



March 1, 2025

Dear Friend of Crooked Tree Arts Center,

I founded the Crooked Tree Arts Center School of Ballet in March of 2003. Many of our alumni have gone on to dance professionally in several American dance companies including Miami City Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, and Deeply Rooted Dance Theatre. Additionally, they are graduates of MFA and BFA dance programs, are currently on our Faculty, and thrive in dance-related careers. We are proud to have brought **world-class dance education to over 4,000 students** (ages 4+) in Northern Michigan and beyond.

Our unique and specialized dance education is a gift that is passed from one generation to the next, one person at a time. We provide dedicated training in ballet and alternative dance modalities, composition, pedagogy, and stagecraft. And our **pre-professional dancers spend approximately 10,000 hours** with us over a decade.

Due to our growing reputation over the past several years, we have enjoyed collaborations with numerous regional and national choreographers, composers, orchestras, visual artists, and writers. We keep ticket prices affordable to make our performances accessible to a broad audience, many of which have never been exposed to dance before. **This community has made our accomplishments possible.**

We are entirely committed to our students' successes and growth, ensuring that financial limitations do not restrict them from full possibility. Without the Dance Scholarship Fund (revenue from performances and individual gifts), a significant number of our dancers would not be where they are today.

I am often asked how I measure the success of the program - Is it by how many professional dancers we've put into the world, how many students we have? The measure of the School's success is not limited to those who dance professionally but rather to each alums' own individual successes in life. **Shaped by their time training with us and the lessons they learn at the School, our alums are making the world a better place.** Some become dancers, yes, but others become teachers, nurses, scientists, social workers, coaches, fathers, and mothers. Our program develops excellent human beings who are critical thinkers with curious minds.

Please consider making a gift to support this life-changing program! You can learn more at [crookedtree.org/SoB2025](http://crookedtree.org/SoB2025). **I would love to have a conversation with you about how you may designate your gift of support.**

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather Raue", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Heather Raue  
Founding Artistic Director  
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