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**Media Contact:** Stephanie Jayakanthan  
Baltimore School for the Arts  
sjaykanthan@bsfa.org  
443.642.5174 (o)  
520.233.3947 (c)

## **Baltimore School for the Arts Names Laura Halm as its New Dance Department Head**

**BALTIMORE** – After conducting a worldwide search, Baltimore School for the Arts (BSA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Laura Halm as the next leader of its Dance Department. An alumni of the school as well as a gifted dancer, choreographer, and educator, Ms. Halm brings a bold vision to the program.

“We believe that Laura Halm is the perfect person to build upon the nationally-recognized foundation already in place at BSA and to take the dance program to new heights in serving the young people of Baltimore,” said Dr. Chris Ford, director of the school.

“I’m incredibly humbled by this opportunity, and excited to serve the next generation of dancers in Baltimore,” said Ms. Halm. “I believe dance education must be an amalgamation of all techniques. The professional dance world now requires someone who is adaptable and able to draw upon a vastly diverse set of skills. Each young dancer is also an individual, and their education must be flexible and able to strengthen their unique skills and gifts.”

After graduating from BSA in 1999, Ms. Halm attended the Juilliard School in New York. Her professional dance career began with Hubbard Street Dance in Chicago, followed by two companies in Germany. Most recently she was the rehearsal director and choreography assistant for the Dance Company Nanine Linning in Heidelberg. Prior to that appointment, she danced with the Ballett des Saarlandischen Staatstheaters in Saarbrücken.

In her role with Dance Company Nanine Linning, Ms. Halm has been responsible for coaching and training young professional dancers as well as managing many of the business and logistical affairs of the company. She has also taught dance at the University of Washington in Seattle.

Throughout her career she has been engaged in creating dance—whether as a dancer collaborating with world-renowned choreographers or as an independent artist creating original works; much of this work has been a contemporary extension of ballet techniques.

Ms. Halm will succeed retiring Dance Department Head Norma Pera, who has been a beloved faculty member since the school's founding, and has served as Dance Department Head for 26 years. There will be a retirement celebration for Ms. Pera on Saturday, June 9.

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The Baltimore School for the Arts is a nationally recognized public arts high school that provides its students with intensive pre-professional training in the arts in conjunction with a rigorous academic curriculum. BSA graduates go on to the most selective arts and university programs nationwide and achieve prominence in theater, film, music, dance, and the visual arts. Additionally, the BSA's highly acclaimed TWIGS program offers free after-school arts instruction to more than 700 city elementary and middle school children from schools across Baltimore, as well as other outreach initiatives to thousands more. Founded in 1979, the school is an integral and vibrant part of Baltimore's educational and cultural communities.

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