

March 9, 2025

## About the Founding Chapter of the Dance Guilds of Virginia

The impetus to develop the Founding Chapter of the Dance Guilds of Virginia in Lynchburg is the belief that Charlottesville Ballet's role as resident dance company of the Academy Center of the Arts is of central importance to the Ballet's future – as is the growing presence of enthusiastic dance audiences here in Lynchburg.

The focus of the Dance Guilds of Virginia will be to:

- Build awareness and support for the Ballet;
- Benefit the Ballet's artistic, education, community, and dancer health initiatives;
- Cultivate collaboration with arts and educational partners across the region (both professional and student);
- Help advance a greater appreciation for the performing arts in Lynchburg, Charlottesville, and throughout the region.

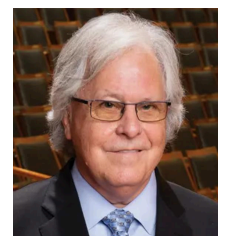
It is intended that additional chapters will be formed, both in Lynchburg and elsewhere, using the Lynchburg Founding Chapter as a model. Chapters will be identified by their special group interests and/or geographic locations – all sharing a central belief in the power of the arts to enhance, enrich, and transform lives.

### About the Steering Committee

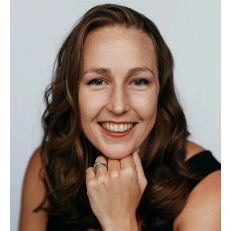
The Steering Committee for the Founding Chapter of the Dance Guilds of Virginia is a limited-term visioning group of a dozen or more people who will shape the mission, operating principles, and membership criteria for volunteer programs designed to support and advance Charlottesville Ballet's work in Lynchburg.

The work of the Steering Committee, to be undertaken in no more than five 90-minute planning sessions, is expected to be completed by the end of Calendar Year 2025. Empowered by the by-laws of the Charlottesville Ballet, the Founding Chapter will be formally launched during the first quarter of 2026.

Facilitating the planning sessions will be **Richard Bryant**, volunteer advisor to the Ballet. Richard recently retired and returned to Virginia after 50 years as a performing arts promoter, presenter, and producer with major venues across the country and artists from around the world, including most of the major ballet companies in the U.S. and many from Europe. Richard grew up in Lynchburg and graduated from UVA with degrees in Theatre and English.



The Ballet's Director and Co-Founder **Emily (Mott) Hartka** will participate in many of the planning sessions. Emily co-founded Charlottesville Ballet with Sara Clayborne in 2007. She grew up in Roanoke and attended Lynchburg's Virginia School for the Arts, during which time she graduated from EC Glass High School. She later attended University of Virginia, where she received her degree in Nonprofit Management & Arts Administration.



### Requirements for Steering Committee Participation

- Attend an initial planning session tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, at 10:30 AM at a location to be determined;
- Attend up to five planning sessions this calendar year on dates and times convenient to the most Steering Committee members;
- Support and advance ideas relevant to the important role of arts in this community, with an emphasis on making the arts accessible to all;
- Purchase tickets and attend Charlottesville Ballet events at Academy Center of the Arts and serve as an ambassador before and after the performance.

To nominate yourself or another to join the Steering Committee, please email Claudia Strawderman: [cstrawderman@charlottesvilleballet.org](mailto:cstrawderman@charlottesvilleballet.org)

For additional information, please call Richard Bryant: 973-886-5118.