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[Press Room](#)



Photos of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp are available for download from Cal Performances' [online press room](#)

## **CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF BERKELEY/OAKLAND AILEYCAMP JUNE 21–JULY 29, 2022**

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

**Final showcase performance, *Believing We Can*,  
inspired by the theme of faith takes place on  
Thursday, July 28 at 7pm at Zellerbach Hall and is free to the public**

**Berkeley July 12, 2022**— This summer Cal Performances proudly celebrates its 20th year of producing Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp, a full-scholarship, six-week summer program that promotes personal development through dance for select middle school students from the Berkeley, Oakland, Richmond, and Albany unified school districts. The program is an

outgrowth of Cal Performances' nearly 60-year relationship with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Outside of its hometown of New York City, the Ailey company has annually performed in Berkeley longer than anywhere else, and through outreach programs like AileyCamp, the organization further deepens its ties with the Bay Area community.

This year, nearly 50 campers are attending dance classes in four disciplines—modern, African, jazz, and ballet—as well as classes in creative communication and personal development that delve into topics such as goal-setting, conflict management, media literacy, positive self-image, and leadership development. Additionally, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp provides campers with dancewear and shoes; breakfast and lunch in the University dining commons; and round-trip transportation for Oakland residents. At the end of their six weeks in this life-changing program, the campers demonstrate their new skills with a final dance performance, *Believing We Can*, inspired by this year's theme of faith. Complete with professional staging, lights, costumes, and live music, the showcase performance takes place on Thursday, July 28 at 7pm at Zellerbach Hall and is free and open to the public.

The camp, one of nine AileyCamps nationwide, is locally produced and fully funded by Cal Performances. Originally conceived in 1989 by Alvin Ailey and the Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey, AileyCamp came to the West Coast 20 years ago, when Ailey alumnus David McCauley was tapped by Cal Performances to lead the program. McCauley headed the camp until his retirement in 2020. Since its launch, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp has touched the lives of more than 1,000 young people in the Bay Area. Families whose children have participated in the intensive program describe how AileyCamp has positively impacted their whole family as their child demonstrates new teamwork and leadership skills; exhibits qualities of discipline and perseverance; and, most importantly, takes pride in who they are. The camp provides a supportive yet rigorous environment in which students are immersed in learning dance that develops skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, and flexibility. Every spring when the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns for its annual engagement at Cal Performances, camp alums reunite to take a master class with an Ailey dancer and to see the Ailey company perform.

“AileyCamp supports one of Cal Performances’ key goals of ensuring that everyone can feel connected to the performing arts. Performance is a means by which we can learn about ourselves and about the world around us, and, as we know from experiences with AileyCamp over these past 20 years, this ability to foster growth and empathy can be transformative at an often-tumultuous time in young people’s lives,” said Jeremy Geffen, executive and artistic director of Cal Performances. “Having run AileyCamp for 20 years, we now have the privilege of seeing not just the immediate impact, but also the ways AileyCamp has shaped campers’ lives well into adulthood—including some who have felt so empowered by the program that they’ve returned to serve as leaders for the next generation of campers. It’s this strong dedication, not just from Cal Performances staff, but from the broader community AileyCamp has created over two decades, that lays the foundation for a supportive environment where young people can work through challenging emotions, express themselves creatively, and, in that process, see for themselves all they can accomplish with diligence and determination.”

UC Berkeley’s chancellor Carol Christ shared, “Cal Performances’ underwriting and producing of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp for these 20 years is an example of what makes Cal Performances such an invaluable contributing member of our UC Berkeley and greater Bay Area community. It is consistent with our values as a public university to invite young people from our surrounding school districts to make use of the resources on the UC Berkeley campus as part of their personal growth during their summers. We are pleased to have the opportunity to welcome the campers to our campus and for them to begin to see themselves succeeding in a university setting like Berkeley.”

Holding AileyCamp on the Berkeley campus has allowed the camp 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 education model with cultural relevance 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. This ongoing connection between AileyCamp and PLI also allows the camp to build relationships with future school

principals who share information about AileyCamp in their school communities. Tom Green, Head Instructor for PLI, reflects, “AileyCamp is a truly excellent model of what developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, highly effective teaching and learning looks like for middle school children. Our educational leaders in training are inspired every year by experiencing what is possible in public education, to provide a program staffed by educators who look like the students, who work collaboratively, who hold themselves and the students to high expectations, and who consistently, year after year produce long-term personal and academic growth in the students.”

Returning AileyCamp director Patricia West and associate director Spencer “SPULU” Pulu, a 2005 AileyCamp alum, lead AileyCamp in its 20th year. West, an educator and performing artist, directed AileyCamp virtually in 2021 and prior to that held Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp’s first Managing Director position in 2017. This year will be her first year directing the camp in person. In addition to her leadership of AileyCamp, she performs with the Alayo Dance Company, Zaccho Dance Theater, and Fog Beast; and since 2006, has been a company member and Creative Engagement Lead for the Joe Goode Performance Group. West co-founded DAP, a performing arts collective, in 2017. SPULU has served as a volunteer, group leader, and group leader supervisor for Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp for 13 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.

Says director West, “Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp is a transformative experience. It inspires youth to be their best selves with a curriculum that encompasses dance, storytelling, and both personal and professional life skills. AileyCamp is a supportive environment where campers leave feeling empowered and engaged in the world around them. Our team of instructors and administrators, many of whom are professional artists in their own right, are dedicated to every camper’s success. Reflecting on the past 20 years, it is my hope that Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp continues to have a meaningful impact by helping youth thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.”

More details about Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp can be found on Cal Performances' website at [calperformances.org/aileycamp](http://calperformances.org/aileycamp). Donations in support of AileyCamp for its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary are welcomed at [calperformances.org/aileycamp-20](http://calperformances.org/aileycamp-20).

## **ABOUT CAL PERFORMANCES**

Cal Performances—the performing arts presenter of the University of California, Berkeley—presents, produces, and commissions renowned and emerging artists of the highest caliber. Serving the entire San Francisco Bay Area, the organization aims, through ambitious programming, to cultivate future audiences for the arts and to connect the most innovative and accomplished artists in the world with the intellectual capital of UC Berkeley. Cal Performances reaches nearly 100,000 people each year through its artistic programming and education and community outreach efforts.

## **CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:**

### **CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS**

**Thursday, July 28, 7pm**  
**Zellerbach Hall**  
**Bancroft Way at Dana Street**  
**UC Berkeley Campus**

**2022 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances**  
***Believing We Can***  
**Patricia West, director**  
**AileyCamp campers, accompanists, and instructors**

**Program:** The nearly 50 campers of the 2022 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances exhibit their work on this year's theme of faith in a 90-minute performance on stage at Zellerbach Hall.

**Tickets:** Admission to the final performance of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp is free and subject to availability. Advance tickets will be available starting Tuesday, July 19 at 12noon at [calperformances.org/aileycamp](http://calperformances.org/aileycamp). Limit four per person.

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