



**ALVIN AILEY**  
**AMERICAN DANCE THEATER**

Press Contact: Paolina Lu  
(212) 405-9032 / [plu@alvinailey.org](mailto:plu@alvinailey.org)

## **AileyCamp New York Celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> Year as Part of National Program that Inspires and Educates Young Students through Dance and Personal Development**

### **The Innovative Summer Program Reaches Inner-City Youth in Eight Cities Nationwide, Guiding them to Believe in their Unlimited Potential**

(New York, NY) June 25, 2015 – Since its inaugural summer in 1991, **AileyCamp New York** has been using the art of dance as a means to stretch the minds, bodies, and spirits of young students in Washington Heights. Now celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, AileyCamp New York, is one of the eight AileyCamps across the country helping young people reach their full potential. Founded by Alvin Ailey and Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey in 1989, each summer, the **full-scholarship day camp** gives approximately 900 **inner-city students ages 11-14** a supportive environment to use dance as a vehicle for developing **self-esteem, self-discipline, creative expression, and critical-thinking skills**.

“AileyCamp provides an eye-opening experience, teaching students that we’re only limited by our imagination and that anything is possible when it comes to their future,” says **Artistic Director Robert Battle**. “In November 2014, I was honored to accept the **Presidential Medal of Freedom**, the Nation’s highest civilian honor, on Mr. Ailey’s behalf. AileyCamp is one of the essential ways that we carry on Mr. Ailey’s legacy and fulfill his belief that ‘dance came from the people and should always be delivered back to the people.’”

AileyCamp’s curriculum includes daily technique classes in ballet, Horton-based modern dance, jazz, and West African dance, as well as **personal development and creative communication classes**, which teach campers how to express themselves in positive ways. The campers discuss topics that include conflict resolution, nutrition, and career development. They learn to carve out their own identities within an encouraging framework that gives them an important foundation for the future. **Camp tuition, uniforms, dance attire, field trips, breakfast and lunch are provided to each student free of charge**. Daily affirmations, such as “**I will not use the word ‘can’t’ to define my possibilities,**” guide them on a path to becoming confident, productive and motivated individuals. In recent years, a boy’s percussion class was developed to enhance campers’ musicality through learning the history, technique, and rhythms of different instruments.

“Alvin Ailey recognized that dance could inspire people in life-changing ways, motivating them to set and achieve goals,” explains **Nasha Thomas**, a former member of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater **who is celebrating her 15<sup>th</sup> year as National Director of AileyCamp**. “As I visit camps throughout the summer, I am inspired by the nearly 1,000 students I meet and by the countless stories of success I hear from former campers. I often see Christopher Taylor from AileyCamp Newark because he’s now on scholarship at The Ailey School, Solomon Dumas from AileyCamp Chicago danced as a member of Ailey II and now teaches at the Ailey Extension, and I just learned that Madison Naya Hill from AileyCamp New York will start college in fall 2015 as a biological engineering student at M.I.T.”

**AileyCamps** will provide a safe environment motivating and educating students in **Kansas City, MO** and **Kansas City, KS** (June 1 to July 10); **Atlanta, GA** (June 3 – July 10); **Berkeley, CA** (June 22 – July 31); **Miami, FL** (June 22 – August 1); **Baltimore, MD** (June 29 – July 24), **Newark, NJ** (June 29 – August 7), and **Washington Heights, NY** (July 6 – August 14).

All AileyCamps culminate in a final performance for family, friends and community leaders where campers showcase their hard work in an original production of specially choreographed dances, poetry readings and theatrical improvisations. The theme guiding the AileyCamp curriculum this year is **Gratitude**. This theme will also be celebrated in all AileyCamp final performances. The performances not only highlight the creative and technical skills of the campers, but also serve as an exciting display of the self-confidence, performance skills and pride developed during camp. In the New York area, **the final performance for AileyCamp Newark** will be held at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center on **August 6th at 7:00pm** and **AileyCamp Washington Heights' final performance** will be held at Hostos Community College/CUNY Theater on **August 13th at 7:00pm**.

**Ailey's Arts In Education & Community Programs** are committed to bringing dance into classrooms, communities, and the lives of people of all ages. Programs include special student performances; lecture-demonstrations; technique classes; AileyCamp, a full scholarship summer camp for underserved inner-city youth; and innovative curriculum based residencies inspired by *Revelations*. For further details on Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and the Ailey organization's performances, training programs and Ailey's Arts In Education activities, visit [www.alvinailey.org](http://www.alvinailey.org).

#### **PRESS**

For photos, videos, and additional press materials regarding AileyCamp visit:

<http://pressroom.alvinailey.org/arts-in-education-and-community-programs/aileycamp>

**Prudential is proud to be the lead funder of AileyCamp Newark**

**Leadership support for Ailey's Arts In Education and Community Programs is provided through the Simin & Herb Allison Arts In Education Endowment Fund.**

**Major support for AileyCamp is provided by the Meringoff Family and The Pinkerton Foundation**

**Major support for Ailey's Arts In Education and Community Programs is provided by The Hearst Foundations, Southern Company, and the Victoria Foundation**

**AileyCamp Newark is administered in collaboration with Newark Public Schools and NJPAC**

**AileyCamp Washington Heights is administered in collaboration with the Children's Aid Society**

**###**

#### **About Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and the Ailey organization**

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, recognized by U.S. Congressional resolution as a vital American "Cultural Ambassador to the World," grew from a now-fabled March 1958 performance in New York that changed forever the perception of American dance. Founded by Alvin Ailey, recent posthumous recipient of the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and

guided by Judith Jamison beginning in 1989, the Company is now led by Robert Battle, whom Judith Jamison chose to succeed her on July 1, 2011. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has performed for an estimated 25 million people in 71 countries on 6 continents, promoting the uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience and the preservation and enrichment of the American modern dance tradition. The Ailey organization also includes Ailey II (1974), a second performing company of emerging young dancers and innovative choreographers; The Ailey School (1969), one of the most extensive dance training programs in the world; and The Ailey Extension (2005), a program of dance and fitness classes for the general public. Each year, Ailey's Arts in Education & Community Programs educate and inspire over 100,000 young people in classrooms and communities through student performances, lecture-demonstrations, technique classes, curriculum-based residences inspired by Alvin Ailey's signature masterpiece *Revelations* and AileyCamp, a unique summer day camp in cities nationwide. The permanent home of the Ailey organization at 55th Street and 9th Avenue – named The Joan Weill Center for Dance – is the largest building dedicated to dance in New York City – the dance capital of the world. For more information on the Ailey organization's performances, training and educational programs, visit [www.alvinailey.org](http://www.alvinailey.org).