

Melissa A Beverly

A native of Milwaukee, WI

Melissa Beverly attended the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 1980 where she studied Social Work. As she traveled on campus to class, she stumbled on an African dance class being taught by Ferne Caulker from Sierra Leone, West African. The heartbeat of the drums called out to her and it was at that moment, she began her life journey in African Dance and music at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.

Melissa studied Dance at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to 1985. In 1986 she Joined Ko-Thi Dance company where she studied traditional Caribbean and African dance and music. Melissa performed and toured the US and abroad (Tokyo Japan, New Mexico, New York-Lincoln Arts Center, Disney World/Orlando, Dance Africa-Chicago, DC, Dallas Texas, New York, Minnesota, Austin Texas and Tour Ohio, Oklahoma City, Delaware, California, Texas, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Indiana, Georgia, Florida.

While dancing full time and touring, Melissa found enjoyment with teaching children's classes on the weekend. She loved working with children. In 1992 Melissa became the Artistic Director of Ton Kothi, Children's dance company, Milwaukee WI. Ton Kothi Children Dance consist of 50 children ranging from the ages of 7-18 years. Melissa was responsible for training, teaching, choregraphing, Costumes and performances.

In 1998 Melissa began teaching African Dance at University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. She found happiness in teaching around the city of Milwaukee, City Ballet in Milwaukee WI, Summer camp at the Milwaukee Ballet, Milwaukee High School of the arts. Her mission and her love were to dance, study, share, and preserve traditional African Dance. Melissa studied under Master Artists from West Africa, South Africa, Congo and the Caribbean with over 40 years of African dance experience.

Melissa Beverly moved to Atlanta in 2005 and continued to Study and share the African tradition. She taught African dance to adults and children at Rockdale County recreation center, West End Performing Arts Center, A Time to Dance- studio. Melissa performed and worked with Atlanta based African dance companies, Kankali Danz, AnkaFo West African dance company. Currently Melissa serves as a dancer with Manga West African Dance company and assistant to the director of Manga Patel Childrens company.

Melissa currently work for Georgia State University, Panther Dining Retail unit management team.