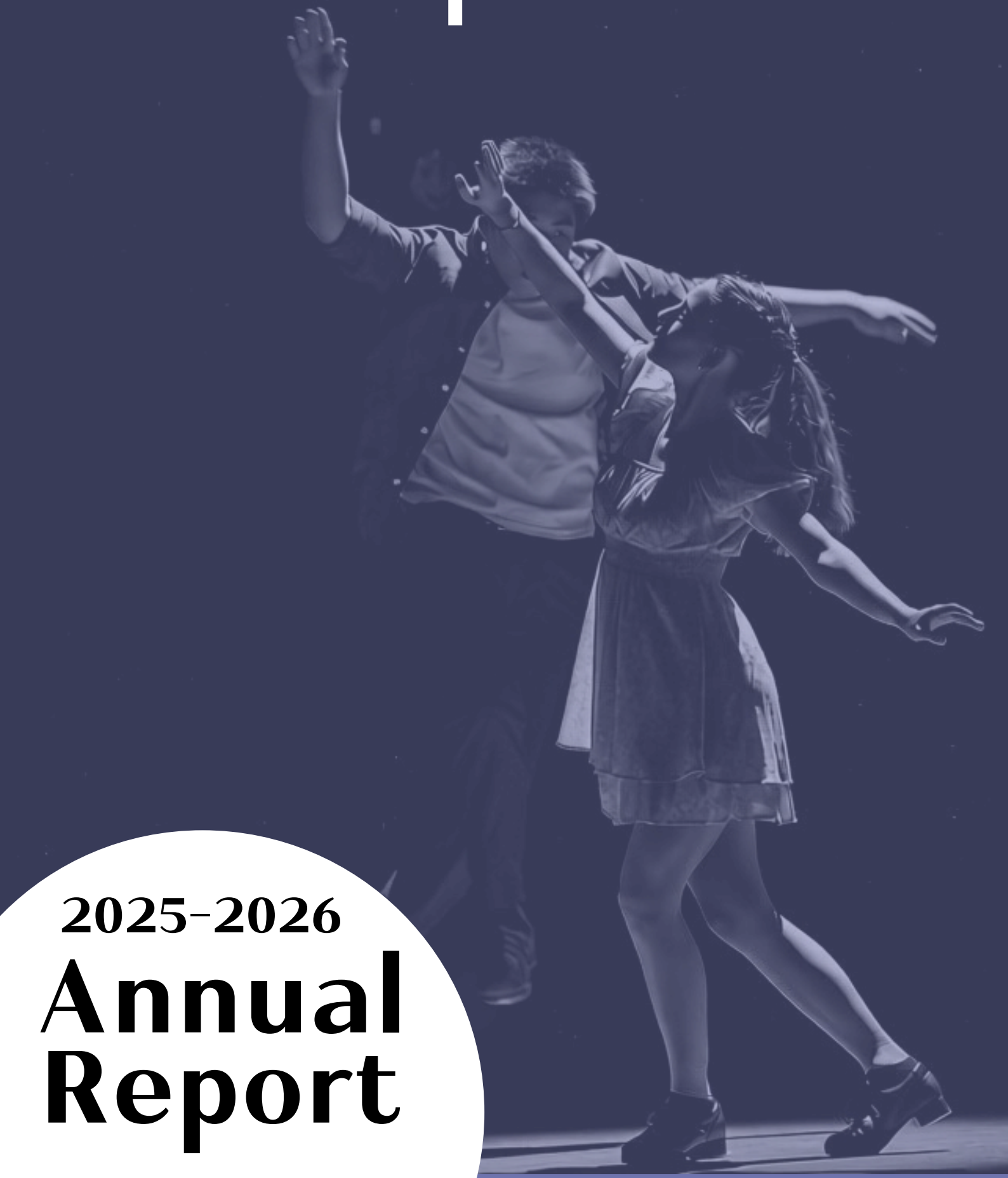
# The North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble



## 2025-2026

# Annual Report

# Table of Contents




Letter from Our Board President..... 3

Vision And Mission..... 4

Season Commitment..... 5

Programming..... 6

Meet Our Team..... 8

Behind the Scenes..... 9

Financial Statements..... 10

Support..... 12

Contact Us..... 14

# A Letter from our Board President

Dear NCYTE Family,

This is Zans McLachlan, one of the original members of NCYTE that Gene Medler started over 40 years ago. I am honored to take on the responsibility of President of the Board of this amazing organization and to help foster its next phase of growth and artistry.

Under the current incredible leadership of Artistic Director Emily Shoemaker and Executive Director Emily Jane Acree, we have seen NCYTE continue to blossom in its unique fashion - as a space for not only developing incredible dancers but whole human beings. NCYTE not only helps our members learn complex choreography and technique, it encourages their individual growth into a holistic person by providing opportunities for leadership, innovation, and community building.

NCYTE would not exist without our Founding Director Emeritus Gene Medler. He is my greatest mentor in all things and helped me find an artistic voice through tap, pushing me to be more than I thought I could be. He encouraged me to find my voice and self with a humility and sense of humor that every alumni shares, because Gene modeled these so purely. If tap is love, then Gene is the heart.

Gene, like other legendary mentors, helps his students find their own path to mentorship, helps them find agency and their artistic heart, and helps them find ways to contribute back to the company, to their family and friends, and to the world. Each generation helps the next to go a bit further, building a dynasty of kindness, of love, and of beauty.

It is only as an adult with my own kids that I have realized that the main lessons I learned were the ones that helped me be a better father. I've come to understand that the way I parented my children was in large part modeled by Gene: be kind, be respectful, be goofy, be vulnerable, be authentic, and - most importantly - be there. I could not be prouder of my own children and of the father and person I have become.

Not everyone becomes a full-time tap dancer when they graduate from NCYTE, but they all become full-time authentic people. Our mission is to help our members find this same sense of self through dance and mentorship. As they live to express, not impress, they will help build a kinder and more creative future for us all. Thank you for helping the company continue to blossom in the coming years.

All my best,
Zans

# Vision and Mission



**NCYTE's mission is to preserve and promote the rich legacy of tap dance and other percussive dance forms by creating an inclusive and inspiring environment where young artists can grow, thrive, and contribute to the evolving world of tap. Through education, performance, and community engagement, we are dedicated to ensuring that tap dance continues to inspire and connect audiences around the world.**



## 2025-2026 Season

**13 Performances**
For over 3,500 people



**8 Workshops**



1 Festival serving over 300 dancers from all over the world.

# Season Commitment

**This season was one of Resonance. Resonance begins with us and ends with us, asking not what disappears, but what remains. We focused our performances and outreach on creating moments in our community that will ripple out, continuing our mission long after we have left the space. Our goal was to pair more intentional outreach with our performances to build the impact of each experience.**





We were able to pair **three different workshops** with performances in elementary schools, showing students and teachers that they too can share in the experience of communicating through rhythm. NCYTE collaborated with Meredith College and Enloe High School to create the **Triangle Tap Collective**, building community and supporting other local tap programs.

A full day event curated for the Fuquay-Varina Arts Center included **four workshops, a community jam, and a performance**. This outreach created a meaningful pathway for local dancers to connect with our company. One workshop participant was inspired to audition for NCYTE and was selected to join the company for the upcoming season—**demonstrating the lasting impact** of this community engagement.



# Programming



**The NCYTE Dancer experience offers mentorship with directors and high-level tap dancers in the tap community, along with access to a celebrated repertory by renowned choreographers.**

Dancers receive additional training beyond their weekly studio tap classes and gain professional performance experience on stages of all sizes. Through this journey, they build confidence and a strong work ethic while becoming part of a special community of dedicated tap dancers who share their passion. **NCYTE operates at zero cost to members.**

## Theatre Performances



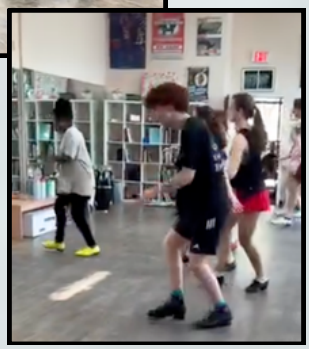
NCYTE tours full-length evening performances to theatres and arts centers. This year, NCYTE presented **Resonance** at the Carolina Theatre of Durham and the Fuquay-Varina Arts Center. These opportunities allow our dancers to collaborate with theatre professionals in lighting, sound, and stage production, providing an essential part of their growth as professional artists.

## Community & Educational Performances

Much of NCYTE's performance schedule consists of appearances in schools, community centers, and retirement communities. This past year, **10 of NCYTE's 13 shows** were school or community events. During these performances, the dancers share the history of tap through educational talks woven into the performance. They encourage audience participation throughout the show and conclude each performance with an audience Q&A.







## Workshops

NCYTE offers several opportunities for dancers of all ages to learn from professionals. This year NCYTE directors traveled to **lead a continuing education class for public school teachers, 2 school workshops, and 4 community workshops.** The company also hosts professional tap dancers for workshops throughout the year. This year NCYTE hosted workshops with alumni Jason Janas and Chicago-based dancer Star Dixon.

## The North Carolina Rhythm Tap Festival





The North Carolina Rhythm Tap Festival (NCRTF) was founded in 1999 by Gene Medler as a branch of NCYTE. Each year, this four-day event brings professional dancers from around the world to guide and educate dancers of all ages. There are **3 full days of classes** with **10 faculty members**, as well as **two- to four-day workshops** with individual instructors, allowing dancers to focus deeply on a specific technique or idea. NCRTF also provides community building opportunities, including jams with dancers and musicians, choreography showcases, and curated performances.

This year, we produced a solo performance by NC native Josh Hilberman, as well as a full-faculty showcase. This year NCRTF welcomed over 300 participants from the United States, Mexico, and Canada.



**NCYTE is dedicated to preserving and promoting tap dance in our community and beyond. The festival is our largest event and plays a vital role in bringing dancers, musicians, educators, and audiences together to celebrate tap dance and build a vibrant, connected tap community.**

# Our Team






## **Gene Medler** Founder

Gene Medler founded the North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble in 1983. He has been seen nationwide in the PBS special, “Juba! Masters of Tap and Percussive Dance”. Gene started dancing at the age of 28 and was quickly bitten by the tap dance bug. He started the ensemble because he wanted to offer his students more opportunities to perform and wanted to expand his own teaching and choreography. After nearly 40 years, he still loves mentoring young dancers and is thrilled with the journey NCYTE has provided.




## **Emily Shoemaker** Artistic Director

Emily is a proud Alumna of NCYTE (2001), performing and traveling with the company for seven years. Emily has a passion for tap dance and has continued to study tap dance and music theory throughout her career. Emily has been the Tap Director at CC & Co Dance Complex in Raleigh, NC, for 20 years. She has proudly watched her students go on to win Academy Awards and Tony awards, break boundaries in the world of dance, and, most importantly, become well-rounded and confident human beings.




## **Emily Jane Acree** Executive Director

Emily Jane is a freelance dance educator, choreographer, and performer passionate about the power of storytelling and using the arts to build community. A graduate of East Carolina University with a BFA in Dance Education, she has performed and choreographed throughout the East Coast, NYC, and abroad. She is thrilled to be working with NCYTE now to help support their mission and tell their story.




## **Caroline Vance** Assistant Director

Originally from Durham, NC, Caroline began as a student of Gene Medler in 1999 at the Ballet School of Chapel Hill. In 2008, she joined NCYTE as a dancer and graduated from the company in 2012 before attending UNC Chapel Hill. She has traveled with NCYTE to various festivals and events across the country, and she has had the privilege of teaching at the North Carolina Rhythm Tap Festival. Caroline is extremely grateful for the opportunities NCYTE has provided and is proud to work among such talented young dancers.




## **Zoe Foote** Assistant Director

Zoe is from Raleigh, NC and began tap dancing in 2005. She was fortunate to study with Gene Medler in Raleigh, later following him to the Ballet School of Chapel Hill. Zoe was a member of NCYTE from 2009 to her graduation in 2017. She attended George Washington University and graduated with a B.S. in Public Health. She is grateful for the opportunity to work with Gene, Emily, and Caroline, and she is especially grateful to work with the current company members.



# Behind The Scenes

## The 2025-2026 Board of Directors

**President**: Alexander McLachlan
**Vice President**: Heather Justus
**Secretary**: Kara LaFleur
**Treasurer**: Puja Puri

Kelly Carter
Michelle Dorrance
Josh Hilberman
Aftan Freeman Winters

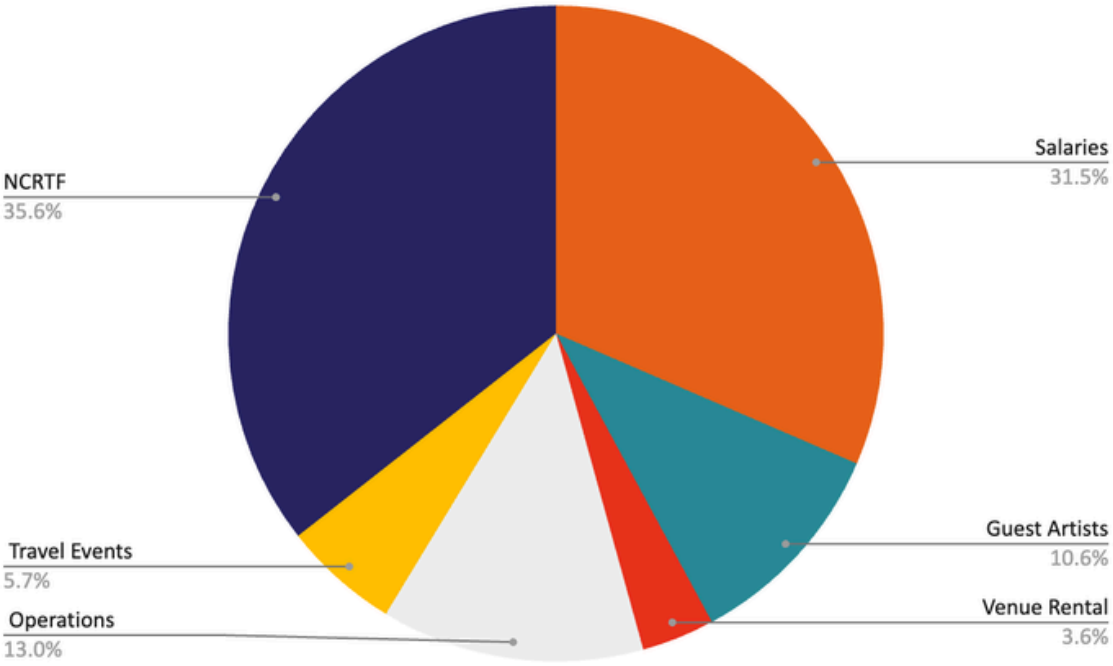


## The Musicians

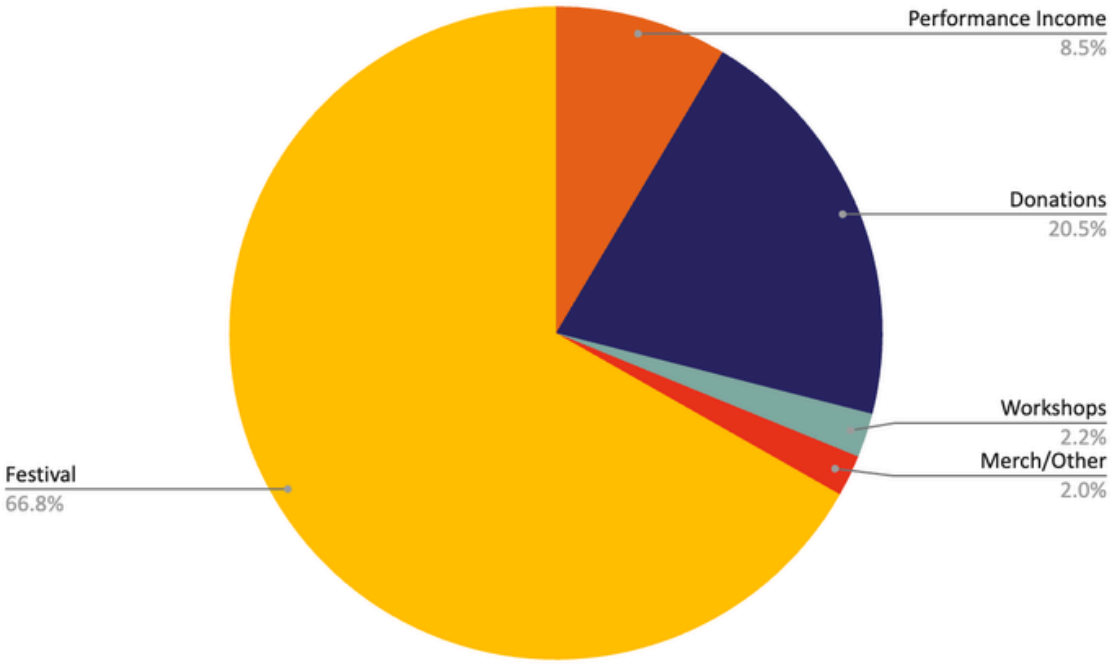
Jim Crew (Keys) John Hanks (Drums) Robbie Link (Bass)

# Finances at a Glance

## Expenses




## Income



# Financial Statements

## Expenses

### Professional Fees

| | |
|---|---|
| Guest Artist | 6,190 |
| Musician Fees | 4,900 |
| Photography Videography | 1,350 |
| Lodging | 1,060 |
| Travel | 1,198 |
| **Total** | **14,698** |

### Operations

| | |
|---|---|
| Accounting Fees | 1,500 |
| Admin Fees | $2,025 |
| Costumes/Props | $120 |
| Floor Upkeep & Storage | $2,781 |
| Marketing | $11,540 |
| **Total** | **$17,966** |

### NC Rhythm Tap Festival

| | |
|---|---|
| Guest Artist Fees | 32,602 |
| Musician Fees | 3,500 |
| Lodging | 5,356 |
| Meals | 3,634 |
| Travel | 4,162 |
| **Total** | **$49,254** |

### Salaries

| | |
|---|---|
| Artistic Fees | 28,076 |
| Admin Staff Fees | 15,512 |
| **Total** | **43,588** |

### Travel

| | |
|---|---|
| Transportation | 2,828 |
| Lodging | 4,559 |
| Meals | 551 |
| **Total** | **$7,938** |

### Venue Rental

| | |
|---|---|
| **Total** | **$4979** |

**Total Expenses: $138,424**

## Income

| | |
|---|---|
| Donations | 42,195 |
| Festival | 105,043 |
| Performance Income | 13,399 |
| Workshops | 3,451 |
| Merchandise / Other | 3,218 |




**Total Income: $167,306**

# 2025-2026 Support

Many thanks to our yearly studio sponsor:

THE BALLET SCHOOL of Chapel Hill

## Show Sponsors:

Hendrick BUICK GMC CARY

DURHAM ARTS COUNCIL

## NCRTF Sponsors:

Lucky DANCEWEAR

CAROLINA PERFORMING ARTS

CAPEZIO

Brandwein's BAGELS

Guglhupf BAKERY & RESTAURANT

caffè DRIADE

CARRBORO COFFEE ROASTERS 27510

ALFREDO'S PIZZA

AMP Tap Board



# Monthly Donors

Sarah Bermeo
Sarah Crumbaugh
Jennifer Jackson
Nina Jain
Riza Jenkins
Heather Justus
Gillian Parke
Ahmad Rulianto
Amy Woodsong
Eda Ziya

# Partners ($1000 +)

Drew & Jamie Barr
Jessica Bright
Michelle Dorrance
M'Liss Dorrance
Shu-Yi Oei
Robert Perera
Puja Puri & Ethan Beattie
Mala Puri & Vinod Kurup
Kelly Sayed

# Friends ($500 +)

Judy Charles
Mary Kate Gladstone
Jay & Kajal Patel
Tracy Strong
Qisheng Zhang

# Fans ($120 +)

Lane Alexander
Jane Beattie
Rebecca Kremm
Nikki Harmony
Daniel Lewandowski
Alexander McLahlan
Joe Mohar
Nancie Pritchard
Susan Sugar
Andy Willard

# Gene Medler Scholarship Fund

Thank you to a one time donation of $10,000, we are able to start the Gene Medler Scholarship Fund. These funds are used for supporting NCYTE dancers in financial need, as well as attendees of the NCRTF.

**Thank you to all of our donors who make this possible.**

# NC Youth Tap Ensemble

## Contact Us


https://www.ncyte.org

info@ncyte.org

1603 E. Franklin Street
Chapel Hill, NC 27514