

OU to co-host 23rd annual Michigan Dance Festival

 October 8, 2018

SHARE THIS STORY

The Michigan Dance Council (MDC) and Oakland University will co-host the [Michigan Dance Festival](#) on Saturday, Oct. 13 in Varner Hall on the OU campus.

“This is the 23rd anniversary of the Michigan Dance Council’s Annual Dance Festival,” said [Gregory Patterson](#), associate professor of dance at Oakland University and chair of the OU Department of Dance. “We are always excited for this event since it brings in dancers from across the state and offers them an opportunity to network, learn and grow as artists.”



The Michigan Dance Council (MDC) and Oakland University will co-host the Michigan Dance Festival on Saturday, Oct. 13 in Varner Hall on the OU campus.

This year's festival features two free community classes — Ethio-Modern Dance with Dr. RAS Mikey Courtney, and Adapted Dance for Youth with Cognitive and Physical Challenges taught by VSA Michigan teaching artist Barbara Selinger. All levels are welcome, but registration is required.

The day-long festival also includes a special dance workshop for middle school-age dancers, master classes in Ballet, Hip Hop and Modern/Contemporary Dance, and a Summer Scholarship Audition where students from middle school through college can audition for scholarships to some of Michigan's finest summer dance programs, including the Grand Rapids Ballet, Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, NewDance Fest with Eisenhower Dance Detroit, Complexions, MPulse Institute, and Art Lab J.

The festival will culminate at 7 p.m. with the Annual Showcase Gala Concert and Artists' Talk, which will celebrate innovation and excellence in choreography with performances of dance works by the eight finalists for the Maggie Allesee Choreography Award — Tracy Halloran, Randi-Kay Anthony, Kristi Faulkner, Julia Moore, Bailey Allshouse, Alyssa Brutlag, Steven Eatmon and Jeremy Blair — who were selected through an adjudication process. [Tickets](#) to the concert are \$20 for the general public, or \$15 for seniors and students.

“The chosen recipient of the Maggie Allesee Choreography Award will receive a \$1,000 stipend to aid in developing the choreographer's future work,” Patterson said.

This year's festival will also offer four professional development workshops:

- VSA Michigan Dance Adaptation by Barbara Selinger (Detroit Dance Collective)
- The Future of K-12 Dance Education in Michigan by Gregory Patterson (OU associate professor of dance, chair of the OU Department of Dance, and president of the Michigan Dance Council) and [Dr. Elizabeth Kattner](#) (OU assistant professor of dance and secretary of the Michigan Dance



Council)

- VSA Teach Workshop: Lesson Plans for Working with Dancers with Physical and Cognitive Challenges by Barbara Selinger (Detroit Dance Collective)
- Working with Special Populations by [Dr. Janet Graetz](#) (OU associate professor of special education in the Department of Human Development and Child Studies).

“Individuals with an autism spectrum disorder learn in unique ways,” Graetz said. “With a greater understanding of autism, educators and teaching artists can help these students embrace the arts. Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to describe the characteristics of an autism spectrum disorder and discuss strategies to increase motivation, minimize behavioral and sensory issues, and promote learning in the arts.”

More information about the festival, including the registration link, is available on the [Michigan Dance Council](#) website at www.michigandance.org/michigan-dance-festival.