

**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR** TERRENCE S. ORR  
**PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School Invites Children to Audition for Dance Scholarships**



**PITTSBURGH, PA (June, 2019)** – Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre invites children from ages 5-8 to audition on **Saturday, June 8**, for the opportunity to receive a full or partial scholarship to study ballet during the 2019-2020 school year. Check-in begins at 12:15 p.m. at PBT Studios in the Strip District, 2900 Liberty Ave. The audition is from 1-2 p.m., with registration available online in advance or onsite day-of.

As part of its Community Youth Scholarship program, PBT will be awarding up to five full scholarships for children to train in its Children's Division. Although the program focuses on early exposure, PBT commits to funding scholarship recipients' training all the way through the school's Pre-professional Division if they choose to continue their ballet training.

PBT created the scholarship program in June 2013 to make the school, company and art form more widely accessible to students and families throughout the greater Pittsburgh area. In addition to talent and passion for dance, students must demonstrate financial need to be eligible for scholarship funds.

At the audition, students will take a basic dance class instructed by PBT School Children's and Student division faculty members. No previous dance experience is required. Children must be 5-8 years of age by Sept. 1, and must qualify for the Free and Reduced Lunch program or meet similar requirements to be eligible for a scholarship. During the audition, PBT School will host an information session on PBT and the art of ballet for parents and family members.

"It's really important to ignite the passion at a young age so they can take advantage of training and learning opportunities during these formative years," said Marjorie Grundvig, PBT School co-director. "Some of these children could be our next generation of professional dancers. And whether they choose ballet or a different career path, many will learn valuable skills from ballet that they'll find helpful in other areas of their lives."

The annual program aims to introduce children to dance at an early age and make top-tier training accessible to talented students who demonstrate financial need. The program focuses on students from ages 5-8 – a pivotal stage to begin classical ballet training. Currently, 26 promising young students are receiving ballet training at PBT School through the Community Youth Scholarship Program.

By reducing potential barriers to training, these scholarship programs help widen the pool of talent that the company can attract to auditions, accept to its school and ultimately even recruit into the company, which is made up of more than 50 percent PBT School alumni.

The program is funded by an endowment fund from the Ladies Hospital Aid Society, among others, and by many individual donors who value the power of dance to enrich the lives of children.

To register for the audition, please complete the online registration form at [www.pbt.org/youthscholarships](http://www.pbt.org/youthscholarships). For questions, please contact Kathryn Gigler, director of education and community engagement, at 412-454-9105 or [kgigler@pittsburghballet.org](mailto:kgigler@pittsburghballet.org). Space is limited. For full audition guidelines and program details, please visit [www.pbt.org/youthscholarships](http://www.pbt.org/youthscholarships).

## **ABOUT PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE SCHOOL**

Under the direction of PBT Artistic Director Terrence S. Orr and School Co-directors Marjorie Grundvig and Dennis Marshall, PBT School provides a diverse dance curriculum to more than 1,200 students annually across its Children's, Student, Pre-Professional and Community divisions. Ranging from pre-ballet to pre-professional, PBT School fosters the expression, discipline and joy of ballet at every level and cultivates the next generation of professional dancers. Strengthened by daily exposure to the professional company, PBT School students experience training that extends from the studio to main-stage performance opportunities in PBT productions at the Benedum Center.