

# *Brown Girls Do Ballet Newsletter*

## Summer Edition 2023

### *A Note To The Reader:*

Dear Readers,

Hello and welcome to the second edition of our Brown Girls do Ballet newsletter—created by BGDB ambassadors and mentors! We are so excited to share updates and articles about what is happening here at BGDB. This edition will include articles about our book release, scholarship updates, BGDB Promotions, and college advice. We hope you enjoy and stay tuned for our fall edition!

Sincerely,  
Sydney, Moriah, and Joelle

### *Meet The Authors:*



*Sydney*

*Hi I'm Sydney Mitchell! I just completed high school at the Chapin School and my dance training with Dance Theatre of Harlem in NYC. I'm an incoming freshman at Yale University where I plan to major in Ethics, Politics, and Economics and, hopefully, join Yale Dancers. I am so excited to continue my work as a BGDB ambassador, intern, and cofounder of the newsletter!*



*Moriah*

*My name is Moriah Mitchell, and I studied at the Ruth Page School of Dance. I am a Brown Girls Do Ballet ambassador, Mentor, and proud co-founder of our newsletter. Getting to work on this facet of the organization is so much fun, and I am so glad we can share all of these wonderful updates with you. Thank you for reading, and please enjoy!*



*Joelle*

*Hi everyone, I'm Joelle! A rising sophomore at The University of Oklahoma and an alumna of Oklahoma City Ballet School. I currently major in Ballet Performance and Biology on the pre-med track. I am a mentor and intern with Brown Girls Do Ballet, and I love working on the newsletter!*

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# College Applications and Dance

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*Not everyone applies to college, as there are many different paths to life—especially for dancers. For those that are interested in a collegiate future, I hope this article helps! -Sydney*

## Key Terms:

- **Personal Statement:** An essay, typically around 650 words in length, that provides information, illuminating who you are to the college admissions people. This essay is almost always submitted to each college you apply to.
- **Supplements:** Essays specific to the college or program that you are applying to. These are typically shorter in length than a personal statement, 100-400 words, and colleges can require none or up to a couple of supplements.
- **College Tour:** A walking tour of the campus for prospective students, typically led by a current student. These happen year-round and can even happen in the rain or light snow—so make sure to dress accordingly. These tours are supposed to be around an hour but often go over. Campus tours are a great way to gauge if you can see yourself as a student at the school!
- **College Information Session:** A college information session is a session led by the admissions department and, sometimes, current students. They give an overview of aspects of the college or university, including housing, athletics, arts, academics, etc. These are typically paired with a college in-person tour, but information sessions can be virtual or in-person. If you attend an in-person information session, it typically happens before the tour. These last about 30-60 minutes in length.

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## Tips:

- **Start researching early!** The hardest part about applying to college is finding the time. This is an extensive and time-consuming process— you want to ensure you are doing quality research to pick a school where you would be happy for the next couple of years. I recommend utilizing summer months to attend in-person college tours; you can even turn it into fun road trips. Also, sign up for virtual information sessions over the summer— it is good to knock out as many of these as possible before the academic and dance year starts. Remember to take notes on your tours and information sessions, as the information you learn could be helpful for further researching the schools online or be good information for your supplements! (Sometimes, if I could not make the scheduled time of a virtual information session because I was at rehearsal or class, my mom would screen-record the session so I could watch it later.)



- **Similar to tip #1...write your personal statement and supplements over the late spring or summer.** As you go through your junior year of high school, keeping a journal is a good idea. Using a journal may be helpful for you to write down anecdotes and reflections on your life experiences. A good exercise is to think about how you want to brand yourself as a person, creating a list of adjectives or values that are core to who you are. There are several youtube videos that can help you with your personal statement, too (e.g., The College Essay Guy). Writing over the summer before application season will allow you to focus on your school work and dance schedule without stressing too much about essay writing.



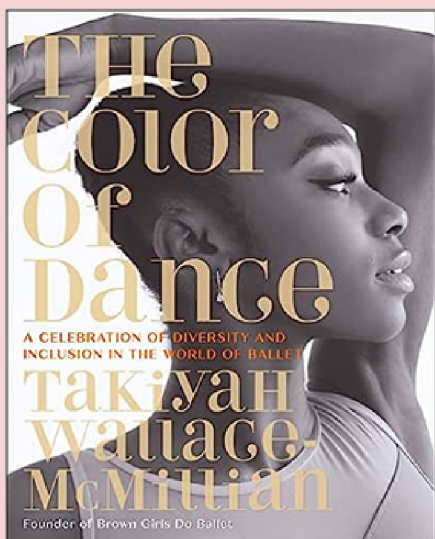
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# College Applications and Dance

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## Tips Continued:

- **Find a support system!** It is so important to have figures that can be a pillar of support for you while you go through this taxing process. A support system can be your parents, an older sibling, a cousin, a school or dance teacher, etc. Having a person or people that you can talk to and plan out the process with will be incredibly helpful for you and your mental health.
- **Communicate, communicate, communicate!** Applying to college is, to iterate again, very time consuming and at points exhausting. Have a conversation with your dance and academic teachers about your college process so they can best support you. There may be occasions where you need to miss class or rehearsal because of a college tour or for essay writing, make sure to tell your teachers in advance so they understand. I was fortunate enough to have a few days off from school for college visits, but I was not granted these with my ballet school. So, my parents helped me to communicate with my dance school about absences and everything worked out.
- **Make sure to film a dance reel or arts supplement.** You have been training so hard for so long, showcase the talent that you've been developing and mastering! If you are applying as a dance major a dance reel or arts supplement is probably required, however if you are applying as a general student make sure you don't miss out on this opportunity to showcase your talent! This video of your dancing will give a personality to your application, painting a fuller picture of who you are and all your accomplishments! You can find examples of dance supplements on youtube, they typically include excerpts of performances or class work and do not exceed 15 minutes in length.
- **Believe in yourself!** While this process can be difficult at times, it is also an opportunity to showcase all your hard work and talent. Please remember that an admissions decision does not value your worth. At all. You can do this!



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## The Color of Dance

Ever since Brown Girls Do Ballet sparked from a photo shoot project, our mission has been to create a beautiful, inspiring, and diverse platform for brown and black dancers specifically in the world of ballet. Our founder, Takiyah Wallace, has traveled to lead photoshoots all over the country, capturing the essence of the brown and black heritage in a facet of dance that is known to be traditionally European. After achieving a collection of photos that accomplish this goal, Takiyah has worked hard to formulate these beautiful images into a breathtaking picture book, which will release in Fall of 2023.

We are so excited to announce this project which features many different Brown Girls Do Ballet ambassadors. Some are old, some are new, and all represent different heritages and come from different backgrounds. This book represents a breakthrough in the dance world, a photo collection that stands out from the rest. It is not only inspiring but aesthetically gorgeous and represents a congratulatory culmination of a 10-year journey of BGDB photoshoots. The story of Brown Girls Do Ballet truly comes full circle: starting as a photo project in 2013 and releasing a photo book a decade later. This book will teach and inspire young girls that they don't have to wait to see ballerinas that look like them - they already exist. With just a flip of a page, we have changed ballet for the better. We can't wait for this book to fall into the hands of many little girls and dreaming ballerinas who will find a new source of inspiration.



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## *Brown Girls Do Ballet 2023 Graduates*



As the end of the school year comes to a close, the echoes of Pomp and Circumstance can be heard across the country. This year, twelve of our very own ambassadors have made the celebratory transition out of high school into the next chapters of their lives. Join us in congratulating them! Each of these ambassadors have already made amazing impacts in the world of dance and beyond.

### **Congratulations to our class of 2023!**

- Sydney** - Yale University (Ethics, Politics, and Economics and Yale Dancers)
- Gabrielle** - University of Southern California (Law, History and Culture ~ Pre Law and Dance)
- Jai** - Johnson C. Smith University (Biology, Pre Health and Dance)
- Moriah** - Hillsdale College (Exercise Science and Dance)
- Mckenna** - Vitacca Vocational School of Dance (Dance)
- Tori** - Hampton University (Human Developmental Psychology and Spanish)
- Quincy** - University of Southern California (Dance and Pre Law)
- Ciyanna** - Dean College (English and Dance)
- Timara** - Paul Quinn College (Health and Wellness)
- Kaira** - Southern Methodist University (Dance Performance and International Business)
- Nya** - Suny Purchase College (Dance and African American Studies)
- Aniyah** - University of Waterloo (Masters of Public Health)

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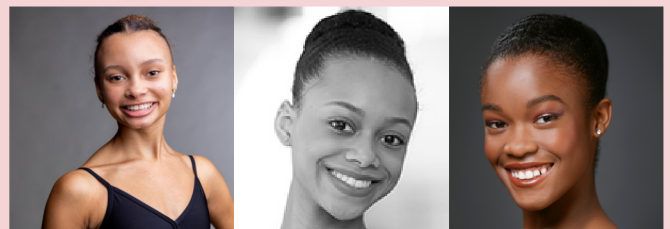
### *Scholarships & Grants Recap*

Last year, our organization awarded several scholarship and grant recipients a total of \$72,000. Special thanks to our corporate sponsors and private donors who made it possible to make this happen for dancers of color and small studios across the nation.



### *Company Promotions*

We would like to take a little time to send major congratulations to some of our ambassadors who have been promoted in their professional dance careers!



**Alex Owens**  
Ballet Austin  
Apprentice

**Olivia Bell**  
New York City Ballet  
Corps De Ballet

**Destiny Wimpye**  
Pacific Northwest Ballet  
Corps De Ballet

