



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027

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MID-COLUMBIA BALLET

WELCOME TO TRI-CITIES ACADEMY OF BALLET AND MUSIC

We are honored to share in your child's ballet education and are committed to providing exceptional classical ballet training in an environment that is both nurturing and inspiring. Our goal is to cultivate not only technical excellence but also character, artistry, and a lifelong appreciation for the discipline and beauty of dance, and joy of music.

At TCAB, we believe that ballet is a powerful vehicle for personal growth. Through dedicated training, students develop confidence, resilience, self-discipline, respect, and perseverance—qualities that serve them both inside and outside the studio. We are committed to helping every student reach their fullest potential while experiencing the joy and fulfillment that dance can bring.

This Handbook has been created to help students and families understand the policies, expectations, and standards that guide our school. We encourage parents and students to read it together before classes begin. A shared understanding of these guidelines helps create a positive, respectful, and successful learning environment for everyone. Enrollment at TCAB signifies your agreement to uphold the policies and expectations outlined in this handbook.

We are grateful that you have entrusted TCAB with your child's ballet education. Our faculty is dedicated to providing the highest standard of instruction while encouraging every dancer to grow with confidence, integrity, and purpose. We look forward to partnering with your family and celebrating each student's progress throughout the year.

Debra & Joel Rogo

PROGRAMS & SCHOOL INFORMATION

With a desire to support and encourage our students, while providing them with the highest caliber of training possible, we have created dance, music and pre-school programs. The programs are designed to guide students through their entire training process, but students can join at any time.

BALLET:

CHILDREN'S DIVISION (ages 3-6 or 7) The focus of our Children's Division (Pre-Ballet 3, 4, 5 and Elementary) is to support children in exploring movement, music and their imagination, all the while developing a better ability to focus and interact in a group environment. As students' progress through the levels, not only are they exposed to basic classical ballet steps and vocabulary, but they also begin to follow the structure of a "real" ballet class.

PRIMARY DIVISION The entry level (Light Blue) in our Primary Division is open to new students ages 7 and up, as well as students who have progressed through our Children's Division. Although this level can come only once per week, we recommend 2 classes per week for optimum growth. A placement class is required for new students entering our Purple, Turquoise, or Royal levels. Students will progress through the levels within our Primary Division. Advancement is based on many factors, with the primary one being the dancer's understanding of and ability to perform the material at their current level safely and correctly. This, along with the student's level of maturity and commitment, is considered above all other things. It is not unusual for a student to repeat a level of training. Requirements vary by level. The TCAB Summer Intensive Workshops are highly recommended for advancement.

STUDENT DIVISION A placement class is required for new students entering our Student Division. Requirements vary by level, but at this point in the training we start to introduce additional genres of

movement beyond ballet. The additional technique in modern, contemporary, tap, and musical theatre classes provide focused, intensive training to help these dancers progress more quickly and achieve their goals, all within our comprehensive curriculum. For the 2026/2027 school year we have six levels – Navy 1, 2, 3, and Hunter 1A, 1B & 2. The Summer Intensive Workshops are highly recommended and essential for advancement. Children in the Student Division will be invited to audition for the Mid-Columbia Ballet Junior or Intermediate companies.

PRE-PROFESSIONAL DIVISION A placement class is required for new students entering our Pre-Professional Division. Requirements vary by level. For the 2026/2027 school year we have two levels: Black 1 & 2. Summer Intensive Workshops are essential. The additional technique and modern, contemporary, tap, and musical theatre classes provide focused, intensive training to help these dancers progress more quickly and achieve their goals, all within our comprehensive curriculum. Dancers in the Pre-Professional Division will be invited to audition for the Mid-Columbia Ballet senior companies.

ADDITIONAL CLASSES: We offer additional classes beyond our structured ballet progression: Adult Ballet, Hip Hop in two different age groups, an intermediate tap class and Musical Theatre for different age groups: adults, a Middle/High School class and children's classes starting at age 6.

STUDENT TEACHING INTERN PROGRAM:

This program is a structured mentorship pipeline designed to transition upper-level dancers into confident, effective dance educators, as a well-designed internship bridges the gap between *executing* technique and *teaching* it—training interns in pedagogy, anatomy, class management, and musicality under the guidance of TCAB faculty.

PERFORMING ARTS PRE-SCHOOL:

The TCAB Performing Arts Preschool offers 2 sessions: a 3 day - Tues, Wed, Thu mornings (9:00am-11:30am) for 3–5-year-olds & a 4 day - Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu afternoons (12:00pm-2:30pm) for 4–6-year-olds. Please refer to the Performing Arts Preschool Handbook for the for additional information.

MUSIC:

At TCAB we currently offer 30-minute private lessons for Piano, Guitar and Voice lessons

Piano: we accept children at 6 years old in private piano lessons, as they have begun to develop longer attention spans and can retain material with ease.

Guitar: we accept children at 8 years old in private guitar lessons.

Voice: The youngest age for private vocal lessons is typically around 8 years old.

Registration is \$40 per family, and tuition is \$160 per installment and is due on the 5th of each month.

EVALUATION & ADVANCEMENT PROCEDURES

Children's Division students are advanced by age, while dancers in our Primary, Student & Pre-Professional Divisions are promoted based on ability and maturity. It is not unusual for a student to remain in a level for more than one year. Students who are inconsistent in their classes or take long periods of time off (for example, during the summer) often will repeat a level. Each student is unique and advancement is based on their individual ability and maturity. The stronger the dancer's fundamentals are the further they will go with their dancing. Sometimes it will appear to the parents and/or student that they are not moving fast enough or being left behind, but this is not the case, for some children it just takes longer. Staff meetings are held monthly to discuss our students' progress. Students can be promoted anytime during the school year, but typically promotions happen upon the completion of a school year. If you wish to discuss your child's progress, please make an

appointment. It is never an appropriate time or location to have this discussion in the hallway or studio before, after or between classes. Students will receive Fall placements towards the end of Summer.

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION & BENEFITS

REGISTERING FOR CLASSES

Students can register in person at our studio, or online at www.tricitiesacademy.com. Our website provides all necessary forms as well as online enrollment access. Please contact us with any questions. By enrolling online you are registering for the entire Season (ie., Academic School year or Summer Season). The Season tuition is billed in installments as outlined in the season's registration information.

CLASS PLACEMENT

We accept new students throughout the year, provided space is available in the requested class(es). New students with previous training should schedule a placement class for the purpose of evaluation by the staff, and they will be carefully placed in the level that best matches their technical ability. Introductory Program classes are based on age with some exceptions. Please contact the office with questions.

ATTENDANCE & MAKE UP CLASSES

Ballet is a very disciplined art form that requires a high level of commitment from both the student and their family. Students are expected to attend all their classes, and those who regularly miss classes don't have the opportunity to achieve the level of growth that consistent training fosters. If a student is unable to attend a class or rehearsal, the student or parent needs to call or email the studio to let us know not to expect them.

- Make-up classes can be fulfilled at the same level, or at a lower level.
- If an absence is anticipated, the make-up can be taken in advance of the absence.

NO CREDITS OR REFUNDS WILL BE GIVEN FOR UNATTENDED CLASSES.

WAIT LISTS To be placed on a wait list for a class that is full, simply complete a Registration Form or log on to our online enrollment system and attempt to enroll in the class. You will be placed on the wait list. If /when a spot becomes available, students on the list will be contacted via email, or called. If they are not confirmed and enrolled within 48 hours the spot will be offered to the next student on the list.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

TUITION COMMITMENT

Enrollment is for the entire Season in which your dancer is enrolled. Tuition is based on a school year (Sept - June) and is divided into 8 equal payments. The 1st payment at the time of enrollment and Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr & May on the 5th of each month (No December or June payments). Tuition payments cover weeks of actual "active" class time. All studio breaks are factored into the tuition, and you are not charged for these closures. Accounts are credited for school holidays. Tuition is prorated for dancers starting mid-season. Tuition is non-refundable. No credits will be given for unattended classes. Remember, you are paying for your child's place in the class and are responsible for that tuition.

REGISTRATION AND OTHER FEES

There is a \$40.00 registration fee per family. Registration is online with a credit card or from your bank account. In the fall you are signing up for the full school year.

Tuition withdrawals are taken out of your account on the 5th of each month or on the next business day

DISCOUNTS

Family discount of 20% for 2nd and subsequent children for dance classes only.
There is a 20% discount on additional classes.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY & PROCEDURE

You can withdraw at any time. If you withdraw before the 15th of the month, you are out at the end of that month. If you withdraw after the 15th of the month you will be charged until the end of the following month.

April is the last month you can withdraw.

- **WRITTEN NOTICE MUST BE GIVEN:** Parent/Guardian must submit their Withdrawal Request in writing via email to registrar.tricitiesacademy@gmail.com.
- Keep in mind – if we are not notified of your dancer's withdrawal, you will be responsible for tuition payments whether your child attends class or not.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

Accounts that are overdue for more than 45 days will result in the student being temporarily removed from classes, until brought current or a payment plan is agreed upon. If a payment plan has not been established after 60 days of delinquency, the student will be dropped from all classes and the account sent to our collection agency.

TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT BY STUDIO TCAB reserves the right to accept or deny registration forms and may cancel registration at any time without notice. In such case, and if necessary, a refund will be issued within 5-7 business days.

POLICIES & GUIDELINES

LIABILITY RELEASE

Dance training and the athletic exercises associated with it place unusual stress on the body and carry the risk of physical injury, and I understand that good dance training involves touching and adjustment of the student's body by the instructor. When you enroll yourself or your child, you assume the risk and agree that the Tri-Cities Academy of Ballet and Music (TCAB), its principals, teachers, and staff shall not be liable in any way for injuries sustained during attendance at the dance school or any of its related functions. As the legal parent or guardian, you release and hold harmless Tri-Cities Academy of Ballet and Music (TCAB), its principals, teachers, and staff from any and all liability, claims, demands, and causes of action whatsoever, arising out of or related to any loss, damage, or injury, including death, that may be sustained by the participant, while in or upon the premises or any premises under the control and supervision of TCAB, its principals, teachers, and staff or in route to or from any of said premises.

PUBLICITY RELEASE

You authorize the Tri-Cities Academy of Ballet and Music (TCAB) to record the student's picture and voice on photographs, films, DVD's, and tapes, and to use these recordings at its discretion, and to incorporate these recordings into movie and sound films on tapes, DVD's, radio, television, and broadcast programs. You also give your permission for TCAB to use and license others to use these materials in any manner or media whatsoever. TCAB is permitted to use these materials for publicity, advertising and sales promotion and to use the student's name, likeness and voice and biographic or other information in connection with them. You acknowledge that no promises of compensation will be made by TCAB for such use.

MEDICAL RELEASE

In the event that you cannot be reached, you give permission to the management, faculty, staff and chaperones of the Tri-Cities Academy of Ballet (TCAB) to authorize any emergency medical care that may be required by the student during participation, in classes, performances, or any related TCAB events. This authorization extends throughout the current academic year and throughout the summer workshops or until the student is no longer enrolled at TCAB, whichever comes first. You understand that you are responsible for any and all charges as a result of such care or medical treatment.

ILLNESS POLICY

PLEASE be conscientious and do your best to not bring illness into the studio! If your child is not feeling well, they SHOULD NOT attend class.

- Children with fever, vomiting, or diarrhea need to stay home. A fever is 100.4 or higher.
- If your child has a fever, has vomited, or has had diarrhea TODAY, they may NOT attend TOMORROW
- If you need to medicate to “get them through the day”, they should not come to class that day.

LATE ARRIVAL • If you are late to class, DON'T OPEN THE DOOR AND JOIN THE CLASS without approval from your teacher. Please WAIT until the teacher invites you into the studio.

- If your child will be more than 10 minutes late, please call to schedule a makeup class, unless arrangements were made in advance and approved by the instructor (under extraordinary circumstances).

DROP OFF & PICK UP OF STUDENTS

We want everyone to remain safe when coming to and from our classes. Remember that we often have young teenage drivers present. When dropping off young students the safest situation is for you to walk your child to our front door. Dancers may be dropped off up to 15 minutes before the start of their first class and must be picked up within 15 minutes after their final class of the day. Please be on time, if you arrive more than 15 minutes after the end of your child's class, the staff must remain in the building past expectation. We understand that delays in pick-ups and emergency situations do happen. Please call the studio if this occurs.

PARKING

The parking lot at Tri-Cities Academy of Ballet and Music can be very congested at peak times (esp. 5pm and 6pm). We ask that you be patient, careful, and safe. After 5pm and on weekends, we have permission to use the parking lot at Abadan (on the other side of the mini storage). It is a very short and safe walk.

OBSERVATION & LOBBY GUIDELINES All our studios have viewing windows, where parents are welcome to observe any scheduled classes. Parents, PLEASE be aware of your influence and possible distraction and observe accordingly. Please do not disrupt your dancer by tapping on the windows. We are responsible for the students during their class(es); however, the parent/guardian is responsible for their behavior and safety before/after class. Children must always be supervised.

COMMUNICATION The TCAB registrar is available during class times to provide assistance. We also answer or return calls and emails throughout the day Monday through Saturday. We are happy to take time to answer questions and give our parents and students the attention they deserve. Parents are encouraged to contact us to discuss any questions or concerns through email or phone. An email, appointment, or phone call will be set up in response. Please allow 48 hours for a response. Email is our main form of communication. Please take time to read all emails that you receive from us. Remember: you can have more than one email address associated with your account. Please monitor the TCAB website, Facebook, and emails for important information. We ask that you read

each correspondence thoroughly and inform us of any changes in your email address, home, or mobile phone numbers or home address and please be sure to add us to your contact list.

IMPORTANT: If you mark one of our emails as “SPAM” our system will put you on a DO NOT EMAIL list. If you suddenly stop getting emails from us, please check in! If you’ve been “blocked” we can fix it. We post updates and important info on our Bulletin Board - near the front door.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & POSITIVE SUPPORT

Parents play an important role in their child's development. We encourage you to expose your dancer to live performances, books, videos, and other forms of art to help inspire their love of dance. Please encourage your child to listen carefully to corrections and apply them consistently—this is one of the fastest ways to improve. We also ask that parents avoid coaching, correcting, or disciplining students from the viewing windows. Students make the greatest progress when learning directly from their instructors. Encouraging regular stretching at home is always appreciated. Finally, we ask that families refrain from negative discussions about TCAB, its students, or staff in the studio, parking lot, or on social media. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact TCAB directly so we can address them promptly.

PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEOS, SOCIAL MEDIA, SECURITY FOOTAGE

- TCAB shares announcements, photos, videos, and studio news through our website, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. We encourage all families to follow us for the latest updates.
- Please help us keep our dancers focused and protected. Thank you for respecting our dancers' space! For the privacy of all students and their families, no video recording or photography is permitted through observation windows or inside the studios without prior faculty approval.
- We have a photo booth area for you to take your child's photos, please tag TCAB in your socials.
- During Observation Weeks parents and guests are welcome to observe designated classes, but cameras must remain off, except when invited by faculty to film.
- For the safety of our students and staff, surveillance cameras are located throughout public areas in the building.

CODE OF CONDUCT

It is the policy of TCAB to promote a healthy and positive environment for all students and staff. Students are expected to behave in a responsible manner and should always show exemplary conduct. Students, staff, faculty, and volunteers should always be treated with respect. TCAB reserves the right to dismiss any student whose conduct is found to be unsatisfactory. The following are prohibited at TCAB:

- Verbal harassment, physical threats or intimidation, acts of violence of any kind
- Alcohol or drugs of any kind (students and parents alike)
- Theft, destruction of school property or property of others
- Firearms or weapons of any kind
- Smoking: No smoking is allowed in our building, on our property.
- Inappropriate use of the internet, social media, or cell phones (onsite photography or videography).

TCAB reserves the full authority to enforce the Code of Conduct and violation of any of these rules will lead to immediate disciplinary action. Actions may include (but are not limited to) dismissal from the program, suspension, probation, or Police and/or Child Protective Services report.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

TCAB does not discriminate against and admits students of any race, national or ethnic origin, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, or sexual orientation in any of its activities or operations to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities. We are committed to an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, students, volunteers, and patrons.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

- Out of respect to the studio and classroom space, and for safety reasons, dancers should not enter the classroom before the teacher invites them in – even if the door is open.
- Talking in class is not allowed. Hands should be raised when there is a question for the teacher.
- Gum is never allowed in the studios.
- Students in Primary Division and above are expected to confine trips to the restroom to the break between barre and center work, except in cases where leaving is unavoidable, in which case the student (when returning) should wait at the door until the class is in between barre exercises.
- If a student needs to leave class early, please let the teacher know prior to the start of class. At the given time, the student should thank the teacher and then quietly leave.
- Throughout the class, the instructor gives “corrections” to the students. Students should not interpret these corrections to suggest that they are not doing well, but rather they are a means of progressing in this art form. All corrections apply to everyone. Corrections, even when given to a single student, should be worked on and applied by the entire class.

DRESS CODE

BALLET: All students are expected to maintain a clean, neat appearance and to abide by the Dress Code guidelines outlined for their level.

HAIR: Hair must be TIDY, UP and AWAY from the dancer’s face in a bun. We begin working on turning with our youngest dancers. Hair that is not properly secured is very distracting, continually gets in the dancer’s face and eyes, and can cause the dancer to develop bad habits, such as blinking and neck tension.

HIP HOP: Solid color shirt or leotard and black shorts or leggings & tennis shoes

TAP: Solid color shirt or leotard and black shorts or leggings & tap shoes

MUSICAL THEATRE: Solid color shirt or leotard and black shorts or leggings & jazz shoes

CANCELLED CLASSES/EXTREME WEATHER POLICY & FORCED CLOSURE

Classes with insufficient enrollment may be canceled, and a refund issued.

Extreme weather, “Snow Days,” or events beyond our control such as power outages can cause closure. In these instances, if a makeup class is offered, no credit or refund will be issued. Please check our website, Instagram, or Facebook page if you think classes may be canceled.

SUMMER TRAINING GUIDE

Summer is a transformative period in a young dancer’s development. While the academic year focuses on steady, continuous improvement, the summer is where rapid growth and technical breakthroughs happen.

Why a Summer Intensive is Essential

By immersing themselves in a full day of quality training, students experience:

- **Rapid Technical Advancement:** The "compounding effect" of daily, high-frequency training leads to breakthroughs in stamina, strength, and precision.
- **Confidence & Artistry:** Moving beyond the mechanics of "steps" to find their unique artistic voice.
- **A Professional Foundation:** For those dreaming of a career, these programs are the first essential steps on a decade-long journey toward mastery.

Our Recommendation is TCAB: At TCAB, we view ballet as a "long game." We prioritize technical mastery over marketing, and we caution families against programs that focus more on short-term excitement than long-term growth.

Beware the "Social Media" Intensive: In today's dance world, many programs are run by social media influencers with high-end marketing teams. While these programs are designed for "likes" and aesthetic appeal, they often lack the pedagogical depth required for technical advancement.

We endorse Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet (CPYB): If you and your child want them to attend a program outside of TCAB and they have not yet reached the Pre-Professional Division, we believe CPYB is the premier program in the country. Since 1955, they have provided elite classical training without the distractions of modern trends. Their "Ballet Boot Camp" curriculum aligns perfectly with the TCAB syllabus, focusing on the rigorous beginning-intermediate-to-advanced growth required for future success.

Guidance for Primary & Student Division dancers

To prevent "training regression" and ensure technical consistency, TCAB remains the required summer intensive for students in the Primary & Student Division. While many programs seek to "sell" you a fun summer experience, we ask for your commitment to the TCAB path for three strategic reasons:

1. **Technical Consistency** Exposure to conflicting methods too early creates a difficult "re-learning" phase in the fall. Keeping training "under one roof" ensures students do not develop habits that conflict with our syllabus. We endorse CPYB specifically because their methodology mirrors our own.
2. **Strategic Financial Investment** Summer intensives are a significant investment. We encourage families to save resources right now, so they are available during the Senior Company years. At that stage, "branching out" becomes a professional necessity for networking, college resumes, and career exposure.
3. **The Long-Term Vision** During these formative years, stability is the key to progress. We advocate for the path that leads to the greatest long-term success, rather than the most "convenient" or "marketed" summer option.

Making a Wise Investment

The dance world is filled with "Summer Camp" traps—programs that are highly profitable for schools and "fun" and VERY expensive. At TCAB, we want your child to have a life-changing social experience, but we also want that experience to be worth your investment. By choosing TCAB or our endorsed partner, CPYB, you aren't just paying for "dance camp" memories, you are investing in excellent instruction that results in a stronger, more confident, and technically superior dancer when they return in the fall.

ADDITIONAL STUDIO RULES

- There is NO running or rough housing permitted in our building. Please keep the level of your voice down while in the building. Please respect the ongoing classes, our Dance Boutique customers, parents watching classes, and our front desk staff.
- The Dance Boutique area is for customers and school inquiries, not a student lounge.
- No food is allowed in the studios, but dancers should bring a water bottle into class with them.
- If you eat in our hallway or lunchroom, please clean up after yourself and dispose of any food containers.
- We are not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please do not bring valuables into the building.
- Bags/personal belongings should be stored under the chairs in the hallway or in the dressing room. Items left out in the hallway will be placed in Lost & Found. Lost & Found will be purged on the 1st of each month. Please mark your child's dance clothes & shoes with their name so you can be contacted if items are found. Cell Phones must remain in dance bags with personal belongings.

RECITAL

The Tri-Cities Academy of Ballet and Music (TCAB) year-end spring recital is a community-focused celebration of dance that highlights the growth, technique, and artistic achievements of its students

Key Features of TCAB's Recital

- 100% Free to Attend: Families pay no ticket fees, making the performance highly accessible to the local community.
- No Hidden Parent Fees: Unlike many studios, TCAB does not charge mystery "recital fees," costume fees, participation fees, or music rights fees.
- Inclusive Performances: The showcase spans across age divisions, featuring the studio's youngest children's division dancers up to pre-professional levels.
- Community Partnerships: The event regularly integrates performances from the *INCLUDE* program by the Mid-Columbia Ballet, ensuring dancers of all abilities share the stage.
- Diverse Dance Styles: While rooted in classical ballet, the performance showcases skills from multiple genres taught at the studio, including contemporary, hip hop, tap, and musical theatre.

MID-COLUMBIA BALLET

TCAB & MCB are closely connected, but they are **not the same organization**.

- **Tri-Cities Academy of Ballet & Music (TCAB)** is the **dance school**. It provides ballet training and other performing arts classes for students of different ages and skill levels.
- **Mid-Columbia Ballet (MCB)** is a **501(c)(3) nonprofit performing ballet company**. Its mission is to present performances & outreach programs, promote ballet in the community, and provide pre-professional performance opportunities for talented dancers. It has been part of the Tri-Cities arts community since 1973.

Their relationship is similar to that of a **school and its affiliated performing company**:

- TCAB serves as the primary training school.
- MCB selects dancers—primarily through auditions—from students who have reached the appropriate level of training. TCAB states that its dancers have the opportunity to audition for MCB's annual season, including *The Nutcracker*.
- MCB rehearses and operates from the same facility as TCAB, and many of the artistic staff work with both organizations.

Here's a simple comparison:

Tri-Cities Academy of Ballet (TCAB) vs Mid-Columbia Ballet (MCB)

Dance school	Nonprofit ballet company
Teaches students year-round	Produces performances and outreach
Students pay tuition for classes	Supported by ticket sales, donations, grants, and volunteers
Training focus	Performance and artistic mission
Students may audition for MCB	Company members are selected dancers, many from TCAB

One of the most visible examples of the partnership is **The Nutcracker**. TCAB is the home of the Mid-Columbia Ballet and its annual production of *The Nutcracker*, which features a large cast of student dancers alongside company members and guest artists.

So, if a student trains at TCAB, a common progression is:

1. Take ballet classes at TCAB.
2. Advance through the school's curriculum.
3. Audition for Mid-Columbia Ballet when eligible.
4. Perform in MCB productions such as *The Nutcracker*, spring performances, festivals, and community outreach events.

In short, TCAB is the training academy, while MCB is the affiliated nonprofit performing company that provides advanced performance opportunities for many of TCAB's dancers.