



## For Immediate Release

### Media contacts:

Jennifer Morton, Mueller Communications  
Cell: 319-325-9564; Office: 414-390-5500  
[jmorton@muellercommunications.com](mailto:jmorton@muellercommunications.com)

Leslie Rivers, Milwaukee Ballet  
Cell: 414-510-0052; Office: 414-902-2102  
[lrivers@milwaukeeballet.org](mailto:lrivers@milwaukeeballet.org)

## Milwaukee Ballet Breaks Ground on the *Baumgartner Center for Dance*

*Capital Campaign to support the new facility nearly 85% towards goal*

**Milwaukee – June 5, 2018** – Milwaukee Ballet broke ground on the new *Baumgartner Center for Dance* this afternoon in a formal ceremony on the site of the future two-story, 52,000 square foot facility at 132 N. Jackson St. During the ceremony, Milwaukee Ballet announced the capital campaign that is underway to create this new physical space and to provide program funds to empower the world-class artistry and operations of Milwaukee Ballet.

Honorary Campaign co-chairs and lead donors Donna and Donald Baumgartner proudly unveiled the name of the building, which was creatively revealed by Milwaukee Ballet's dancers.

"We are absolutely thrilled to break ground on the *Baumgartner Center for Dance*. This Center has been the Company's dream for many years and it is an absolute pleasure to help convert it to a reality," shared Donna Baumgartner.

"Donald and I share not just a love of dance, but we value the transformative power this organization adds to the life of our community. The new Center will provide a place for dancers, teachers and students from across the Americas, Europe and Asia to learn, study and perform their craft. We see Milwaukee Ballet with its strong educational component as a cherished asset to the cultural landscape of Milwaukee and Wisconsin. The new Center is necessary to sustain the growth of Milwaukee Ballet and Milwaukee Ballet School and Academy to the greater benefit of our community."

The new facility will be a significant component of Milwaukee Ballet's capital campaign, which has almost reached \$22 million of its total \$26 million goal. The capital campaign components focus on each aspect of the Company's mission: artistry, education, and community engagement, while providing an operating reserve fund to support the increased expenses of running a larger facility.

"The unveiling of the *Baumgartner Center for Dance* is a critical and celebratory milestone in Milwaukee Ballet's history," said Justin Mortara, Milwaukee Ballet President and Capital Campaign Chair. "We are grateful to our donors who have contributed to this new era for the company. We are confident in the success of the project and are excited to put the shovel in the ground today."

The *Baumgartner Center for Dance* will house Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy, the Midwest's only accredited professional studio school. It will feature seven studios that will reduce class waiting lists, enable new classes, and make it possible for more ballet students at all levels to achieve their goals and dreams. More than 600 families across greater

Milwaukee already participate in the classes offered by Milwaukee Ballet in three locations, but many more desire to enroll in classes. The expanded facility will allow more children to experience ballet.

In addition to the ***Baumgartner Center for Dance***, the campaign will benefit the Artistic Fund. The Fund will enhance the Ballet's trajectory of recognized choreographic excellence and spur development of new works.

"Our dedication to developing classical ballet for a modern world underpins our efforts to attract new ballet patrons of all ages and backgrounds. This fund will also support the creation of new work for our School & Academy students who benefit from unique opportunities to develop their technique and share the stage with our Company dancers," said Artistic Director Michael Pink.

The third pillar of the capital campaign is the "Give Back to Milwaukee Fund." Milwaukee Ballet provides hundreds of community engagement opportunities which touch 30,000 lives throughout greater Milwaukee. The Give Back to Milwaukee Fund will support an expansion of Milwaukee Ballet's community engagement programs, like Tour de Force, to make them even more flexible, inclusive and encompassing.

The shovels used in the groundbreaking ceremony were decorated by children from Milwaukee Ballet's Community Engagement programs and School & Academy, as well as Krista Allenstein from Milwaukee Ballet's Costume Department.

"Milwaukee Ballet has created moving experiences in Milwaukee for the last 50 years and we hope our announcement today moves the community to further support our future plans," said Milwaukee Ballet Executive Director Julia Glawe. "The new Baumgartner Center for Dance and the expanded programs housed within it will ensure the continued growth and expansion of our impact in Milwaukee and the surrounding region."

The ***Baumgartner Center for Dance*** was designed by a team from HGA Architects and Engineers, led by Design Principal James Shield, FAIA, John Chapman, Principal-in-Charge, and Andrew Lasca, Project Manager. The construction will be managed by Catalyst Construction, led by Adam Arndt. The due diligence, entitlement and construction process is being managed by Catalyst Construction and The DeMichele Company, respectively led by Adam Arndt and Michael DeMichele.

"The ***Baumgartner Center for Dance*** was designed with a nod to the beauty and history of the surrounding buildings, but at the same time stand out as an important new feature of the Third Ward," shared Design Principal James Shield. "It's designed with a desire to be an open, inviting "hive of activity" for the community, drawing in passersby to experience the transformative work of dance."

#### **About Milwaukee Ballet**

*Milwaukee Ballet was founded in 1970 and is led by Artistic Director Michael Pink and Executive Director Julia Glawe. Milwaukee Ballet's mission is to create a rich and diverse community through its inspiring dance performance, education and outreach. Milwaukee Ballet hosts an international company of dancers, and is one of the few companies in the nation to maintain its own orchestra. Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy is the only professional dance school in the Midwest accredited by the National Association of Schools of Dance. Milwaukee Ballet's award-winning Community Engagement department serves more than 30,000 people in Southeastern Wisconsin each year through original, interactive programs.*

###