

The Academy of Performing Arts



Luanna Luxton Armstrong,
B.A.T.D., Director, Choreographer

A lifetime member of the British Association of Teachers of Dance, and a seasoned dancer, actress, singer, choreographer, playwright and director in countless productions, Miss Luanna brings a wealth of experience to the arts and our community.

Miss Luanna was born and raised in Sault, Ontario. She is a graduate of Loretto in Sault, Michigan, alumni of Lake Superior State University, Ryerson University and York University, Ontario. She opened her first school of dancing in Dundas, Ontario in 1969. For 20 years she owned and operated the Luanna Luxton School of Dance and Performing Arts in Bolton, Ontario where she also founded and directed a professional summer theater company. Her school boasted a Barn Theater where countless one of a kind productions, both amateur and professional took place.

In September 2003, Miss Luanna founded the Academy of Performing Arts, on the campus of Lake Superior State University, after being the Director of Dance and Drama at Lake Superior State University for two years. In September 2008, the Academy moved to its beautiful new location, the Chi Mukwa Community Recreation Center. (Big Bear Arena).



Erika Laitinen-Odbert,
Instructor & Choreographer

Erika Laitinen-Odbert has been sharing her commitment to excellence in the dance arts for 16 years with the Academy of Performing Arts, where she teaches Ballet, Pointe, Lyrical, and Jazz. With over 25 years of experience, Erika danced competitively with Trixie Hardy Dance Studio and Studio Dance Arts, both of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

She has traveled internationally and within the United States competing, performing, and attending numerous workshops. Erika has undergone extensive B.A.T.D. training, focusing primarily in the study of ballet.

Erika loves to share her passion for dance with her students, her family, and her community. Among her dance experiences, Erika has been able to volunteer for many community events, including Hospice of the EUP Madrigal Dinner for over ten years and is incredibly honored and proud to now be a coach for the Dancing with the Hospice Stars!

She looks forward to continuing her adventure in sharing the art of dance with all for many years to come.



Kayla Price,
Instructor & Choreographer

As a seventh year instructor, Kayla comes to the Academy from a long history with performing. Her love of figure skating and gymnastics at a very early age inspired her to study ballet, where she began dancing at the Sherry Walsh Academy of Dance Arts at the age of 8. Kayla also participated in the Sault Gym Club Gymnastics programs in Sault Sainte Marie, ONT.

She has studied dance at our Academy for many years and has taken part in several of our annual Children's Theatre Productions, both as a dancer and as an actress. Kayla has participated in several dance competitions during her time, performing with the Sault High Pom Pon squad.

She also brings skills learned from participating in those competitions, as well as, performing and dancing in New York City, Disney World in Orlando, Florida, and Puerto Rico. She performed with the LSSU Dance Company, and has taken summer residence near Traverse City, MI. as an employee of Interlochen Center of the Arts. During the summer of 2018, Kayla enjoyed instructing dance to students coming to LSSU from various cities for the EDventures summer camps.

Kayla will be returning in the fall to begin instructing classes again this year. We look forward to having more years with her.



Tina Pountney,
Instructor & Choreographer

Tina has over 14 years of dance experience and B.A.T.D. training in tap, jazz, and ballet. She has danced competitively in Canada and USA with Sherry Walsh Dance Academy and early on with Trixie Hardy.

Recently, she has had wonderful experiences with the adult competitive dance program in Sault Sainte Marie, ONT. She competed in Tap, Jazz, & Hip-Hop where she received a platinum or diamond rating in all three dances.

Tina has also had experience as a performer with our local 'Dancing With The Stars' fundraiser and she provided her services to create the choreography for the 'opening number' for a local talent show fundraiser.

She is excited to inspire kids/ adults to live their dreams and passions using the expression of dance. She has graduated from LSSU from the BScN Nursing Program and graduate school with GVSU with Masters Degree in Nursing and Family Nurse Practitioner Program.

Tina has had three years of experience teaching advanced and adult tap through the Academy where she was previously an instructor and is very excited to be back on board with us. She is hoping to expand in the years to come.