

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 22, 2024
[2024 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp Press Kit](#)



Photos of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp are available for download from the 2024 [Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp Press Kit](#).

A video about Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp can be viewed on [YouTube](#).

A video showing a day in the life of a Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamper can be viewed on [YouTube](#).

A story about a family whose lives were transformed when six of the grandchildren attended Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp can be read on Cal Performances' [Beyond the Stage blog](#).

CAL PERFORMANCES PRODUCES THE 22ND ANNUAL BERKELEY/OAKLAND AILEYCAMP ON THE UC BERKELEY CAMPUS JUNE 17 – JULY 26, 2024

Offered completely free of charge,
Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp is Cal Performances'
six-week dance and personal development program for youth ages 11–14

RISE: Reflect, Inquire, Strive & Excel, the final showcase performance,
takes place on Thursday, July 25 at 7pm at Zellerbach Hall

This year, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater celebrates
the 35th anniversary of AileyCamp nationally

Berkeley, May 22, 2023—This summer, Cal Performances produces the 22nd annual Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp on the UC Berkeley campus, June 17 – July 26. The full-scholarship, six-week summer program promoting personal development through dance for middle school students from the Berkeley, Oakland, Richmond, and Albany unified school districts is the product of Cal Performances’ nearly 60-year relationship with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. This year, AileyCamp celebrates nationally the 35th anniversary of its founding, which was inspired by the vision of Alvin Ailey himself. Outside of its hometown of New York City, the Ailey company has performed in Berkeley longer and more often than anywhere else, and through AileyCamp, the organization further deepens its ties with the Bay Area community. Every spring, when the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns for its annual engagement at Cal Performances, AileyCamp alums reunite to take a master class with an Ailey dancer and to see the Ailey company perform.

“It brings me so much joy to celebrate 35 years of this amazing, life-changing program. Alvin Ailey’s present to our youth has enabled participants to shine brightly as leaders and created a ripple effect that positively impacts friends, families and communities,” said [Nasha Thomas](#). “After performing with the company at Zellerbach Hall for 12 years, it’s also been a great honor to serve as the National Director of AileyCamp for the past 25 years and return to Berkeley each summer for AileyCamp – it has profoundly enriched and changed my life too. I’m forever grateful for the gifts that Alvin Ailey shared with me and the opportunity to pay it forward, so that his legacy continues to inspire the next generation.”

This summer, 70 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCampers will attend classes in four dance techniques—modern, West African, jazz, and ballet—as well as in creative communication and personal development that delve into topics such as goal-setting, conflict management, media literacy, positive self image, and leadership development. In addition, AileyCamp increasingly makes leadership roles available for returning campers as a way to successfully cultivate mentorship skills and foster a sense of community within the camp. New Personal Development instructor Caro Olvera, a former camper who was a group leader mentor last year, will lead campers in drum sessions as a therapeutic practice and ensemble-building activity.

As is true each year at Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp, throughout the six-week program, campers are provided with uniforms, dancewear, and shoes; breakfast and lunch in the university’s dining commons; and round-trip transportation for Oakland residents. At the conclusion, campers will demonstrate their new skills with a final dance performance. Featuring professional staging, lights, costumes, and live music, this

year's showcase performance—entitled *RISE: Reflect, Inquire, Strive & Excel*—takes place on Thursday, July 25 at 7pm at Zellerbach Hall and is free and open to the public.

The camp, one of 10 AileyCamps nationwide, is the only one situated on a college campus and is locally produced and offered entirely free of charge by Cal Performances, thanks to the generosity of individual and institutional donors. Originally conceived by Alvin Ailey and the Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey, AileyCamp first took place in 1989 and then expanded to the West Coast in 2002. Since its start, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp has touched the lives of more than 1,200 young people in the Bay Area. Families whose children have participated in the intensive program describe how AileyCamp has positively impacted the entire family as campers demonstrate new teamwork and leadership skills; exhibit qualities of discipline and perseverance; and take pride in their accomplishments. Read more on Cal Performances' [Beyond the Stage blog](#) about a family whose lives were transformed when six of the grandchildren attended AileyCamp.

Holding AileyCamp on the Berkeley campus has allowed the program to build a long-term partnership with the UC Berkeley School of Education's Principal Leadership Institute (PLI). PLI cohorts are made up of school teachers and administrators who, each summer, study AileyCamp as an arts-centered, culturally relevant, and developmentally appropriate education model for Bay Area students. Cal Performances and AileyCamp in turn gain important feedback on the camp's pedagogical effectiveness from these experts in the education field. In 2023, the value and practices of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp were described by PLI in the Harvard Education Press book, [Preparing Leaders for Deeper Learning](#), as an exceptional arts education model, focusing on cultural relevance and responsiveness and trauma-informed learning and teaching. The book describes the leadership practices of former Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp director David McCauley as a case study.

This year, returning AileyCamp director Patricia West and returning associate director Spencer "SPULU" Pulu, a 2005 AileyCamp alum, will lead Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp. Both have a deep history and experience with the camp. West, an educator and performing artist, has directed AileyCamp since 2021. In addition to her leadership of AileyCamp, she has performed with the Alayo Dance Company, Zaccho Dance Theater, and Fog Beast; since 2006, she has been a collaborating artist and served as Assistant Director and Creative Engagement Lead for Joe Goode Performance Group. West also co-founded DAP, a performing arts collective, in 2017. SPULU, who first came to AileyCamp as a camper, has served as a volunteer, group leader, and group leader supervisor for Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp for 15 years. SPULU

uses the arts and movement as a form of resistance and protest. Their artistic work, informed by social issues facing the Tongan community and Pacific Islanders worldwide, has been showcased internationally.

More details about Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp can be found at calperformances.org/aileycamp. A video showing a day in the life of a Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamper can be viewed on [YouTube](#).

Media opportunities are available throughout the six weeks of AileyCamp and journalists are welcome to attend AileyCamp by appointment.

CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS

Thursday, July 25, 7pm
Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley Campus

2024 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances
RISE: Reflect, Inquire, Strive & Excel
Patricia West, *director*
AileyCampers, junior leaders, accompanists, and instructors

Program: Nearly 70 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCampers, ages 11–14, will dance their final showcase on this year’s theme of “Excellence” in a 90-minute performance complete with professional staging, lights, costumes, and live music, on stage at Zellerbach Hall.

Tickets: Admission to the final performance of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp is free, subject to availability. Advance tickets will be available starting Tuesday, July 16 at noon at calperformances.org/aileycamp. Limit four tickets per person. For Ticket Office summer hours, visit calperformances.org/ticket-office.

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