

# MILWAUKEE BALLET

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Milwaukee Ballet welcomes Above the Clouds as a resident community partner**

- New Baumgartner Center for Dance enables the program to deepen impact in the community -

**MILWAUKEE** – Oct 4, 2019 — Milwaukee Ballet proudly announces Above the Clouds, Inc. as a resident community partner in its Baumgartner Center for Dance.

As part of the partnership, the organization’s advanced ballet students will come to the Baumgartner Center for Dance for a free, weekly ballet class with Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy faculty. This will supplement the current ballet classes Above the Clouds teaches at their facility.

“Milwaukee Ballet strives to remove barriers that prevent students from studying our art form. These barriers could be geographic, socio-economic, or even related to how students’ peers and families perceive ballet,” explained Milwaukee Ballet Director of Community Engagement Alyson Chavez. “With this strong focus on providing ‘ballet without boundaries,’ we look forward to developing the artistry of these students.”

“Adding this advanced class to the existing their programming is so beneficial to their current and future students and has been something Linda Wade, president of Above the Clouds, has wanted to do with for a long time. We finally have the space to make it happen,” Chavez explained.

“Above The Clouds is honored to be chosen as a resident community partner for Milwaukee Ballet. We have been working with the Company for more than 10 years and are excited to deepen our relationship with them,” said Linda Wade. “These classes are an ideal progression for our students, encouraging them to continue their study and aspire to new levels of excellence.”

Additionally, these students will see *The Nutcracker* with their families, as well as all other productions with Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy students.

This announcement comes shortly after Milwaukee Ballet unveiled its new, state-of-the-art facility, the Baumgartner Center for Dance. Located in the Third Ward, the 52,000 square-foot building includes a space dedicated to its Community Engagement efforts, the Vandenberg/Mardak Community Studio, where the Above the Clouds ballet classes will take place.

The Vandenberg/Mardak Community Studio will also be used for Milwaukee Ballet’s award-winning partnership with Children’s Hospital, Tour de Force and its partnership with three Milwaukee Public Schools, Relevé.

Milwaukee Ballet moved out of its former home, the Jodi Peck Center, at 504 W. National Avenue in July after 38 years.

#### **About Above the Clouds**

Incorporated in 2001, Above the Clouds, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3), faith-based, free, creative arts program, which originated to reach disadvantaged children ages five through 17 in the Milwaukee area who would otherwise not have the means or opportunity to participate in such programs.

#### **About Baumgartner Center for Dance**

Milwaukee Ballet's Baumgartner Center for Dance is located at 128 N Jackson Street in Milwaukee's stylish Third Ward. The 52,000 square-foot-facility, named in honor of lead donors and longtime supporters Donna and Donna Baumgartner, is home to Milwaukee Ballet's professional dancers, School & Academy, production team and administrative staff. Milwaukee Ballet opened its doors to the new facility Sept 4, 2019. Milwaukee Ballet bought land from the Italian Community Center in late 2017 and broke ground on the Center in June 2018. The facility designed by HGA's Jim Shields and was built by Catalyst Construction.

#### **About Milwaukee Ballet**

Milwaukee Ballet was founded in 1970 and celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. Led by Artistic Director Michael Pink, Milwaukee Ballet transforms lives and connects communities through inspiring performance, community engagement, education and training. Milwaukee Ballet hosts an international company of dancers and is one of the few companies in the nation to maintain its own orchestra. Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy is one of 11 professional ballet schools in the country to be accredited by the National Association of Schools of Dance (NASD), and is the only one in the Midwest. Milwaukee Ballet's award-winning Community Engagement department serves more than 30,000 people in Southeastern Wisconsin each year through original, interactive programs.

### Note to editors: More images and interviews available on request.