

Judges

National Championship Gatlinburg, TN | July 3-7, 2025

Aislinn Feathers is originally from Pennsylvania and has over 20 years of extensive dance experience. Aislinn attended The American College of Greece and majored in Theatre and Dance. Throughout her tenure she was a member of the collegiate dance team and took part in many productions that expanded her understanding of diverse artistic styles. She is actively teaching at Blair Dance Academy where she teaches various forms of dance. She is currently the director of the Railroad City Revue Musical Theatre Troupe, working with children of different ages to cultivate the abilities of her students in multiple art forms. Aislinn is very excited to be a part of the NexStar National Talent Competition judging staff and looks forward to watching many talented artists!

Hailing from the Washington, DC area, Geralyn Ward has dedicated over four decades to teaching dance. Her exceptional talent and commitment have earned her numerous awards for choreography, overall achievement, and high scores at regional, national, and world competitions.

Originally from Pittsburgh, PA, Geralyn's passion for dance began as a competitive dance student. She pursued her love for the art by majoring in dance at the University of Georgia and George Mason University, where she also performed with their prestigious dance companies.

Geralyn's students have gone on to achieve remarkable success—performing on Broadway, on cruise ships, in music videos, and as teachers, judges, and directors of esteemed dance competitions. She teaches all ages, from toddlers to adults, in a variety of dance styles.

In addition to teaching, Geralyn has served as a judge on the regional and national competition circuit for over 25 years. Recently, her students and choreography have been showcased in iconic venues like New York City and Walt Disney World.

Geralyn's passion and dedication have not gone unnoticed; she was named Favorite Dance Instructor in Loudoun County, Virginia, by Loudoun Now for seven consecutive years (2018–2024). Her enduring love for dance and her students continues to inspire her work every day.

Konner is a seasoned entertainment professional with over 15 years of experience

in the industry. Starting his dance journey at the age of 12, Konner immersed himself in various styles, including jazz, ballet, lyrical, tap, modern, musical theatre, contemporary, and hip-hop. His passion for performance led him to the world's biggest stages including various theme parks, theaters, and cruise lines where he was a Dancer, Aerialist, Dance Captain, and Company Manager. In his dance career, Konner also taught at numerous studios and dance teams across the Midwest, sharing his expertise and love for dance with the next generation of performers. Now based in Atlanta, he combines his flair for storytelling and entertainment as an Unscripted Casting Producer, contributing to hit shows including American Idol, MasterChef, and LEGO Masters. Thrilled to be part of the NexStar family, Konner aims to empower and uplift dancers, helping them reach their highest potential in artistry, performance, and technique. Konner's extensive background and passion make him a fun and engaging judge who brings both warmth and wisdom to every competition!

Kym began her dance training at the age of three and has trained extensively in ballet, jazz, musical theatre, lyric, and contemporary. She has been a dance educator for more than 35 years studying in Boston, New York, and California and has a wealth of experience in varied dance genres. She has proven herself in the competition industry through her award winning choreography and competitive success of her students. They have won many prestigious awards, nationally and internationally, and have obtained professional careers as dancers with Royal Caribbean, Disney Cruise ships, So You Think You Can Dance, New England Patriots Cheerleading, and on Broadway. Growing up she was involved in the pageant circuit and has coached many students participating in the Miss America and Miss Teen USA Pageant program. Kym's greatest joy is teaching and instilling her love of dance into students of all levels and ages and as a judge seeing each performer come alive on stage!

Makayla Wade from Panama City, FL began dancing at the age of two and has been performing since! Makayla danced competitively and was awarded many regional and national awards. Following high school, Makayla decided to further her education by attending Troy University where she received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance and graduated Cum Laude in 2021. She was awarded Troy University's Theatre and Dance "Outstanding Freshman" Award, studied abroad in Pietrasanta, Italy with world renowned faculty at The DAP Festival of Pietrasanta! In 2019, Makayla performed with Rosie Simas Danse Company in the piece "Weave" at the Alabama Dance Festival. She began to find a love for choreography and in the fall of 2019 she choreographed in Troy University's Fall Dance Concert "The Fallen" and in 2021 "BLOOD". Following graduation she performed with Cedar Point Live Entertainment in "Pep Rally", "150th Night Show Celebration and Parade" and "The Shrieks" where she worked with Marilyn Magness, Alexis Robberts, Josh Assor and

Phillip Vitug. In January of 2021 she worked with Virgin Voyages where she performed and dance captained many shows onboard including “Untitled Dance Party Show Thing”, “Ships in the Night” and inaugural cast of “Its a Ship Show”. She performed works created by Ani Taj, Sam Pinkleton, House of Yes, Jenny Gersten, 7Fingers and more! Between contracts, Makayla teaches master classes and choreographs across the south region. Her choreography has won many regional and national awards including “Best Choreography” in open and contemporary category. Makayla hopes to continue perform and inspire the next generation of dancers.

Mandy Arroyo, is a dedicated dance educator with over 25 years of teaching experience, began her dance training in the Tampa Bay Area and continued her studies at Howard W. Blake School of the Arts and the University of South Florida. Her passion for the arts and commitment to cultivating confidence and artistry in young dancers has led many of her students and apprentices to successful careers in various genres of dance and the performing arts worldwide. Currently serving as the Dance Department Director at a performing arts school, Mandy has received numerous accolades, including Outstanding Choreographer by Youth America Grand Prix and Dance Teacher of the Year for Hillsborough County Public Schools. She also served as Head Coach of the Plant High School Danceros Dance Team. She is known for her ability to instill technical excellence, artistry, and performance skills in her students.

Marisa Ervin is a dancer, choreographer, and educator based out of Los Angeles, California.

After studying at both collegiate campuses of the “American Musical and Dramatic Academy” she has spent years curating her craft in New York City and Los Angeles, earning her BFA in Dance Theatre. She can be seen in multiple live and video performances with music artists such as Hozier, Cannibal Kids, and Chad Future. Marisa most recently assistant choreographed alongside Monika Felice Smith in Lume Dance Collective’s “WHAT IF...” show. Ervin continuously hopes to spread inspiration through movement, and provide a lively environment for each dancer to discover their individuality.

Taylor Gordon is an international dancer, creator, and educator. Resident Director for Dublin Worldwide Productions and formerly a Show Supervisor for RWS Global/Step One Dance Company, Taylor performed at Lincoln Center with The Metropolitan Opera Ballet, Radio City Christmas Spectacular, Off-Broadway/Angelina Ballerina, Kennedy Center, & Carnegie Hall. A member of SDC, she choreographed for Princeton University’s Triangle Club, the film “Juliette’s Miracle,” STEPS Beyond

Foundation, Jazz Choreography Enterprises, Uptown Rising. She was featured in NYTimes, CNN, NBC, FOX5, ABC, CBS, Dance Magazine. She teaches at NY Film Academy, BDC, the United Nations Ballet Club, and has guest taught in Japan, China, India, Bali, across the US.

Tonya Ferrucci began her dance training at the age of three and has studied under the late Bette-Ann Monti Rossi for the past 30 years. Her dance training is both extensive and impressive and she was well known in the competition world winning many prestigious regional and national awards. She has trained in Boston, New York, and spent a brief time in California pursuing her dancing career. She was the owner and director of APAC Dance, Inc., one of the most successful studios in the New England area. Her students have won many prestigious regional and national awards including Petite Miss Dance of New England; Petite Miss American Dance Awards, Junior Miss Candance North America, dance-off champions and many national dance scholarships. Her students were gold medal World Dance Champions for the United States in Reisa, Germany. Her unique choreography has been the recipient of many regional and national awards as well. Tonya loves sharing her passion of the artform dance to the next generation of artists.