on dancers' technique and personal voice through movement. She also choreographs a plethora of pieces for competitions and annual recitals. This summer, Jen will be attending the ABT Teacher Training for Pre-Primary to Level III, hoping to earn her ABT Teacher Certification as she continues her pursuit of knowledge to better educate the next generation of dancer

Administration

Chris Hale, Director of Education

Calen Kurka, CEO/Artistic Director

Elani Engleken, Director of Professional Development Program

Curricular Breakdown

CORE Curriculum

Ballet

Muscular awareness and Movement initiation in Ballet

This class will focus on the concepts of alignment, placement, and the idea of rotation as a stabilizing force in the body using classical movement vocabulary. We will be creating a greater awareness of where movement comes from and how to bridge the gap between classical and contemporary styles. Concepts include work on achieving neutral alignment in barre and center. Focus is on the abdominals and other postural muscles. Dancers will also look at muscle development in the body and begin to address imbalances throughout.

Body Mechanics for Dancers

Class will include basic anatomy and muscle function as it relates to dance technique, conditioning based upon Pilates methodology and biomechanics, as well as injury prevention/rehab, strength vs. flexibility, tools to individualize training needs, and translating information as it relates to dance movement.

Improvisation Systems

Class begins with a somatic improvisational warm up, introducing ideas of yielding into gravity, differentiating between skeletal versus muscular support, sequencing and an investigation of organic sensation to unleash movement possibility. We prepare for rigorous and dynamic physicality by awakening initiation channels in the body. The dancers are led through a kinesthetic journey to cultivate an expansive qualitative range and an active cognitive awareness. The dancer is encouraged to find an intuitive coupling between isolation and continuous motion, and the ability to morph from one physical state into the next. We will break down the mechanics of partnering as a way to deepen consciousness of one's own movement experience in relationship to others. Exercises examine quality of touch, emotional connection, momentum, weight bearing, manipulation and counterbalance. Through contact, listening and responding to each other and the shared energy in the room, we will hone new ways to intimately connect. Class culminates with prompts that incorporate fall and recovery, intention, focus, gesture and precision with a strong emphasis on performance and expressivity. A wide and eclectic array of music is used, anything from electronic to hip hop to contemporary classical. The dancers are directed to play within rhythmic structures, listening to what they hear as a vehicle to make thoughtful decisions in their artistry.

Contemporary Mechanics

Class Focus - This class is a movement class grounded in Contemporary techniques, movement exploration through improvisation, and concepts in anatomical placement and classical technique. The class is designed to ground the dancer in their senses and their approach to exploring the human body throughout class allowing the body a more physical, mental and spacial awareness to the approach of training. This connection nurtures the bodies natural innate human ability to compare, recognize, obtain, and retain the information it is receiving.

Description - The class begins with a simple centering of the mind, improv, and exploration of the torso, limbs, and surrounding negative space, playing on the senses and breath. Warm-up continues with a center combination layering and combining exercises moving through the torso, and spine, warming the body slowly at first in repetitive patterns standing, and on the floor. These exercises are continual through active movement and promote both connection, strength, and stretch through the use of breath and the extension created by expansion through space. Concepts are then reinforced in center barre as a means to bring sensation and performance to approach in technique.

Warm-up is then followed with simple ideas in improv, accessing each artists inner creative ideas and choice making.

Combo can combine any or all ideas explored throughout the class and will then be explored further allowing each artists to exercise their own approach, thoughts and ideas, in order to better understand the body of work.

Curricular Breakdown Cont.

Conditioning

This class focuses on taking basic knowledge of anatomy and it's relationship to dance into physical practical movement phrases and exercises meant to both strengthen and inform each dancers movement vocabulary. Information is accessible and practical, and is easily translated to any genre of dance, technique, or performance approach, as a base to move clearly and efficiently from. These essential tools in training are a collection of ideas from study in anatomy, pilates, Gyrotonic® / Gyrokinesis®, neuromuscular therapy, personal training, and exercises in visualization.

Composition

Composition classes supply the fundamental tools to construct dances based on space, time, architecture, movement invention, structure, motif and narrative. We will work individually and collaboratively to discover our directorial voices and mine aesthetic preferences with freedom to explore and experiment. Dancers will explore varied techniques to communicate their ideas including sourcing from various artistic mediums to choreographic with specific intention and purpose. Students are given prompts such as self-identity portraits, "my turn your turn" partnering strategies and methods to build larger ensemble structures. Through these exercises, we transfer our inspirations into clear and dynamic vision. After the creation stage, we will discuss the works we create in a supportive environment in relation to what we see, and what meaning, theme, or content we may infer from our observations.

Coaching and Personal Development

In this work we examine the source of our choices, action, and conversations. Dancers explore their own mental constructs and conversations as a means to identify limitations and move beyond them. The recognition that mental patterns inform our artistic and personal self-expression gives dancers power and responsibility of their participation in the classroom, on-stage and in life.

Modern Technique and Horton

The Horton and Modern technical work trains dancers to use their natural, structural alignment to explore full movement potential. In this class alignment and structure of the body are used for increased efficiency and freedom of movement. Using classic techniques dancers will refine movement quality through repetitious training of the key muscle groups needed to execute this work.

Personal Class Process and Development

This class is designed to help students at a pre-professional to professional level to gain a new perspective on the definition of training, and obtain the maximum benefit of every class they take, as each class is an opportunity to move forward in personal and professional goals. It is easy to get lost in the day-to-day marathon of dance class and miss out on important opportunities for growth while partaking in any training program, and training is as much of a mental discipline as physical. Every dancer is capable of building their own skill set for bringing mental strength to their dance training, in and out of the studio.

Class will be run with a standard open class format, with a warm-up and combination, but interspersed with discussion points and tasks meant to challenge and bring forth fresh perspectives on getting the most out of every single class: Being able to enter each class as a blank slate, with a clear objective and open mind, and leave each class feeling like they have accomplished something, no matter what happened in the studio. Self-reflection, positive mindset, listening-skills, finding JOY in being uncomfortable and challenged, and exercises for staying focused and getting out of your head will be among the topics discussed in class. Over the course of a semester, students will be continually challenged to bring these new ideas into their other classes to begin building their own individual strategy for approaching training from the healthiest possible mindset. Open discussion in class each week will involve group brainstorming for reflection from their experience in the past week's classes, and strategies for the upcoming week. All students are welcome to express their thoughts and opinions and bring their most authentic selves to the room!

Curricular Breakdown Cont.

Supplemental Curriculum

GYROKINESIS®

Yoga

Approach to artistry and performance

Nutrition

Goal Setting

Sample Schedule

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
9am - 10am Coaching (Calen)	Ballet	10am - 11am Reading/Coaching	Ballet
10am - 12am Horton (Elani)	Anatomy	11am - 12pm Conditioning	Conditioning
12pm - 2pm Contemp. Mech. (Calen)		12pm - 2pm Contemp. Mech.	Jumps/Turns

Workshops

We will provide a series of guest instructors throughout each year that we feel best augments the lessons being taught for the duration of the program. This includes but is not limited to courses in nutrition, audition prep, movement master classes, improv, and special skills.

Projects

Projects will be given throughout the year as a means to challenge the mind and creative skills of each artist. The work is considered out of class time, with an expectation of completion of work as personal study. The projects include skills in research, writing, presentations, and choreography. Each project is used as a means of personal development in individual skill sets, and individual coaching.

Readings and Mindset Coaching

Several books will be read throughout the year as a collective, followed by worksheets, group discussions, and personal coaching. Many references will be made in classes as a means of bringing all information together between mind, body, and personal approach to training.

Productions

There will be a spring showcase at the end of the year that students from both years will participate. Second years will have additional performance opportunities throughout the year.

Tuition and Fees

Annual Tuition: 8 months (two semesters) - \$8,750.

Application Fee: \$60

Tuition schedule

There will be a \$1500 non-refundable deposit due at the time of acceptance into the program. 50% of the balance for the entire tuition is due 8 weeks prior to the start of the program with the remaining 50% tuition due at the start of the Program.

*Should a student demonstrate considerable financial need, the school will consider arranging a payment plan on a case-by-case basis. Additional fees apply.

Admission Information

Admission Requirements

Students must be available for a 16 month commitment September 2015-May 2016 and 2 September 2016-May 2017 dancers must be 17 years of age as of the time of their enrollment.

All dancers must be at the intermediate level and have had a minimum of 5 years of consecutive technical training.

All dancers must either audition in person or meet all the requirements for an electronic submission.

If submitting an electronic application dancers may be asked to meet with the program directors in person to complete the application process if deemed necessary.

Housing

Students will be responsible for providing their own housing. The program directors can help direct them to housing resources in the city if necessary.

Calendar

September 14	Start date
October 30 - Nov 1	First set of Evaluations
November 25 - 27	No Classes for Thanksgiving
December 18	Last day of first Semester
January 18	First day of Second Semester
February 26-28	Second Evaluation
March 27 - April 3	No Classes Spring Break
April 15-17	Third Evaluation
April 25 - 29	Invite Days
May 14 and 15	Year End Show

Withdrawal and Refund Policy

Students will be considered enrolled until official withdrawal or they are asked to withdraw by one of the program Co-Directors. To withdraw from the Training Program before or during the program students must contact the Training Program Director and submit their departure notice and declare an official withdrawal date.

Refund Policy

Students who withdraw more than 8 weeks prior to the start date of the Program will receive a full refund. Students who withdraw less than 8 weeks prior to the start date of the Program or during the first 30 days of the Program will be eligible for 50% refund of tuition and will be refunded within 45 days of the official withdrawal date.

Students who withdraw after the first 30 days of the Program will not be eligible to receive any refund.

Application fees are non-refundable.

Attendance Policy

Excellent attendance is a crucial part of the learning process and is expected by all students to ensure they receive the education they need to become professionals in this field. All dancers are expected to:

- a) come to class for all scheduled classes
- b) arrive to class on time,
- c) come to class prepared
- d) come to class ready to participate.

The pushing progress Contemporary Training Program will be divided into Semesters

September 15 - December 18

January 19 - March 6 - April 24

Rehearsal period: April 27-May 15

Absences Policy

1. Students are allowed no more than 2 unexcused absences per semester
2. If a student is in excess of 5 absences in a semester they will be asked to leave the training program.

Excused Absences vs. Unexcused Absences

For an absence to be excused students must submit a request in writing to the training program director within 24 hours of the absence by sending an email with the word "Absence" in the subject line as well as a doctor's note in sickness or injury cases. The email must provide the time and date of the absence and a list of classes that will be missed. Some absences may not be approved and it is up to the discretion of the director what will be considered an excused absence. Any absence for which no email is submitted will be counted as an unexcused absence. Ex: If a student is feeling sick enough to stay home but does not send a Student Absence email and does not have a doctor's note, he/she is not excused.

Things that will never be considered excused absences:

- auditions
- jobs
- unexpected trips home that are not due to a family member in danger
- vacations
- personal days
- classes or workshops NOT hosted by Pushing Progress Contemporary Dance

Injuries or Sickness

In the case of serious, long-term injury/illness, due to which the student is no longer able to participate in class(es), the student must submit a written note declaring injury/illness from a doctor or physical therapist. It is at the discretion of the training program to recommend withdrawal from the Program if a serious, long-term injury/illness is detrimental not only to the student benefiting from participation in the Program but also to their health and well-being.

Make-Up Classes

Dancers will be asked to submit a list of potential make up classes that correspond to the classes missed to the program director. They will then be instructed on which classes are approved and will need to be made up within two weeks of the absence. Failure to do so will mean the absence will be marked as unexcused.

Rehearsal Period

Once we enter the final 3 weeks of the program absences of any kind will not be permitted. Should you need to be absent for a medical reason you will need to submit a doctors note verifying your inability to attend rehearsal. If you miss any part of rehearsal the directors have the right to pull you from the final performance should they see fit.

Dress Code

All classes will require:

Women: leotard and tights or close fitting shorts/or leggings and proper footwear which includes ballet shoes for ballet.
Men: Tank or close fitting t-shirt. Tights or close fitting shorts. Proper footwear which includes ballet shoes for ballet.

Close fitting warm up attire will be permitted if the weather deems necessary.

- Baggy shirts and baggy sweat pants are not allowed.
- No distracting prints, colors, or labels.

Hair is always to be kept up, neat and away from the face unless otherwise directed.

Undergarments must be neatly concealed under dance clothes. Men must wear dance belts for all classes and rehearsals.

*This dress code will be strictly enforced. If you come to class unprepared you will not be allowed to participate in class and you will be required to make up the classes of the day.

Rules of Conduct

Please remember that, even in this age of technology, it is common courtesy to silence (and ignore) personal electronic devices as soon as you walk into a classroom. All students will be required to have a notebook and to bring it to class daily as there will be journaling work on a regular basis. Phones, iPads and laptops will not be acceptable as a replacement for a notebook.

Evaluations

Students performance will be evaluated regularly and will participate in 4 review sessions during each year. They will be asked to answer a series of self evaluative questions and set goals to help them in getting the most out their experience in the program.

Year I Evaluation Schedule (One 45 minute appt during this time frame)

October 20-24

December 15- 19

February 16 - 20

April 13- 17