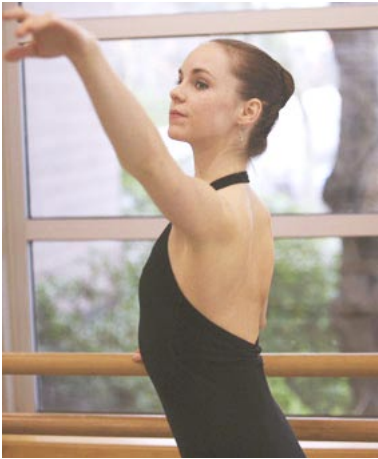


Pacific Northwest Ballet School was founded in 1974 and has achieved national recognition as one of the leading dance institutions in the country.



A Professional Division student of Pacific Northwest Ballet School. Photograph by Angela Sterling.



Pacific Northwest Ballet School DanceChance students. Photograph by Angela Sterling.

"Pacific Northwest Ballet School is a source of great pride for all of us at PNB. The name synonymous with the School is Francia Russell. The rich history and high standards that are part of PNBS today are the result of Francia's tireless dedication and unwavering vision. That vision will continue to guide us into the future."

– Peter Boal, Artistic Director of Pacific Northwest Ballet and Pacific Northwest Ballet School since 2005

- 1974** Professional training program for Pacific Northwest Dance offers classes at Madrona Dance Studio, assuming residency at Good Shepherd Center in Wallingford later that year. Janet Reed appointed Director of the School.
- 1975** "The Official School of the Pacific Northwest Dance Ballet Company" opens its doors with a 10-week summer course in June in studios at the Good Shepherd Center. By autumn, 230 students are enrolled in graduated classes. One-week teachers' seminar is offered during the summer and again in 1976, laying the foundation for the bi-annual Teachers' Seminar established in 1979.
- 1976** Melissa Hayden begins one-year tenure as Ballet Mistress of Pacific Northwest Dance and Director of the School.
- 1977** Francia Russell appointed Director of the School.

"They were very modest beginnings, but we were young and determined. Kent and I taught most of the classes. We were happy to have the Good Shepherd Center, for all its limitations. We had a one-person office; just two showers – the boys', in the basement, flooded frequently; initially there were only two small studios for both Company and School."

–Francia Russell, Director of Pacific Northwest Ballet School, 1977-2005

- 1979** PNBS requires auditions for all students entering the School above Level I.

Pacific Northwest Ballet School's Teachers' Seminar, conducted by Francia Russell, becomes a bi-annual offering, attracting participants from the West Coast. The Teachers' Seminar now attracts teachers from around USA and Canada.
- 1981** PNBS is first ballet school to hire a consulting staff, including kinesiologist, psychologist, and nutritionist.

PNBS Summer Course develops into a 6-week intensive training program for advanced students, following a 6-city audition tour conducted by Ms. Russell. The Summer Course is currently a 5-week intensive training course that attracts students from around the world. Admission continues to be by invitation based on results of an extensive 21-city national audition tour. Students are now offered housing at the University of Washington and Seattle Pacific University during Summer Course.

Pacific Northwest Ballet

Pacific Northwest Ballet School currently offers a complete professional track curriculum to nearly 1,000 students in Seattle and Bellevue, with another 500 teens and adults participating in the Open Program, offering more than 200 classes weekly.



Pacific Northwest Ballet School Faculty member Elaine Bauer in class with PNB School students. Photograph by Angela Sterling.

- 1982 First Annual School Performance held in June at Meany Hall, University of Washington. In 1988, growth necessitates move of Annual School Performance to Seattle Center Opera House. In 2004, the Annual School Performance expands to two performances at the new McCaw Hall.
- 1983 Premiere of Pacific Northwest Ballet’s Stowell/Sendak *Nutcracker*, involving dozens of PNBS students in its many roles.
- 1986 PNBS opens second location in Bellevue, WA, enrolling 90 students in classes through Level IV. 350 students are enrolled at PNBS in Seattle at the Good Shepherd Center, with another 350 adults participating in Open Program classes.
- 1988 PNBS is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Dance, acknowledging the School as one of the top training institutions in the country.

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation award and subsequent Surdna Foundation grant allow PNBS to formalize syllabus, increase faculty salaries (including 52-week contracts for faculty) and broaden curriculum.

“At Pacific Northwest Ballet School, I learned discipline, patience, perseverance, and the value of a strong work ethic. The teachers and staff were kind and caring and helped me realize my full potential. I was able to persevere, slowly rise through the levels of the School, and finally be invited to join my dream company, Pacific Northwest Ballet.”

– Jessika Anspach, Pacific Northwest Ballet School student, Creative Movement through Professional Division; current Pacific Northwest Ballet Company dancer

- 1993 PNBS relocates with the PNB to The Phelps Center on Seattle Center campus. With eight professionally-designed studios, spacious dressing rooms with ample showers and lockers, state-of-the-art therapy room, comfortable student lounge, and dance library, PNBS’s new facility is among the best in the world.

Pilates-based instruction is offered as injury-prevention cross-training for PNB dancers. The program develops into PNBConditioning, available to PNBS students, PNB dancers, and the general public. In 2002, PNBCConditioning expands to The Francia Russell Center.

- 1994 DanceChance program launched, offering classical ballet training on full scholarship to elementary school children in Seattle School District. The goal of the program is to discover talented youngsters and provide them with an opportunity to pursue dance that they might not otherwise have had. During its first year, 66 third-graders are selected from 600 boys and girls at 12 Seattle schools. In 2004, DanceChance expands to The Francia Russell Center. Students are integrated into PNBS beginning at Level III. Currently, 38 former DanceChance students are enrolled in Levels III through VII.

- 1998 Professional Division Audition Fund established as part of career preparation program.



The Francia Russell Center. Photograph by Angela Sterling.

1999

Pacific Northwest Ballet School students travel to London to perform *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Pacific Northwest Ballet at Sadler's Wells Theatre. The production is filmed by the BBC and subsequently released on DVD.

2002

Talented Students in the Arts Initiative awards \$1 million to PNBS, including challenge grant for PNBS Endowment and additional grant money for education program enhancement. PNBS is only the classical ballet school to be included in this prestigious program.

The Francia Russell Center, Pacific Northwest Ballet School's new state-of-the-art Eastside facility, opens in Bellevue, WA. Eastside enrollment grows to over 500 students.

2005

Peter Boal becomes Artistic Director of Pacific Northwest Ballet School upon retirement of Francia Russell.

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