



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 11, 2026
[2026 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp Press Kit](#)



Photos of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp are available for download from the [2026 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](#).

CAL PERFORMANCES PRODUCES THE 24TH ANNUAL BERKELEY/OAKLAND AILEYCAMP ON THE UC BERKELEY CAMPUS JUNE 15–JULY 24, 2026

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

**The final showcase performance, *The TIME is Now*,
takes place on Thursday, July 23 at 7pm in Zellerbach Hall**

Berkeley, CA, June 11, 2026—Cal Performances produces the 24th annual Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp on the UC Berkeley campus, June 15–July 24. The full-scholarship, six-week summer program promotes personal development through dance for middle school students primarily from the Berkeley, Oakland, Richmond, and Albany unified school districts. Building on Cal Performances’ nearly six-decade relationship with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp deepens the connection between the dance company and the presenter. Outside of its hometown of New York City, the Ailey company has performed more in Berkeley than anywhere else. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater next appears at Cal Performances [April 6–11, 2027](#).

Throughout the camp each summer, the approximately 70 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCampers attend classes in four dance techniques—modern, West African, jazz, and ballet—as well as creative communication and personal development classes exploring topics such as goal-setting, conflict management, media literacy, positive self-image, and leadership development. With Daily Affirmations such as, “I will not use the word can’t to define my possibilities,” AileyCamp provides youth with the tools they need to thrive throughout their lives. In addition, AileyCamp increasingly offers leadership roles for returning campers as a way to cultivate mentorship skills and foster a sense of community within the camp. Each spring, AileyCamp alumni from the previous summer reunite to participate in a master class led by an Ailey dancer and attend an Ailey company performance.

As it does each year, Cal Performances provides campers with uniforms, dancewear, and shoes; breakfast and lunch in the university’s dining commons; and round-trip transportation for Oakland residents. At the conclusion of the program, campers demonstrate their new skills in a final dance performance. Featuring professional staging, lights, costumes, and live music, this year’s showcase—entitled *The TIME is Now* (with TIME serving as an acronym for “teach, inspire, mentor, and elevate”) reflects the camp’s 2026 theme and takes place Thursday, July 23 at 7pm at Zellerbach Hall. It is free and open to the public, with advance tickets available beginning Friday, July 17 at noon at calperformances.org/aileycamp.

Of the nine AileyCamps across the US, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp is the only program situated on a college campus and has always been produced locally and offered entirely free of charge by Cal Performances, thanks in large part to the generosity of individual and institutional donors. Since its founding, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp has touched the lives of approximately 1,400 young people in the Bay Area. Families whose children have participated in the program have described how AileyCamp positively impacted the entire family, with campers demonstrating new teamwork and leadership skills, discipline and perseverance, and pride in their accomplishments. This year, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp was honored with the UC Berkeley Chancellor’s Award for Public Service in the Campus–Community Partnership category, recognizing the program’s contributions to public service and commitment to strengthening both the local and global community.

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), which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2025. Each summer, PLI cohorts of teachers and administrators study AileyCamp as an arts-centered, culturally relevant, and developmentally appropriate education model for Bay Area students. Cal Performances and AileyCamp, in turn, gain valuable feedback on the camp’s pedagogical

effectiveness from these education experts. In her final year as PLI Director, Soraya Sablo Sutton celebrates a partnership that has long been one of the highlights of the PLI experience. Each summer, she has introduced incoming cohorts to AileyCamp, where aspiring school leaders have witnessed the power of culturally responsive teaching and transformative learning firsthand. Through both her leadership and research, she has helped strengthen a partnership that continues to shape future generations of equity-centered leaders.

Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp's 2026 theme is *The TIME is Now*. TIME—an acronym for “teach, inspire, mentor, and elevate”—serves as a holistic framework for growth. “Teach” reflects the commitment required to equip campers with essential skills and knowledge to become active, engaged citizens. “Inspire” emphasizes fostering confidence and self-discovery so campers may realize their full potential. “Mentor” highlights the importance of building caring, consistent relationships through the guidance of supportive adults. “Elevate” centers on uplifting campers' aspirations and capabilities so they may thrive and contribute positively to their communities.

The theme reminds campers and staff alike that each moment presents an opportunity to choose one's actions, words, and responses to events. Through this framework, AileyCamp educators and leadership encourage campers to embrace fresh perspectives, take risks and try new things, and recognize that it is never too late to begin again. AileyCamps across the country will explore variations of this shared theme during the summer season.

Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp is led by director Patricia West and associate director Vincent Chavez. West, an educator and performing artist, has directed AileyCamp since 2021. Chavez, a dancer and educator, served as Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp's associate director last year and as the ballet instructor four times since 2019.

More information about Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp can be found at calperformances.org/aileycamp. Media opportunities are available throughout the six weeks of AileyCamp, and journalists are welcome to attend by appointment. Interview subjects for stories about Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp include AileyCamp's national and local directors, campers, teachers, Cal Performances' leadership, and UC Berkeley campus partners.

CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS

**Thursday, July 23, 7pm
Zellerbach Hall**

**Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley Campus**

2026 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances

The TIME is Now

Patricia West, *director*

Featuring AileyCampers, junior leaders, accompanists, and instructors

Program: Approximately 70 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCampers, ages 11–14, dance their final showcase on this year’s theme of TIME (an acronym for “teach, inspire, mentor, and elevate”) 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 Friday, July 17 at noon at calperformances.org/aileycamp. Limit four tickets per person.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Louisa Spier

Cal Performances

(510) 643-6714

lspier@calperformances.org