

AMERICAN MIDWEST **Ballet**

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Print-quality photos available [here](#).



American Midwest Ballet's dancers will be making their move next week into the company's spectacular new home at the Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center in Council Bluffs. [Download photos...](#)

NOTE TO EDITORS: Contact Wesley Houston at the links above if you'd like to **tour the facility, attend a rehearsal, and/or interview artistic director Erika Overturff and company dancers about our new space.**

NEW HOME, NEW CAPABILITIES FOR AMERICAN MIDWEST BALLET

COUNCIL BLUFFS, Iowa — Next Tuesday, February 4, will mark the start of a new era for American Midwest Ballet, as its dancers begin their first rehearsals in its spectacular new home at the just-completed Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center in Council Bluffs.

"This is the first time in AMB's ten-year history that all our functions – classes and rehearsals, administration, production, and costuming – will be together under one roof," said Erika Overturff, American Midwest Ballet's artistic director. "We're excited about the capabilities this will give us to create dance for our audiences in Omaha, Council Bluffs, and beyond."

Centerpiece of the ballet's new facility is the main studio, with 16-foot ceilings and 2,745 square feet of floor space. Floor-to-ceiling windows with power-adjustable blinds provide natural light, with energy-efficient, variable-brightness LED lighting for the evening hours. Dancers' leaps and turns will be cushioned by a specially-constructed surface that is resilient, or "sprung," and covered with flooring designed specifically for dance. Two smaller but similarly equipped studios will accommodate additional rehearsals. When not in use by the company, all three studios will be shared with its affiliated American Midwest Ballet School.

Managed by nonprofit Pottawattamie Arts, Culture and Entertainment [PACE], the new center also features a fully-equipped 280-seat theater, the Polina & Bob Schlott Performing Arts Center, which the ballet will share with Chanticleer Theater and the Kanesville Symphony. Overturff said the new theater will complement Omaha's Orpheum Theater and Joslyn Art Museum, which will remain primary performance venues for AMB.

Company dancers' reactions to the new facility have been strongly positive.

"It's beautiful," said company dancer Whitney Walsh after a test session at the studio. "It's kind of overwhelming how incredible it is and how much light it gets. I'm so excited to be here every day."

First on the dancers' schedule next week will be rehearsals for the ballet's winter tour to Vero Beach, Florida. Next will come rehearsals for the ballet's performance as part of *PACE Interactive*, a February 22 event that will introduce the Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center to the public. [\[More info...\]](#)

Later in February, the company will begin rehearsals for its April season finale, *Swing, Swing, Swing!*, with performances on April 4 at the Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center and April 11 at the Orpheum Theater.

The ballet, a tribute to the Second World War's "Greatest Generation" and featuring live music from the Big Band era, was American Midwest Ballet's very first mainstage production in 2010, Overturff said — making it a fitting way to end the company's tenth season and kick off its new era.

"We've been working hard for ten years," she said. "It's special coming back to *Swing* because we can stop and see just how far we've come.

"And we can also recapture the excitement of that first season — of putting on a show and having an audience and being a company. It's a way of coming full circle."

American Midwest Ballet [AMB] brings the beauty, athleticism, and energy of professional ballet to audiences in the Midwest and beyond. Performing at home and on tour, its mission is to provide enrichment through programs of the highest quality: professional dance performances, educational programs, and community outreach.

AMB's tenth anniversary season is presented with the generous support of premier benefactors the Iowa West Foundation, the Fred and Eve Simon Charitable Foundation, the Holland Foundation, and Douglas County; season sponsors Omaha Steaks and the Peter Kiewit Foundation; and major support from the Heider Family Foundation, the Nebraska Arts Council, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, and the Sherwood Foundation.