



tessa langley
dancer teacher choreographer



170 South University
Salt Lake City, UT 84102
972-569-7881
tchamberlainlang@att.net
tessalanglely.com



Tessa C. Langley

170 South University | Salt Lake City, UT 84102

December 6, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

Being a dance teacher is something that I love. But what is even better is having the opportunity to teach in a public school. I feel that dance can teach students a different type of discipline that is eye catching. Having grown up in DISD schools and being able to dance everyday was a great experience and I really loved my time there. Now I have graduated and I feel it is time for me to give back to the district that gave me so much. I have been teaching for seven years in various styles and settings and I have been dancing for nineteen. I am able to offer a lot in the way of teaching, including but not limited to Modern, Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Hip-Hop, Folklórico, and West African Dance. Having grown up in DISD schools, which are very diverse, I am used to working with students of all backgrounds and I am comfortable with teaching students with different styles of learning. To cater to the different learning styles I would incorporate different methods of teaching. I would really get the students involved not only in moving but in different ways of thinking as well, using tools such as writing, media, and movement. With writing I would have the students write down different steps, history of the dances that I would be teaching and taking quizzes based on that. I would use media tools such as video and power points and have the students do projects where they have to find videos and use power point for their projects. Then the obvious of having the students experience and practice the movement. I would be honored and ecstatic if I were to be accepted into this position. I look forward to hearing from you!

With best regards,

Tessa C. Langley

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Artist's Statement



Some people dance because it is something to do, or because they are good at it. But for me, dance is life. In fact, it is a way a living; a lifestyle that I have created for myself and that I am continuing to design. To lose dance would mean the loss of myself. It would mean the loss of the syncopation between the earth's natural rhythm and my movement and if that were to cease to exist I would not be as complete. Through dance so much can be conveyed; emotions, ideas, and belief. Dance is a living and breathing work of art that is constantly in motion. Visual artists use a canvas and dancers use whatever surface they can find to dance upon. I believe that dancing is not only a way for me to live but it is away for me to help others as well. Dance is a way to bring so many different people together and through dance I can reach out and others.

Because of the discipline required to dance I have become a focused person and do not stray from my objective. I do not judge myself by my accomplishments but rather by the method through which I have achieved success, for how much value can one honestly place on achievement that is unearned? I refuse to sink into the mire of self-aggrandizement. I remember to offer a small thought of thanks to those who have taught me to be strong, to believe in myself, to work hard, and to value each small success not because I am better or more talented than another, but because each was earned.

I am thankful for my ability to move and I wish to cherish and share that with everyone who wishes to understand for I believe that Stillness leads to the Depression of Mind.

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Biography



Tessa is a student at the University of Utah where she is pursuing a major in Modern Dance. She expects to receive her BFA in May 2012. In addition to her university coursework and teaching duties at Prodigy Dance in Holladay, Tessa was elected to serve as the 2011-2012 Fine Arts Assembly Representative to ASUU, the university student government and as Vice President of the BSU chapter at the university. Under the direction of Ann Carter she has been involved in teaching modern dance at Wasatch Elementary School in the fall of 2011. She has worked as a Research Assistant for the Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (RMCOEH) since the fall of 2008.

Tessa is a 2008 graduate of Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts where she received High Honors in Dance and Academic High Honors as well as the Dance Coordinator's Award. She received an Honorable Mention in West African Dance from the NFAA Presidential Scholar in the Arts competition for 2007-2008. She was a three year member of the African Dance Ensemble and was a rehearsal captain for the 2007-2008 year. Tessa was a three-year member of the National Honor Society and served as treasurer in 07-08. She was a student at Amanda's Dance Express for thirteen years and was a member of the apprenticeship program for eight years. Tessa competed with the xtremeDancers, FIRE!, and Águilas Azteca Ballet Folklórico. She was a founding member of Images Contemporary Dance Company.

She currently is teaching jazz, ballet and tap at Prodigy Dance Studio in Holladay, Utah.

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Awards

- 2009 Adrenaline Dance Crew (Independent)
- 2008 Coordinator's Choice Award (BTW)
- 2008 Graduated with High Honors Dance (BTW)
- 2008 Graduated with High Honors Academic (BTW)
- 2008 Adrenaline Dance Crew (ADX)
- 2007 NFAA Presidential Scholar in the Arts; Honorable Mention, West African
- 2006 Tremaine Studio Dancer of the Year (ADX)
- 2005-2008 National Honor Society; 2007-2008 Treasurer

Organizations

- 2011-2012 Senior Council
- 2011-2012 CMLT (Campus Ministry Leadership Team)
- 2011-2012 ASUU Fine Arts Assembly Representative
- 2011-2012 CMLT (Campus Ministry Leadership Team), Service group Leader
- 2010-2012 BSU (Black Student Union), 2011-2012 V. President
- 2005-2008 ADE (African Dance), Rehearsal Captain 2007-2008



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Education and Training



2008- 2012 University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah; Expected Graduation with a B.F.A. Modern Dance, May 2012 | G.P.A. 3.255

2004-2008 Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing & Visual Arts, Dallas, Texas; High Honors in Dance Performance; Academic High Honors

1995- 2008 Amanda's Dance Express, Grand Prairie, Texas

Master Class Instructors

Kim Abel, Ruth Andrien, Griff Braun, Nicholas Cendece, Elisa Clark, Thom Clower, Robin Connors, Dylis Croman, Linda Davis, Fred Darsow, Tyler Dvorak, Dan Edwards, Ford Evans, Nina Flagg, Titus Fotso, Jay Franke, Gus Giordanno, Melissa Glasgow, Solonge Gomez, Grupo Corpo, Mauro Romualdo Mestrando Jamaica, Denise Jefferson, Holly Johnston, Jennifer Kayle, Alla Khaniashvilli, Colleen Hoelscher, Nicholas Leichter, Stephani Liapis, Kim McSwain, John Mead, Maputo Mensah, Mawue Mensah, Momix Dancers, Ceyhun Ozoy, Pilobolus Dancers, Poreotics, Dwight Rhoden, Kaye Richards, Jeff Micheal Rubedal, Mathew Rushing, Brent Schneider, Kanji Segawa, Nathan Shaw, Danielle Short, George Smallwood, Linda Smith, Christopher Vo, Aaron Wood – Ririe Woodberry Artistic Director, Myra Woodruff, Darrin Wright, Edgar Zendejas

Intensives & Workshops

2010 American College Dance Festival

2009 Adrenaline

2008 International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD)

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Performances



2008-2011 (UU) Senior Choreography Concert, Clustercuss
There's no Map for this Thing Student Choreography Concert
Première Louisiana Lullaby Senior Choreography Concert, XXI
Somewhere Between Graduate Salon Concert **Breaking Dishes**
Adrenaline Dance Crew

2004 – 2008 (BTW, ADX) Senior Choreography Concert **Première**
Kihikihi (choreographer) **Senior Showcase** Rassambleman, Sunnu,
Sinte (soloist) **On Stage! At the Eisman** Sorsonet (soloist and
drummer) Apple Bottom Jeans **New Works Concert** **Première**
Yankadi & Makru **Repertory Workshop** **Première** Where Old
Meets New (short film, dancer) **Dance for the Planet** Sorsonet
(soloist and drummer), Coin Operated Boy, Maneater, FIRE!
Young Audiences of North Texas Under Big Thought, Dance
Africa, Senior Choreography Concert **Première** Epiphany
(principal) **Senior Showcase** Sorsonet, Mandiani **Evening of**
Dance, On Stage! At The Latino Cultural Center, Evening of ADE
Kou Kou (soloist), Sorsonet (Soloist and Drummer) **Repertory**
Workshop Sunnu **Dance For The Planet** **Première** **Portals South**
Dallas Dance Festival **Première** Burdens Duo **TOTA (Taste of the**
Arts) Tiriba **South Dallas Dance Festival** **Première** My Troubled
Resting Place **Choreographers' Showcase** **Première** Expect Delays
Dance for the Planet **Première** Plague

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Tessa has been sought out to perform the choreography of

Denise Bailey, Belle Baggs, **Pam Chu**, Jonathan Campbell, **Moussa Diabate**, Chuck Davis, **Nick DiNicolangelo**, Chris DuPree, **Laurie Johnson**, Chloé Langley, **Garfield Lemonius**, Chelsea McCall Lujan, **Joey Tarwater**, Sonya Tayeh, **Amanda Thomas**, Camille Thompson, **Keith Thompson**, Lily Cabatu Weiss, and **Nick Zborowski**

Work Experience

- 2011-2012 ASUU Fine Arts Assembly Representative (UU)
Vice-President BSU (UU)
- Fall 2011 Wasatch Elementary School (UU) – Through my Elementary Teaching Methods class, under the direction of Ann Carter; I taught at Wasatch Elementary School in a group with one other student. We taught 4 classes.
- 2009-Present Prodigy Dance Studio, Holladay, Utah – Teacher, Beg-Intermediate Tap, Jazz 1-2, Hip Hop Kindergarten-4th grade, Ballet 2
- 2008-Present Work Study (UU) – Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (RMCOEH) Research Assistant
- Summer 2008 Amanda’s Dance Express, Grand Prairie, Texas – Teacher for Hip Hop and Substitute Teacher (All company and recreational levels ballet, tap, jazz, modern, Hip Hop); Office Assistant
- 2004-2008 Amanda’s Dance Express, Grand Prairie, Texas – Company Rehearsal Director, Teacher for preschool through high school, (ballet, jazz, tap, lyrical/contemporary); Substitute Teacher (all company and recreational levels ballet, tap, jazz, modern); Office Assistant

Teaching Philosophy

Being a teacher means a lot to me. I love performing and learning as well and they are very dear to me, but teaching is special. I love teaching because it gives me the opportunity to enrich and enliven others; children and adults alike. It's truly rewarding when dancers are excited about learning because it gives you a sense of satisfaction and a willingness and eagerness to teach them. I would love to be a teacher of all dance disciplines. To teach all I know and am continuing to learn from the technical forms to the ethnic forms including West African dance which I have been granted permission to teach by Moussa Diabate.

Dance has such a deep and rich history that one can only scratch the surface of in one lifetime. Not only is the dance technique important but the history of the dance is of equal importance. For instance, many young people are excited to learn Hip Hop but the fact that it is derived from African dance forms is important as well.

Too many teachers today are specialty teachers who are qualified to teach just one discipline. Especially in the public school environment it is important for dance teachers to have a well-rounded and eclectic background in many different dance disciplines. Just as every dancer will not choose to be a prima ballerina...not all forms of dance are of equal interest to young dancers. As an educator, it is the dance teacher's responsibility to share a solid, general knowledge of many dance forms and history with their students and to leave them not necessarily with a desire to become a dancer but with an appreciation and understanding of the art.

Not only is the appreciation of dance as an art form important to share with students, but the study of the history of modern forms is an opportunity to spread awareness of other peoples and cultures and how they relate to young people today. I believe that the more people know about each other, the less likely it is that they will have problems with each other and they will respect each other better. So many times people judge others without knowing more about them, or they think that they know a lot when in fact all they "know" is hearsay and gossip. It's just like the telephone game.

Although I feel a generalist background is important in the public school environment, there is obviously a place for teachers with specialized backgrounds. One type of specialty teacher is a creative dance teacher. Which brings up the question, what is creative dance? There isn't really one exact definition of what creative dance is. But if I had to pick one I would have to say that creative dance is moving organically and allowing the students to explore without fear of being right or wrong. It isn't really technical, but it is about process. I feel this is really beneficial for children because it forces them to have to think more about what they are doing, why they are doing it, and how they are doing it. It gives them a different way of thinking than the standard logical process they learn in Math and English.

Teaching Philosophy

Dance, and all art disciplines, is important to have in a school setting today. The study of art is a study in the creative process. Creativity is the basis of all the spectacular advances in math and science made throughout history. We would not have wheels if someone hadn't watched a round stone roll across the ground and imagined what they could do with that action. Creativity and imagination is the basis of all great invention and what better way for students to practice than through the study of an art form like dance.

The study of art and in particular dance is not easy. It requires dedication and discipline. It is hard physical work. These principles are important for all students to master. In many instances learning and school has been made too easy. Healthy competition has been eliminated. Students have been babied and the result is an undisciplined approach to life and learning. Is it any wonder that the academic progress of our students is lagging? The fault though does not lie entirely with the school system. Although being a champion for their children is important; parents today have become much too adept at making excuses for them. Too often teachers are accused of being too mean or teaching subjects that are too hard or for expecting too much from their students. Dance can't solve that problem but I think it can help and challenge the kids and get them thinking. Not every dancer can be the Sugar Plum Fairy. Some dancers need to be the mice too. A child who doesn't necessarily get the part they want or they believe they deserve is given an opportunity to reflect on why Sally got "their" part and hopefully to emulate her hard work in their own study.

I came from a school district that values the arts and I went to a arts magnet program which was doubly good. I was constantly challenged on a daily basis to work harder; to practice discipline; and to think creatively in every class whether it was science, math or dance class. I joke with my mom when she asks me how college. I've often said that "wow, high school was way harder than college." This is not to say that my college experience has not been amazingly challenging but that my public high school education really prepared me for. So I would have to say that yes, dance and other art forms are very integral parts of education today. Art not only challenges students but they can learn while having fun and it gives them a means to express themselves in another way and get their brains thinking in a less cookie cutter way.

I started teaching at 15 so I was still a kid myself but I had a lot I could offer my students. I started demonstrating in classes when I was 9 and began assisting when I was 12. When my Hip Hop teacher was picked as a Dallas Maverick's dancer, the studio director had to find a replacement for her on the night she would be rehearsing. Since I'd been working with her for several years as her assistant I had to suck it up...go into class...and substitute teach a room full of middle school students. I was so nervous. I had assisted enough to have a good idea of what I

Teaching Philosophy

was doing. What I didn't know was that the class was my "audition" as a teacher. The owner of the studio stood outside the class and listened to the comments from the parents and watched me teach. At the end of class she heard the kids saying they loved it and then she asked if I would be willing to teach this class for the rest of the year. I said "Yes Ma'am I would."

Kids are full of surprises. That's all that really needs to be said. They will continue to amaze you if you let them. The dancers I teach now are constantly surprising me with their eagerness to learn and how hard they practice to get the trickiest of combinations or the hardest of steps. It makes me happy seeing them be able to do things that are difficult. The sky is the limit. I would rather challenge them not to the point where the goal is unattainable but to where it's difficult enough that they earn a true sense of accomplishment. My dancers learn quickly I think in part because I have faith in them and their ability to master new skills and also because they are happy to see me proud of what they've learned.

Kids are so fun to teach and they are little balls of energy and joy and also a little crazy. But what I really love is being able to teach them something and seeing the look on their faces when they get it right. Or when they run up to me at the end of class and wrap their little arms around me and tell me I am the best teacher ever. It makes me feel good that I can share something with them. I have taught kids with special needs before and they work just as hard as their peers and make outstanding progress. They do not let their disabilities hold them back and they aren't afraid of looking or being different. The mom of a non-verbal little boy with autism that I taught told me she could tell he loved it because he would run to the studio. I taught a girl with Down Syndrome who worked so hard in class and did so well that most people didn't realize she had special needs. Another little girl had started going deaf and blind shortly after she started dancing. But her face would light up when she danced and she took class with everyone else. I had to do more hands on with her and let her feel on me what she was supposed to do, but by concert time she was up on stage with her friends dancing her heart out. I have a little girl I teach now who has speech anxiety and refuses to talk except to certain people and even then it's a whisper. I have seen so much improvement since she started taking class. She greets me when she comes in; talks to her classmates and rushes to raise her hand and answer questions. Her mom has been shocked with how much improvement she has made in such a short time. It makes me feel really good knowing I was able to positively influence someone's life. Being a teacher is hard at times but it is one of the most rewarding jobs anyone can love.

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EDUCATION/ TRAINING

- 2008-2012 University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah; Expected Graduation with a B.F.A. Modern Dance, May 2012 | G.P.A. 3.255
- 2004-2008 Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing & Visual Arts, Dallas, Texas; High Honors in Dance Performance; Academic High Honors
- 1995-2008 Amanda's Dance Express, Grand Prairie, Texas

AWARDS

- 2009 Adrenaline Dance Crew (Independent)
- 2008 Coordinator's Choice Award (BTW)
- 2008 Graduated with High Honors Dance (BTW)
- 2008 Graduated with High Honors Academic (BTW)
- 2008 Adrenaline Dance Crew (ADX)
- 2007 NFAA Presidential Scholar in the Arts; Honorable Mention World Dance, West African
- 2006 Tremaine Studio Dancer of the Year (ADX)
- 2005-2008 National Honor Society 2007-2008 NHS Treasurer

ORGANIZATIONS

- 2011-2012 Senior Council
- 2011-2012 Intramural Sports; Soccer for Newmanites
- 2011-2012 ASUU Fine Arts Assembly Representative, Representative Langley
- 2011-2012 CMLT (Campus Ministry Leadership Team), Service group Leader
- 2010-2012 BSU (Black Student Union), 2011-2012 Vice President
- 2005-2008 ADE (African Dance Ensemble BTW), Rehearsal Captain 2007-2008

COURSEWORK – UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

- 2008-2012 Teaching Methods Secondary, Children's Teaching Methods, Modern Technique Theory I-III, Ballet Technique Theory I-III, Jazz and Advanced Jazz, West African Dance, Latin

Dance, Movement and Culture, Pilates Mat, Crossfit, Rhythmic Analysis and Percussion Accompaniment, Music Resources in Choreography, Choreography/Improvisation, Advanced Improvisation, Bartenieff Fundamentals, Composition, Dance Kinesiology, Dance History, Costuming, Dance Production/Lighting Practicum, Contemporary Views, Elements of Music, Freshman Seminar, and Senior Capstone

WORK EXPERIENCE

- 2011-2012 ASUU Fine Arts Assembly Representative (UU)
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- Fall 2011 Wasatch Elementary School (UU) – Through my Elementary Teaching Methods class, under the direction of Ann Carter; I taught at Wasatch Elementary School in a group with one other student. We taught 4 classes.
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- Summer 2008 Amanda’s Dance Express, Grand Prairie, Texas –Teacher for Hip Hop and Substitute Teacher (All company and recreational levels ballet, tap, jazz, modern, Hip Hop); Office Assistant
- 2004-2008 Amanda’s Dance Express, Grand Prairie, Texas – Company Rehearsal Director, Teacher for preschool through high school, (ballet, jazz, tap, lyrical/contemporary); Substitute Teacher (all company and recreational levels ballet, tap, jazz, modern); Office Assistant

CHOREOGRAPHY

- 2011 Prodigy Dance Studio, Celebrating Culture (Jazz 1), Celebrating Girly Girls (Hip hop 1), Celebrating Sound (Tap 3), and Celebrating Birds (Jazz 2).
- 2010 Prodigy Dance Studio, Trashin’ the Camp (Tap 2)
- 2008 My Bad, Jump Around, Bratz Girls, Pulse
- 2007 Show Off, Kihikihi, Assyrian Rain

MASTER CLASSES

Kim Abel, Ruth Andrien, Griff Braun, Yamoussa Camara, Nicholas Cendece, Elisa Clark, Thom Clower, Youssef Combassa, Robin Conners, Dylis Croman, Chuck Davis, Linda Davis, Fred Dursow, Tyler Dvorak, Dan Edwards, Ford Evans, Nina Flagg, Titus Fotso, Sarah Franco, Jay Franke, Gus Giordanno, Melissa Glasgow, Solonge Gomez, Grupo Corpo, Mauro Romualdo, Mestrando Jamaica, Denise Jefferson, Holly Johnston, Jennifer Kayle, Alla Khaniashvilli, Colleen Hoelscher, Nicholas Leichter, Stephani Liapis, Kim McSwain, John Mead, Maputo Mensah, Mawue Mensah, Momix Dancers, Ceyhun Ozoy, Pilobolus

Dancers, Poreotics, Dwight Rhoden, Kaye Richards, Desmond Richardson, Jeff Micheal Rubedal, Mathew Rushing, Alassan Saar, Brent Schneider, Kanji Segawa, Nathan Shaw, Danielle Short, George Smallwood, Linda Smith, Christopher Vo, Aaron Wood, Ririe Woodberry Artistic Director, Myra Woodruff , Darrin Wright, Edgar Zendejas

WORKSHOPS/INTENSIVES

- 2010 American College Dance Festival
- 2009 Adrenaline
- 2008 International Association of Blacks In Dance (IABD)

CHOREOGRAPHERS

Denise Bailey, Belle Baggs, Pam Chu, Jonathan Campbell, Moussa Diabate, Chuck Davis, Nick DiNicolangelo, Chris DuPree, Laurie Johnson, Chlo  Langley, Garfield Lemonius, Chelsea McCall Lujan, Joey Tarwater, Sonya Tayeh, Amanda Thomas, Camille Thompson, Keith Thompson, Lily Cabatu Weiss, Alexis Willson and Nick Zborowski.

PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE

2008-2011

- Senior Choreography Concert, Clustercuss (UU) – There’s no Map for this Thing, Amanda Thomas
- Student Choreography Concert (UU) - Premi re Louisiana Lullaby, Chlo  Langley
- Senior Choreography Concert, XXI (UU) - Premi re Somewhere Between, Chelsea McCall Lujan
- Graduate Salon Concert (UU) - Breaking Dishes, Belle Baggs
- Senior Choreography Concert – Premi re Kihikihi (choreographer) (BTW)
- Senior Showcase – Rassambleman, Sunnu, Sinte (soloist) (BTW)
- On Stage! At the Eisman – Sorsonet (soloist and drummer) Apple Bottom Jeans (Choreography by Sean Paul Choreographer)(BTW)
- New Works Concert – Premi re Yankadi & Makru (BTW)
- Repertory Workshop – Premi re Where Old Meets New (short film, dancer) (BTW)
- Dance for the Planet - Sorsonet (soloist and drummer) (BTW), Coin Operated Boy, Maneater, FIRE! (ADX)
- Moussa Diabate’s Mandingo
- Young Audiences of North Texas Under Big Thought (BTW)
- Adrenaline Dance Crew; Salt Lake City

2006 – 2007

- Dance Africa with Chuck Davis’ African American Dance Ensemble
- Senior Choreography Concert, Premi re Epiphany (principal) (BTW)

- Senior Showcase, Sorsonet, Mandiani (BTW)
- Evening of Dance, On Stage! At The Latino Cultural Center (BTW)
- Evening of ADE, Kou Kou (soloist), Sorsonet (Soloist and Drummer) (BTW)
- Repertory Workshop, Sunnu (BTW)
- Dance For The Planet (BTW), Premi re Portals, FIRE! (ADX)
- Young Audiences of North Texas Under Big Thought (BTW)

2005 – 2006

- South Dallas Dance Festival, Premi re Burdens Duo (ADX)
- Choreographing Seniors' Showcase (BTW)
- Senior Showcase (BTW)
- Choreographers' Showcase (BTW)
- Dance for the Planet (BTW) (ADX)
- Young Audiences of North Texas Under Big Thought (BTW)
- Repertory Workshop (BTW)
- TOTA (Taste of the Arts) Tiriba (BTW)

2004 – 2005

- South Dallas Dance Festival – Premi re My Troubled Resting Place (ADX)
- Senior Choreography Concert (BTW)
- Choreographers' Showcase, Premi re Expect Delays (BTW)
- Dance for the Planet, Premi re Plague, FIRE! (ADX)
- Repertory Workshop (BTW)

1998 – 2008 (ADX)

- Competition/convention dance participation Adrenaline ('08 regional/national member Adrenaline Dance Crew), Hall of Fame, LA Underground, Dupre, Monsters of Hip Hop, Stage One, Star Systems, Tremaine ('06 Studio Dancer of the Year)

1996 – 2008

- (ADX) Annual Spring Concerts

COMMUNITY SERVICE

2005-2008 Young Audiences of North Texas, Under Big Thought (BTW) (04-07)

2004-2008 Pro-bono Audition choreography (ADX) (04-08)

REFERENCES – AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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- 2005-2008 Young Audiences of North Texas, Under Big Thought (BTW) (04-07)
- 2004-2008 Pro-bono Audition choreography (ADX) (04-08)

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