

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 13, 2025 updated July 11, 2025
[2025 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp Press Kit](#)



Photos of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp are available for download from the [2025 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 23RD ANNUAL BERKELEY/OAKLAND AILEYCAMP ON THE UC BERKELEY CAMPUS JUNE 16–JULY 25, 2025

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, *Stronger Than Before*,
takes place on Thursday, July 24 at **1 and 7pm in Zellerbach Playhouse**
with an open dress rehearsal on Wednesday, July 23 at 1pm

RESILIENCE is the theme of this year’s Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp,
dedicated to the life and legacy of Judith Jamison,
Artistic Director Emerita of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Berkeley, June 13, 2025—This summer, Cal Performances produces the 23rd annual Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp on the UC Berkeley campus, June 16–July 25. The full-scholarship, six-week summer program promotes personal development through dance for middle school students from the Berkeley, Oakland, Richmond, and Albany unified school districts. Building on Cal Performances’ nearly six-decade long relationship with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, AileyCamp deepens the connection between the two organizations. Each Spring, AileyCamp alumni reunite to participate in a master class lead by an Ailey dancer and to attend an Ailey company performances. Outside of its hometown of New York City, the Ailey company has performed in Berkeley longer and more frequently than anywhere else. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater next appears at Cal Performances [April 7–12, 2026](#).

Dedicated to Judith Jamison

This year Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp honors the life and legacy of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater’s Artistic Director Emerita Judith Jamison who passed away in November 2024. Celebrated for her talents as a performer, choreographer, and a company leader, Judith Jamison had an international reach that inspired many generations of dancers and dance-lovers. She was a powerhouse performer, visionary leader, and groundbreaking cultural figure. As a dancer, Jamison embodied Alvin Ailey’s tenet to “use my steps, but show yourself.” She became Artistic Director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1989, when Ailey asked her to succeed him before his death. She served in this capacity until 2011.

AileyCamp was developed by Mr. Ailey and the Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey in his final year of life. Ms. Jamison was incredibly dedicated to extending opportunities to youths, and invested her energy into seeing the program expand. Sylvia Lindsey, who has been a longtime supporter of arts throughout the Bay Area and especially of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp, recalled Ms. Jamison’s vision and ensuing determination to establish an AileyCamp on the West Coast. “She was motivated because she saw what AileyCamp was already doing elsewhere, and she wanted a camp on the West Coast.” In 2002, thanks to the support of Ms. Jamison and the Ailey company, as well as numerous dedicated donors and community advocates and trustees, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp officially launched.

An article about Judith Jamison’s connection to Cal Performances and influence on Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp is available on Cal Performances’ [Beyond the Stage blog](#).

AileyCamp This Year

The National Director of AileyCamp, [Nasha Thomas](#) said, “I’m excited about the upcoming summer of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp and the opportunity for another group of campers to explore their own voice. AileyCamp helps them tap into their unique creativity and gain self-confidence. The theme this year is RESILIENCE, and during the six weeks, with the guidance of the instructors, campers will focus on how to overcome life’s obstacles while learning new things, making friends, and having fun. In 2025, it is so meaningful to celebrate the life and legacy of Judith Jamison, who inspired us to be our best selves and embrace Mr. Ailey’s belief that dance is for everyone.”

This year, nearly 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 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.

As is true each year at Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp, 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 their six weeks, campers demonstrate their new skills with a final dance performance. Featuring professional staging, lights, costumes, and live music, this year’s showcase performance—entitled *Stronger Than Before*—reflects the camp’s 2025 theme of resilience, and takes place on Thursday, July 24 at 1pm and 7pm at Zellerbach Playhouse, with an open rehearsal on Wednesday, July 23 at 1pm. It is free and open to the public with advance tickets available starting Friday, July 18 at noon at calperformances.org/aileycamp.

The camp, one of 10 AileyCamps nationwide, is only one of two 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. Since its start, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp has touched the lives of more than 1,300 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.

Unique to the UC Berkeley Campus

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 celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2025. 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. The value and practices of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp are 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.

Leadership of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp

This year, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp director Patricia West returns and is joined by associate director Vincent Chavez. 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. Vincent Chavez has been the ballet instructor for Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp four separate years since 2019. He received his formal dance training from Dance Theater Southwest, Ballet Hispanico, Academy of Nevada Ballet Theatre, and Alonzo King LINES Ballet Training Program. He has performed with leading companies including the San Francisco Opera, Robert Moses' KIN, Oakland Ballet Company, Nevada Ballet Theatre, and New Mexico Ballet Company, among many others. As an educator, he has taught, directed, and coached in dance programs including those for the Ruth Asawa San Francisco School of the Arts, San Francisco Youth Ballet Academy, the ODC School Youth & Teen Program, and Orinda Ballet Academy. He, alongside another long-term member of Robert Moses' KIN, developed the curriculum for "Bootstraps: Lyric Legacies," a collaborative educational and explorative outreach program implemented by the San Francisco Unified School District. He brings all of his dance and education experience to bear in his new role with Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp.

More Information and Media Opportunities

More details about Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp can be found at calperformances.org/aileycamp. The story of a family whose lives were transformed when six of the grandchildren attended AileyCamp is

available on Cal Performances' [Beyond the Stage blog](#). 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 24, **1pm & 7pm**
Open Rehearsal, Wednesday, July 23 at 1pm
Zellerbach Playhouse
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley Campus

2025 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances
Stronger Than Before
Patricia West, *director*
AileyCampers, junior leaders, accompanists, and instructors

Program: Nearly 70 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCampers, ages 11–14, dance their final showcase on this year's theme of RESILIENCE in a 90-minute performance complete with professional staging, lights, costumes, and live music, on stage at Zellerbach Hall. This year's Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp honors the life and legacy of Judith Jamison, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Artistic Director Emerita.

Tickets: Admission to the final performance of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp is free, subject to availability. Advance tickets will be available starting Friday, July 18 at noon at calperformances.org/aileycamp. Limit four tickets per person.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Louisa Spier
Cal Performances
(510) 643-6714
lspier@calperformances.org