



AILEYCAMP MARKS 35 YEARS IN NEW YORK AND 15 YEARS IN NEWARK OF EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH DANCE

Local Middle School Students in New York and Newark, NJ Discover Their Unlimited Potential in Six-Week Program with National Theme of TIME: Teach, Inspire, Mentor, Elevate



Photos Left to Right: AileyCamp Newark reciting daily affirmations. Photo by Nicole Tintle; AileyCamp New York rehearsing Judith Jamison's *Hymn*. Photo by Danica Paulos; AileyCamp Newark final performance, 2025. Photo by Danica Paulos.

NEW YORK, NY (JULY 16, 2026) – This summer marks the 35th anniversary of Children’s Aid/AileyCamp New York and the 15th anniversary of AileyCamp Newark, the six-week program that provides a safe space for metro-area youth ages 11-14 to develop self-confidence and explore their creativity through dance. Welcoming over 200 local youth, AileyCamp New York runs July 6-August 14 in collaboration with the Children’s Aid Society in the Bronx, and the Newark camp runs June 30-August 7, in partnership with New Jersey Performing Arts Center and Newark Public Schools. Since AileyCamp Newark’s inaugural session in 2011, the program has proudly been hosted at Arts High School in Newark, the first performing arts high school in the country.

Alvin Ailey and The Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey created [AileyCamp](#) in 1989 in Kansas City, ultimately being the last initiative Mr. Ailey founded before his passing. Established in 1991, AileyCamp New York was the next step in the program’s national expansion, advancing Mr. Ailey’s vision of using the power of dance to enrich the lives of children. Now operating in nine cities nationwide, AileyCamp marks almost four decades of dedication to youth development across America, providing a supportive environment for students to express themselves, build leadership and communication skills, and develop a foundation for successful futures.

Across six weeks, students engage in the [AileyCamp curriculum](#), which focuses on developing self-esteem, creative expression, and critical thinking skills, while partaking in a variety of daily dance techniques, including ballet, Horton-based modern, jazz, and West African. The Personal Development classes allow students to work on goal-setting and conflict resolution, and Creative Communication classes unleash their creativity through visual arts-based projects, creative writing, and more. **With Daily Affirmations such as, “I will not use the word ‘can’t’ to define my possibilities,” AileyCamp empowers youth to cultivate self-awareness and imagine a limitless future for themselves.**

“I am thrilled to engage with students across the country to offer the unique inspiration provided by AileyCamp,” says **National Director [Nasha Thomas](#)**. “For a combined total of 50 summers in New York and Newark, our transformative program has been life-changing for thousands of young participants. It is a joy to collaborate with our talented faculty and alumni, along with our dedicated partners, to help the next generation step into their unlimited potential as we embody our national theme, TIME: Teach, Inspire, Mentor, Elevate.”

An important aspect of the program’s success is in providing positive adult and peer role models who give campers the invaluable opportunity to explore their creativity, learn to master their bodies, and strengthen their respect for themselves and others. The dedicated instructors and staff are positive role models who nurture campers’ creativity

within an atmosphere of warmth, respect, and trust. The AileyCamp community strengthens each year, as alumni return to the program in leadership roles, helping to guide their young peers. Camp tuition, uniforms, dance attire, field trips, breakfast and lunch are provided to each student free of charge.

Each AileyCamp presents a special final performance for family, friends, and community leaders, where campers showcase their hard work in original productions of choreographed dances, poetry readings, and theatrical improvisations. AileyCampers will have the opportunity to perform an excerpt inspired by Ronald K. Brown's masterwork, *Grace*, a rapturous blend of modern and West African dance originally created for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. To celebrate the metro area youth's transformation and accomplishments, **AileyCamp Newark's final performance will take place on Friday, August 7 at 7pm at NJPAC and Children's Aid/AileyCamp New York's final performance on Thursday, August 13 at 7pm, at Hostos Community College.**

The AileyCamp experience extends beyond the summer sessions with reunions and special activities, including witnessing a performance by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, which includes three AileyCamp alumni: [Solomon Dumas](#) (Chicago), the first former AileyCamper to join the troupe; [Christopher Taylor](#) (Newark), who also studied on scholarship at The Ailey School and danced with Ailey II; and [Sebastian Garcia](#) (New York). While AileyCamp is designed to foster personal growth and is not meant to be a training ground for professional dancers, some students receive scholarships to study at The Ailey School or pursue training at other accredited dance institutions and have later performed with professional dance companies.

PRESS:

- Click here for [AileyCamp Overview film](#) as well as [photos](#) and [videos](#).
- For additional information, please visit pressroom.alvinailey.org.
- Upon request, site visits, media interviews and coverage opportunities may be arranged to highlight AileyCamp, including final performances.

Upcoming Important Dates:

- July 21, 2026 – AileyCamp New York Site Visit (Children's Aid Society)
- July 22, 2026 – AileyCamp Newark Site Visit (Arts High School)
- July 28, 2026 – AileyCamp New York Site Visit (Children's Aid Society)
- August 3, 2026 – Local AileyCamps Site Visit to AILEY Studios (Joan Weill Center for Dance)
- August 7, 2026 – AileyCamp Newark Final Performance (New Jersey Performing Arts Center)
- August 13, 2026 – AileyCamp New York Final Performance (Hostos Community College)

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**AileyCamp New York is supported by The Altschul Foundation, Keith Haring Foundation,
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support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.**

About Ailey Arts In Education & Community Programs

Since 1992, Ailey Arts In Education & Community Programs has been committed to bringing dance into homes, classrooms, and communities across the country to positively impact people of all ages through the power of dance. In addition to AileyCamp, a summer day camp for youth, in-person and remote programs include lecture demonstrations, technique classes, innovative curriculum-based residencies inspired by Alvin Ailey's *Revelations* and *Night Creature* and Ronald K. Brown's *Grace*, and AileyDance for Active Aging, a program for older adults that serves as an outlet for artistic expression and fosters a sense of joy. For more, visit ailey.org/community.

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