



LEAH BRANDSTETTER – Guest Master Class Teacher

Started ballet at a young age with instructor Viorica Stampfel. In 2009 she began training at the Academy of Dance Arts under the guidance of Nick & Shayne Mishoe, Sori Gottdenker, Elaenee Nowell, and Viorica Stampfel. At the Academy, Leah has had the opportunity to participate in Master classes with dancers from Pennsylvania Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and New York City Ballet. In 2017, she went to the SLK Ballet Summer Intensive to train with Sara Knight to gain a deeper understanding of Vaganova technique--which she continues to study. Her performance experience has included original works choreographed by multiple choreographers--including Peter Leung, scenes from Don Quixote, and other classical works. Leah has been an intern at The Whole Dancer under the guidance of founder Jess Spinner. She is also more than half-way through in earning a MS in Integrative and Functional Nutrition through Saybrook University. Leah is using her knowledge and experience of nutrition, health, and fitness to help dancers be as healthy as they can be while learning ways to cope with the many body image issues dancers face. She has also started her own online nutrition & fitness coaching business. Leah continues to train in classical ballet, character, contemporary, & pilates so that she can continue to learn and grow as a dancer, artist, and teacher. She seeks to inspire her students to have a love of the discipline and art form that is dance.

Leah has been teaching with Agape for 5 years!



ANITA FERGUSON

Anita received her training and education at the Conservatoire Royal de Liege, Belgium :(Classic Jazz/Modern) 1992-1996, Bobby's: Jazz/Funk Liege, Belgium (1994-1996)) and Studio Jam Brussels, Belgium (2002-2011). She has taught in a wide variety of places starting in 1996 including Non-Profit Maison de Jeunes de Seraing in Belgium, artistic Director for the Positive Discrimination Program in Belgium, Studio Jam Brussels Belgium, Dancers Pointe Howell and Manasquan Music and Dance Academy. She has taught Hip Hop, Competition and Urban Contemporary. She was instrumental as the Hip Hop/Jazz Teacher/Choreographer, creating projects for the less fortunate kids to engage in artistic events such as making a music video, creating their own rap song, performing on stage in a theater and outside events. Collaboration with the Liege Philharmonic (music) and RTBF TV (radio and TV) to create the video. She has been instrumental in helping to introduce students to Urban contemporary, developing Hip Hop programs from 5 years – adults, and creating a style of contemporary that hip hop dancers with no ballet training felt comfortable to perform.

Her choreography and performance career is extensive and includes shows such as "Wicked Forest", Alice and Wonderland guest choreographer, "World of Lights", "Cooks", and "Gifts around the World" Choreographer/ Artistic Director, Studio Jam Youth Division Royal Yacht club in Geneva, Switzerland, and "Peter Pan" assistant Artistic Director, choreographer. She was a Member of "Jam Troop" Tour Disneyland Paris, France and Disneyland Florida Tour, Orlando Florida

She has worked with world class dancers for Justin Timberland, Brandy, Janet Jackson for local events and dance conventions in Europe.

Anita has been teaching at Agape Arts Center for 6 years!



LARAIN KAUFFMAN - Certified Special Needs Instructor

Laraine has been dancing for over 30 years and as a young teen started her training at The Joffrey Ballet School in NYC. Moving on into her HS years she was accepted into the “Fame School” Fiorello H. La Guardia HS of Performing Arts in NYC and graduated with a degree in dance. There she trained in art of Classical Ballet, Modern (Graham Technique), and Contemporary Jazz. She studied under the direction of many artists in the dance industry such as Dorothy Lister, Michelle Benash, Elisa King, Penny Frank, James Moody, and Bob Heath. Laraine also studied jazz at Horizons in Dance where she trained with Tyce Diorio who is now a world renowned choreographer. Throughout her many years of dancing Laraine has won numerous awards for her ballet solos and free style dance in competitions such as the Waldof Astoria in NYC.

After many years of dancing Laraine’s passion for the arts and her love for children drove her to train up other students in their pursuit of dance. She became a director and worked in many studios in the surrounding New Jersey area for the last 10 years teaching Martha Graham technique, ballet, jazz, and lyrical bringing her students to competitions such as Dance Moms at Starbound, Nuvo, Groove, and Revolution. Laraine’s pieces have been recognized in the dance competition world winning first place awards overall for her beautiful Martha Graham modern pieces.

Teaching dance lead her to a greater passion to work with children with various special needs. Laraine became the founder and owner of a Dance Team called “Unique Kids.” She received a certification to work with children of all ages and all abilities through a program called Rhythm Works Integrative Dance. A program that therapists and dance teachers developed together for students of all abilities. Since then she has been passionately running her program for the last 4 years taking her students to participate local performances such as the Lakewood Blueclaws, competitions such as (Starbound, Revolution), and yearly recitals. She has been recognized in the Coast Star newspaper for taking her students with special needs to their first competition ever at Starbound National Dance Competition. It is Laraine’s desire to continue to grow her Unique Kids program at Agape Arts Center so all who want to pursue dance can without any LIMITATIONS and set HIGH GOALS for themselves no matter what their abilities are!

We are thrilled to have Laraine returning to our studio after being instrumental in the early years of our studio!



MAX and IRMA SANCHEZ

Irma and Max have been teaching the Art of Salsa Dancing since 2001. The two met at a Salsa dance club where Irma was teaching beginner Salsa. Max became one of her students. They began dancing together and a year later, irMax SALSA was born. To further their knowledge of Salsa dancing, they started attending classes with Eddie Torres in NYC. They taught at a local studio in Perth Amboy owned by Jamale Graves, choreographer for C&C Music Factory. Irma and Max have choreographed first wedding dances, sweet 16 court dances and a father and daughter dance. We hope to instill in our students, respect for their partner and a love for Salsa dancing for years to come.

Irma has been an Agape Arts Center instructor for 4 years!