

dancing with the stars for Hospice

Your Dance Pros

Sasha Young



Sasha Young (she/her) is a dancer and performer located in Cape Breton. She spent much of her childhood in dance studios honing her craft under the instruction of Susan Gallop, Kim Roper, and Jenna Quinn at Northside dance. Her passion for dance grew over time to be a central part of her everyday life. Even though Sasha has stepped away from competitive dance, she has centered herself in on performance at venues such as Sacred Heart Downtown, The Highland Arts Theatre, and the Boardmore Playhouse. She has enhanced her craft over the past few years and cannot wait to return to the stage in support of Cape Breton's Hospice patients and workers.

After leaving competitive dance, Sasha spent her time and creativity doing choreography and dance instruction around Cape Breton. Her love of dance has led her to a future career in education. She felt that her calling was to share the love of her craft with other youth. She is currently working toward a Bachelor of Arts and intends on returning to CBU to obtain a Bachelor of Education. Dance leads us to many different places. And tonight, it has led all of us to this room for a very particular goal; to care for and appreciate each other.

Ryan Davis



Ryan has been dancing competitively for 10 years in various styles under Northside Dance in Florence. His team and instructors taught him how to better himself and to push hard to achieve his goals. Ryan was a part of the 2024 Dancing With The Stars fundraiser and is now excited to hit the stage again.

Ryan is excited to be part of such an amazing cause that will help many people here in our community and he is honoured to be dancing with Eron Doucette.

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Cynthia Vokey



Cynthia is a Merritt nominated and award-winning choreographer and dance educator from Cape Breton who currently resides in Sydney, NS with her husband Johnathan and their children, Pearl and Theodore.

She started dancing at the age of 5 and into adulthood, continuing her dance education was of great importance. Cynthia has completed intensive programs at Toronto Dance Theatre, Broadway Dance Centre and obtained her teaching certificate through the Associated Dance Arts for Professional Teachers in Toronto.

She served for 5 years on the Board of Directors for Dance Nova Scotia and was the Chair of the Board for one term. Cynthia holds a Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Arts Community Studies and a Master of Business Administration along with several leadership certificates. She works for Cape Breton University as the Director of Graduate Programs in the Shannon School of Business and is proud CBU alumnus.

To date, she has choreographed over 25 stage productions for The Savoy Theatre, Boardmore Theatre and Highland Arts Theatre. She was also chosen to be the Chrysalis Choreographer at Neptune Theatre for their 2019/2020 season.

Cynthia had the great pleasure of participating in the 2019 Dancing with the Stars with her dance partner and colleague CBU President, David C. Dingwall. In 2023 her husband Johnathan, participated as a star and in 2024 was paired with her sister Andrea as coaches with their dance partner and father, Bill.

She is once again thrilled to hit the stage with her dance partner Mike Kelloway and can't wait to show everyone what they've been working on.

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Lindsey Fraser-McPherson



Lindsay Fraser-McPherson grew up in Sydney and now lives in Halifax with her husband, Alex, and their two beautiful daughters, Andie and Calla. She has proudly owned and operated Elle Dance Academy for the past 13 years, where she has had the privilege of sharing her passion for dance with students of all ages.

Lindsay is thrilled to be returning to her hometown to participate in Dancing With the Stars in support of Hospice Cape Breton. She is honoured to give back to the community that helped shape her, while sharing her love of dance in support of such a meaningful cause.

Denise Jardine



Denise is the owner/operator of D&R Dance Ltd, formerly MacDonald Dance Academy. Founded in 1948 by WWII war bride Doris MacDonald and her husband Allan, the school is entering its 79th year of teaching dance in Cape Breton.

The school offers classes in tap, jazz, lyrical, ballet, modern, contemporary, pointe, musical theatre and hip hop as well as technique classes and exam classes with the CDTA and ADAPT.

Denise started dancing at the age of 2 1/2 and has no understanding of what it would be like not to have dance in her life. She was also a competitive highland dancer growing up, performing and competing throughout Nova Scotia and in Montreal, Ontario and Scotland. She also danced for the Queen Mother in the Nova Scotia Tattoo.

They say if you love what you do, you never work a day in your life, something Denise firmly believes. Dance is more than just dance, from the baby class to our Graduates, the recitals, competitions, the memories and friends made, dance can be something that can stay with you for a lifetime which was demonstrated last May when over 50 alumni graced the stage to perform once again. Once a D&R Dancer, always a D&R Dancer. Good luck to all the dance couples, enjoy this amazing night for an amazing cause.

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Kyle Hunter



Kyle has been dancing since the age of 18 years old and now has 20 years of experience. Over the years Kyle has danced at D&R Dance Ltd. (formally known as Doris MacDonald's Dance Academy) under the direction of Denise Jardine where he mainly focused on Hip-Hop but also has experience in other styles such as Contemporary, Musical Theatre, Tap and Jazz.

For the past 14 years he has been teaching dance at D&R Dance sharing his love and craft to his students that was given to him by his teachers over the years.

As a competitive dancer Kyle has had opportunities to learn from various choreographers in workshops such as Nico Archambault, Vincent Noiseux, Kameron Bink, Tyce Diorio, Jordan Clark and Trevor Tordjman. In more recent years Kyle has been involved with both The Savoy Theatre and The Highland Art Theatre (HAT).

He's been in shows such as Disco Nights, As You Like It, Chiaroscuro and The Nutcracker. Outside of the dance world Kyle has been involved with All Star Cheerleading for 17 years where he became an athlete, coach and from time to time did choreographer for middle and high school teams.

Kyle cheers competitively for Atlantic Cheer Academy in Port Hawkesbury where he is currently on the highest level as well as Cheer Nova Scotia's East Coast Adaptive Abilities in the hopes to go to ICU Cheerleading Championship to represent Canada as well as go to Worlds 2027 this coming April.

Kyle currently works for Cape Breton Regional Centre of Education as a Teacher's Assistant giving support to children with special needs and behaviour issues. He has been in the field for 18 years and loves working with children being part of the educational journey working hard to hit their goals.

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Jillian MacKenzie



Jillian Mckenzie
Studio Owner & Artistic Director, Studio Élevé
BPR, MCPA-TTP, CDTA Ballet Licentiate, CDTA Jazz Associate, PBT,
AAC1

Jillian Mckenzie is a highly trained and accomplished dance educator whose extensive experience, professional credentials, and passion for excellence have shaped her approach to dance education.

Jillian holds a Bachelor of Public Relations from Mount Saint Vincent University and also works professionally with Nova Scotia Health. Her passion for dance began at just two years old, and she went on to train competitively, earning numerous awards and achievements throughout her dance career.

She completed her post-secondary professional dance training through the Teacher Training Program at the Maritime Conservatory of Performing Arts (MCPA-TTP), developing a strong foundation in both dance technique and teaching methodology. Jillian holds her Canadian Dance Teachers Association (CDTA) Ballet Licentiate and Jazz Associate and is certified in Progressive Ballet Technique (PBT) and Acrobatic Arts (AAC1).

With over 13 years of teaching experience in Cape Breton and a decade of teaching and training dancers at several of Halifax's schools, Jillian brings a high level of professional expertise to her students. Her own continued training has taken her to institutions including Canada's National Ballet School, Broadway Dance Center, and Peridance Center.

As a choreographer, Jillian's work has received top marks and numerous awards at competitions, reflecting her dedication to creating meaningful, challenging, and engaging choreography for her students.

Jillian is known for her ability to challenge and inspire dancers while creating a supportive yet disciplined environment. She believes in setting high standards while giving each dancer the tools, confidence, and encouragement they need to reach their potential.

Jillian is committed to creating a space where every dancer is encouraged to work hard, grow, and become the best dancer they can be.

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Kiersten Penny



Kiersten Penny is a dancer, choreographer, and theatre artist based in Sydney, NS. She currently serves as General Manager of the Highland Arts Theatre (HAT), where she combines her love of the performing arts with her work in arts administration, programming, and theatre education.

Kiersten holds a Bachelor of Kinesiology and a Bachelor of Arts in Dance from the University of Calgary, as well as a Certificate in Safe Dance Practices from the International Association for Dance Medicine & Science. Her passion for dance began at a young age and has taken her across Canada and to New York City, where she completed Broadway Dance Center's six-month Professional Semester Training Program with a concentration in Theatre Jazz. Throughout her career, she has worked professionally as a dancer, choreographer, instructor, and theatre artist.

Dance has been a constant love throughout Kiersten's life, so the opportunity to share that love while supporting such an important cause was an easy yes.

Kiersten's husband, Shane, works as a nurse in palliative care and hospice, giving them both a personal understanding of the compassionate care and support provided to patients and their families. She is honoured to be participating in Dancing with the Stars for Hospice alongside her friend and partner, Chris Tsujiuchi, and hopes to help raise as much as possible for hospice and palliative care in their community.

Michelle Langille – Choreographer

Michelle is an actor/director, proudly living in Sydney, , Nova Scotia. A graduate of George Brown Theatre School and the Canadian College of the Performing Arts, Michelle has been privileged to work across the country. She is the Board Chair for the Atlantic Burlesque Festival and performs and teaches as Honey de Mele.



Michelle has appeared at Neptune Theatre many times, most recently in Come From Away and The Rocky Horror Show, and Cape Breton audiences will recognize her as Tanya in Mamma Mia and Diane in Come From Away at the Savoy Theatre. She has also directed shows at the Savoy including Jersey Boys, Annie, Frozen and the upcoming How the Grinch Stole Christmas. She directed The Producers for The Highland Arts Theatre, The Wizard of Oz at Neptune and is headed back to the Savoy to direct How the Grinch Stole Christmas.