UNION PARK Charter Academy presents....

EACH SMALL VICTORY CAN FEEL GIGANTIC

HOW TO DANCE IN OHIO

A NEW MUSICAL BASED ON A TRUE STORY

Books and Lyrics by
Rebekah Greer Melocik

Music by
Jacob Yandura

October 20 & 21, 2026
6:30pm

PHSC IPAC
8657 Old Pasco Road
Wesley Chapel, FL 33544

HOW TO DANCE IN OHIO
is presented through special arrangement with Musical Theatre International (MTI).
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by by MTI.
www.mtishows.com

How to Dance in Ohio

Cast of Characters

DREW.....Aarav Chandwani

MARIDETH.....Hannah Okobi

CAROLINE.....Isabella Leitao Tosetto

JESSICA.....Gwen Scott

MEL.....Kendall King-McDuffie

REMY.....Addison Smith

TOMMY.....Phillip Britt

DR. EMILIO AMIGO.....Christian Cespedes

ASHLEY AMIGO.....Jalissa Bennett

JOHANNA.....Kamila Rosado

TERRY.....Valentina Galue

MICHAEL.....Jayce Flournoy

AMY.....Kenley Wisneski

KURT.....Maria Petersen

SHAUNA.....Cheyenne Gelser

RICK.....Leklan Ready

ENSEMBLE.....Jayanna Cadrin, Spila, Elyse Guthke, Mason Jacobson, Avery Lopez, Julie Museau, Lutisha Pierrelus,

How to Dance in Ohio

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ACT 1

Today Is……GROUP, AMIGO, ASHLEY, CAST

Under Control……..DREW, CAST

The How-Tos……AMIGO, PARENTS

How to Dance in Ohio……CAST

Unlikely Animals……MEREDITH

Butterflies……CAST

Slow Dancing……CAROLINE, CAST

Hello, How Are You?……AMIGO, SHAUNA, DREW

Come Home, Recover……ASHLEY

Getting Ready for the Dance……JOHANNA, TERRY

Waves, and Wires……DREW, AMIGO, ASHLEY, CAST

Thank you to:

- All of our amazing parents. Your support means the world to us!
- UPCA administration, faculty, and staff for always supporting the theatre department.
- Mr. Washington and Mr. Watson for supporting our crazy ideas.

ACT 2

Drift……MEREDITH, CAST

Terminally Human…… AMIGO

So Much In Common……CAST

So Much in Common, reprise……JESSICA

Chevy Silvarado……TOMMY

Admissions……DREW

Don't Fall Behind……ASHLEY

Reincarnation……MEL, ASHLEY

Two Steps Backward……CAST

Nothing at All……REMY, CAST

The Amigo Spring Formal……AMIGO, PARENTS, CAST

Building Momentum……DREW, AMIGO

The Second Chance Dance……AMIGO, PARENTS, CAST

Unlikely Animals, reprise……MICHAEL

Building Momentum, reprise……CAST

Finale……CAST

Please silence all cell phones. No flash photography. No video recording.

No food or drinks allowed in the theatre.

How to Dance in Ohio

Crew

DIRECTOR……Myndee Washington

MUSIC DIRECTOR……Jonah Watson

STAGE MANAGER……Rebecca Watson

SET CONSTRUCTION……James Washington

SET CREW……Isabella Cintron, Marissa Esqueda, Samuel Foster, Antonella Heredia Fonger, Moises Naranjo Romero, Isabella O'Brien, Harlie Simpson

PROPS……UPCA Technical Theatre Classes

From Broadway to…the UPCA Cafeteria! Creating any show with middle schoolers is challenging, but creating a show in my classroom and the cafeteria presents an entirely new set of challenges. However, when I saw that this incredible show was available, for the first time since it ended it's Broadway run in 2024, I knew it was a challenge we were ready for. How to Dance in Ohio is based on a true story and was the first time that the entire cast of a show was on the Autism Spectrum. The foundation of my career in theatre is built on the belief that theatre is for everyone and everyone has the right to see themselves represented on the stage. In the future, I hope that representation on stage is not an oddity, but the norm!

Enjoy the Show!

♥Mrs. Washington

How to Dance in Ohio

Cast Bios

JALISSA BENNETT (Ashley Amigo) Jalissa has performed in many shows like "Little Shop of Horrors", "Lion King", "Aladdin", and more. She plays Ashley Amigo and is very excited to perform in "How to Dance in Ohio"!

***PHILLIP BRITT** (Tommy) This is Phill's 3rd play. Previous shows include SpongeBob the Musical and tech for Little Shop of Horrors. He is so excited to be in this show.

***JAYANNA CADRIN SPINA** (Nurse)- Jayanna has been doing theater and plays since 1st grade and has always loved acting. She has been doing shows at UPCA for 3 years and is am exited to do her fourth year.

***CHRIS CESPEDES** (Dr. Amigo): Christian is our current Thespian Troupe President. His other roles at UPCA include Seymour in Little Shop of Horrors and an Electric Skates SpongeBob. He is excited to see you all onstage!

***AARAV CHANDWANI** (Drew) Aarav has done a few shows at UPCA, including Annie and Little Shop of Horrors, but has also done shows at the Straz Center and The Acting Studio. Aarav loves doing theatre and is so grateful for being in this show. Hope you enjoy!

JAYCE FLOURNOY (Michael) Jayce is a 7th grader here at UPCA. He is glad to be here and I am happy to be playing Michael. He cannot wait to perform how to dance in Ohio with such a wonderful cast!

VALENTINA GALUE (Terry) Valentina has done several shows at UPCA including, The Little Mermaid, Annie, and Yes, Virginia. Valentina loves to craft, play volleyball, and perform. She loves to work with her friends and do plays with them. She hopes you enjoy this show they worked so hard on.

***CHEYENNE GELSER** (Shauna) Cheyenne previously appeared in Annie and Yes Virgina. She loves to sing and act.

ELYSE GUTHKE (Hawkins) This is Elyse's first time in theater! I love to sing and act and is very excited for her role in How to Dance in Ohio.

***MASON JACOBSON** (Ensemble) Mason was bit by the theatre bug when he saw the UPCA production of In the Heights. He has since appeared in Annie, SpongeBob the Musical and Little Shop of Horrors. He cannot wait to see you in the audience!

***KENDALL KING-MCDUFFIE** (Mel)- This is Kendall's 6th show! Five of her shows have been held by our teachers and amazing directors Mrs. Washington and Mrs. Watson! She has worked very hard to create her character. It's a joy every day to be in this fresh new musical and play this character. She hopes you'll enjoy it as much as she does.

***ISABELLA LEITAO-TOSETTO** (Caroline) Isa is so excited to play the role of Caroline in How to Dance in Ohio. She previously played a Street Urchin in Little Shop of Horrors, and this is her second show at UPCA. She wants to thank everyone who helped this show come to life, and is very eager to perform!

***AVERY LOPEZ** (Ensemble) Avery has been at UPCA since 2nd grade and has performed in The Little Mermaid Jr and Little Shop of Horrors and has been a member of Thespians all 3 years of middle school. She is so happy that I do all things theatre!

***JULIE MUSEAU** (Ensemble) How to Dance in Ohio is Julie's first show in UPCA and she is very excited to be in it. She hopes you enjoy.

***HANNAH OKOBI** (Meredith) Hannah has been in the theater program for 6 years! She has been in every show from "Dorothy in Wonderland" to "Little Shop of Horrors" and is so excited to close off her experience here as an eight grader with this show. She has had an amazing experience and is so excited to take my final bow at UPCA!

***MARIA PETERSEN** (Kurt) Maria is a member of our Thespian Troup, but this is her first show! She is ecstatic to have the chance to do this! Thank you!

LUTISHA PIERRELUS (Ensemble) Lutisha is a member of our theatre class, but this is her very first show! She is so ready and excited for this musical!

LEKLAN READY (Rick/ Derrick)-This is Leklan's first show and he is very happy to be in such a grand show!

***KAMILA ROSADO** (Johanna) Kamila has done two other UPCA shows: Annie and Yes, Virginia, so How to Dance in Ohio will be lucky number 3. She is excited for future shows as well. Thank you!

***GWEN SCOTT** (Jessica) Gwen has been in many other shows at UPCA like Annie, Yes Virginia, SpongeBob the musical and more. She is very excited to perform in How to Dance in Ohio.

***ADDISON SMITH** (Remy) Addison has been in 9 UPCA shows few of which include SpoongeBob, Little shop of horrors, Annie, and now her 10th show How to dance in Ohio. Addison and the rest of the cast have put so much hard work and effort into the show and hope that you enjoy it greatly!

***KENLEY WISNESKI** (Amy) Kenley has been in SpongeBob, Little Shop of Horrors and now How to dance in Ohio, it's a pleasure to be in this show. She has been at UPCA for 9 years and has proudly represented Thespian troupe 89580 for all three middle school years. She is so glad you've come to the show. Thank you!

**** Member of Troupe 89580***

MYNDEE WASHINGTON (Director/ Costume Designer) Mrs. Washington started the UPCA theatre program nine years ago and has since gone on to direct/ produce 13 shows here. She is also the director of Honors Thespian Troupe 89580, where she has had numerous students receive top honors and critics choice awards at both the district and state levels. She holds a BA in Music from the University of Tampa, an MS in Diversity in Education from the University of Nevada- Reno where she is currently a PhD student in Diversity in Education.

JONAH WATSON (Music Director) C. Jonah Watson is the Director of Choirs at Sickles high school, A music Director and professional vocalist in Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties. He has been performing professionally for over a decade and has been an educator for the past 14 years. He is very proud of these students for telling these stories.

REBECCA WATSON (Stage Manager) is delighted to be stage managing *How to Dance in Ohio*. By day, she is a teacher at UPCA, and throughout the Tampa Bay area she works professionally as a stage manager, props master, and actor. She has had the privilege of stage managing and performing in numerous productions and is passionate about storytelling both onstage and behind the scenes. Rebecca is especially excited to support her students as they take the stage and share their hard work with audiences!

SHOUT OUTS

Finding your stage family was just the beginning—bravo, **Maria Pia** and the incredible troupe! Love, Mom & Juli

Kenley, We are so proud of you and all the hard work, dedication, and talent you bring to the stage. Keep shining, believing in yourself, and following your dreams. Enjoy every moment in the spotlight! We love you and are cheering you on every step of the way! Love, Your Family 🖤

Congratulations Elyse! We are so excited to see you do what you love! May you continue to climb those mountains to reach your dreams! Love you!

Great job Gwen! We are so proud of you!

Valen, watching you shine on stage makes us so proud! ❤️‍🩹 We admire your dedication and the love you put into everything you do. Keep shining, mi amor! ¡Te amamos muchísimo! 🎭✨❤️

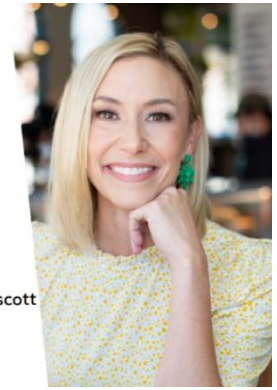
Kamila, we are so proud of you! You have worked very hard to get ready, we have loved listening to your singing, humming, and your lines everywhere you go. Your hard work and dedication will shine on stage tonight, we can't wait to see you bring it all together. Mama and Papa love you so much!

Could we say, "We are so proud of you, Leklan. Keep chasing your dreams. Love, Mom, Dad, and Gram"

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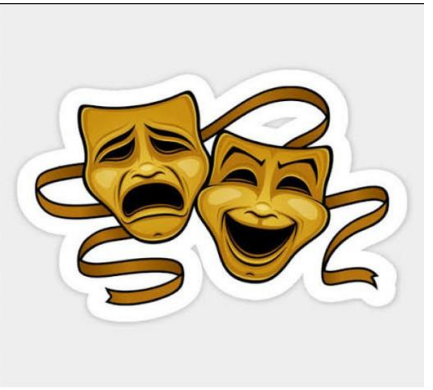


We are so proud of you, Jayce. Keep reaching for the skies.



Love, mom, Joshua and Grandma





CONGRATULATIONS, HANNAH!

Starring as "Marideth"
How to Dance in Ohio

A Standing Ovation for You!

As you take the stage for one of your final productions at Union Park Charter Academy as an 8th grader, we want you to know how incredibly proud we are of you.

Watching your confidence, talent, and dedication grow through the years has been a joy, and seeing you shine in this special role is a wonderful way to close this chapter of middle school.

You've worked hard, embraced every challenge, and brought so much heart to your performances, costume design, and stage tech. We know you'll make this show unforgettable, just as you've made so many memories during your time at UPCA.

Enjoy every moment under the spotlight, soak in the applause, and remember that no matter where your journey takes you next, we'll always be your biggest fans.

⭐ BREAK A LEG, HANNAH! ⭐
We love you & are so proud of you
Love, Dad, Mom & Logan ❤