



## Mijkalena Smith

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### Education

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Temple University – Bachelor of Fine Arts, Dance 2021  
Boyer College Alumni Award Recipient  
Frances Bowden Award for Excellence in Dance Recipient  
National Honor Society for Dance Arts (NHSDA) Graduate  
West Chester University – Non-degree, Undergraduate, Dance 2016 – 2018

### Training

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I Am Phresh Dance Academy – Training Program 2021  
Antoine Troupe – Philadelphia Troupe Intensive 2021

### Teaching Experience

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**Dance Instructor:** *Jazz Level 2, Contemporary Level 2, Recreational Dance Team* 2022-present  
Remix Dance Collective, LLC. – Morgantown, PA

**Dance Instructor:** *Lyrical Level 2, Intro to Hip Hop, Hip Hop Level 1, Conditioning, Jazz Level 2, Jazz Level 4, Contemporary Level 3, Turns & Leaps, Company Director - UMDGC Performance Company* 2021-present  
Upper Merion Dance and Gymnastics Center – Upper Merion, PA

**Substitute Dance Instructor:** *Jazz Levels 3 & 4, Ballet Levels 1-3, Hip Hop Level 1, Adult Dance Fusion* 2021-present  
Upper Merion Dance and Gymnastics Center – Upper Merion, PA

**Dance Instructor:** *Fidget Education Program* 2022  
Waldorf School of Philadelphia – Philadelphia, PA

**Dance Instructor:** *Summer Camps* 2021  
Upper Merion Dance and Gymnastics Center – Upper Merion, PA

**Dance Instructor:** *Lyrical Level 1* 2020  
Performance Studios – Riverton, NJ

*I started in this position in August 2020. In this course I teach five 7 and 8-year-olds focusing on foundational technique (i.e. finding turnout, core strength), choreography retention (I teach a combination every class), and musicality (improvisational exercises to develop relationship to artistry and music).*



**Substitute Dance Instructor:** *Boys Hip Hop, Jazz Levels 2-4, Contemporary Levels 2 & 3, Lyrical Level 2, Musical Theater Level 3, Composition and Improvisation* 2020 – 2021  
Performance Studios – Riverton, NJ

**Substitute Dance Instructor:** *Turns and Leaps Levels 1 & 2* 2020  
I Am Phresh Dance Academy – Philadelphia, PA

**Substitute Dance Instructor:** *Jazz Levels 1 & 2* 2020  
Rain Dance Studio – Philadelphia, PA

**Power Scholars Academy Dance Enrichment Teacher** 2019  
Oscar Lasko YMCA and Childcare Center – West Chester, PA  
*I worked in this position from July 2019 to August 2019. In this position I developed, wrote and taught a dance curriculum for 40 children ages kindergarten to fifth grade (with no dance experience). The students were divided by age group. I broke the curriculum into three major sections tailored to each age group: Hip Hop, Jazz and Musical Theatre, Choreography and Improvisation.*

**Substitute Dance Instructor:** *Contemporary Levels 2 & 3, Leaps and Turns Level 3* 2019  
Remix Dance Collective, LLC. – Morgantown, PA

**Substitute Dance Instructor:** *Ballet Levels 2 & 3* 2017 – 2019  
Remix Dance Collective, LLC. – Morgantown, PA  
*My ballet classes focus a great deal on control and precision. I believe it is important to hit a balance of maintaining proper technique while offering exercises that challenge students.*

**Dance Instructor:** *Contemporary Level 1* 2017 – 2018  
Remix Dance Collective, LLC. – Morgantown, PA  
*This position was my first time teaching my own class. I taught four girls ages eight to fourteen, focusing on the fundamentals of modern technique combined with competition/contemporary tricks. I choreographed a three-minute piece for them that they performed at dance competitions as well as our studios' annual recital.*

**Assistant Teacher:** *Contemporary Levels 2 & 3* 2016 – 2018  
Remix Dance Collective, LLC. – Morgantown, PA

**Assistant Teacher:** *Creative Movement, Jazz Funk 1* 2017  
Remix Dance Collective, LLC. – Morgantown, PA  
*In this position I assisted a startup six-week program at the studio. I helped teach Creative Movement (ages 1-3) and Jazz Funk 1 (ages 5-9).*

**Student Teacher:** *Beginner Ballet, Ballet Level 1* 2016 – 2017  
Remix Dance Collective, LLC. – Morgantown, PA  
*In this position I observed for the first month of classes, then gradually took over class responsibilities until I taught full classes by the end of the year. I was primarily in charge of leading barre and warmup, across the floor, and choreographing recital dances.*



## Teaching Philosophy Statement

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*When I think about the kind of teacher I want to be, I feel I have to consider the kind of person I am. Reflecting on the values I hold myself to allows me to integrate a teaching philosophy that is built off personal experience and ongoing learning. The following are the most fundamental aspects of my philosophy as a teacher:*

- 1) **Work Ethic:** I was raised in a household where quitting was not an option and learned how to hold myself accountable. I feel that this is an extremely valuable skill not only in dance but in every aspect of life. As a teacher I hold my students accountable for their responsibilities. This includes preparation (such as arriving to class on time, following dress code, etc.) as well as the students' commitment to the classwork. Students will be spoken to and disciplined as necessary if I feel they are not maintaining an adequate work ethic.
- 2) **Self-Efficacy:** Too often teachers pigeonhole students. It is important to acknowledge a student's individual strengths and weaknesses, however too much focus on this can be polarizing, thus diminishing the ability to succeed in weak areas. I was always labeled as a "jumper" at my dance studio. While it may have been true that I had better leg coordination and strength when I was 14 years of age than core balance for turns, my body and abilities have since changed. This label led me to believe my turns would always be worse, hindering my improvement in that area. As a teacher I stay away from this closed-minded approach and offer a more uniform and inspiring view of success by viewing strengths and weaknesses as ever-changing. Students must think, "I will try" rather than "I cannot."
- 3) **Body Positivity:** Throughout my young adult life, I have struggled greatly with eating disorders and body dysmorphia. While I understand this is primarily a result of my personal mental health, I believe that the body-shaming and perfectionist nature of dance contributed to my negative self-talk. As a teacher I promote an environment of confidence and acceptance. I use accurate and positive language when I speak to dancers, making sure I correct in a way that focuses on the dancer's technique and is not an attack on their body or their values as a person. This is a value I am extremely passionate about and will continue to promote in my classroom.
- 4) **Non-Discriminatory Practices:** As an adult with the opportunity to shape young minds it is my duty as a person and educator to make sure that every student feels comfortable and listened to in my classroom. No student should be made to feel inferior in a learning environment, let alone on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, religious and political belief, ability, or any other belief that devalues the life of another human being. We join in classrooms to learn and to make mistakes, but discrimination of any kind will not be practiced or tolerated in my classroom.