

FOR REQUESTS AND MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

- **Jacob's Pillow:** Kendall Lockhart, Public Relations & Communications Coordinator, klockhart@jacobspillow.org
- **Berkshire Hills Regional School District:** Sheela Clary, Communications Consultant, sheela.clary@bhrsd.org

**30 Years of Dance and Discovery:
Jacob's Pillow Curriculum in Motion™
Connects Art and Academics
at Monument Mountain Regional High School**

**Locally-Focused Program Inspires Berkshire County Students
with Dance-Based Learning Opportunities**

Final in-class day of the current residency is Friday, December 13

December 4, 2024 (BECKET, Mass) – This week and next, students grades 9-12 at Monument Mountain Regional High School in Great Barrington are embracing a unique opportunity to step away from their desks and reimagine their classwork through a nationally recognized arts-integrated curricular approach: the Curriculum in Motion™ (CIM) program. Run by Jacob's Pillow—an internationally celebrated home for dance education and performance in nearby Becket—this innovative in-classroom arts residency integrates dance into academic subjects, connecting Berkshire County students with professional dance educators while fostering creative and critical thinking through movement.

The Curriculum in Motion™ program celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. The current two-week residency at Monument Mountain began on Monday, December 2, and will conclude on Friday December 13, with a second residency taking place February 3-14, 2025. The program, co-taught by Jacob's Pillow Artist Educators and Monument Mountain classroom teachers, focuses on the student's academic learning, social interaction, and creative thinking.

During this residency, Artist Educators Kimberli Boyd, Liv Shaffer, and Lynn Peterson have collaborated with students across various subjects, including English, Chemistry, Special Education, English Language

Learners, and Early Childhood Development, using movement to explore academic themes and concepts. In a 12th-grade English class reading Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, students use movement to deepen their understanding of the novel's themes of human connection, inspiration, and transformation. In Chemistry class, students explore complex scientific concepts like nuclear fission and fusion by representing these processes through dynamic movement, making abstract ideas more tangible. In Early Childhood Development classes, movement exploration helps students understand how young children develop motor skills, including balance, hand-eye coordination, and body awareness.

Kimberli Boyd, Curriculum in Motion™ Artist Educator, reflected on her long term involvement with the program: “Year after year, I have witnessed the joy and magic the Jacob’s Pillow Curriculum in Motion™ program brings to classrooms. There’s something truly transformative about watching students connect their lessons through movement, discovering new ways to express themselves and engage with their learning. It’s a testament to the power of dance to inspire and enhance education in profound ways.”

For the past 30 years, Monument Mountain Regional High School has served as the flagship school for the Curriculum in Motion™ program, where the methodology has been continuously developed and refined. The program, originally founded by Jacob’s Pillow Artist Educator Celeste Miller and “J.R.” Glover—then the Education Director at Jacob’s Pillow—was first implemented at Monument Mountain during the 1994-95 school year. After a pause during the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in 2020, the program returned to classrooms in 2023.

Christopher Barnes, principal at Monument Mountain Regional High School, shared: “I am thrilled to continue building on our long-time partnership with the Jacob’s Pillow Curriculum in Motion™ program. By integrating the arts into our curriculum, we’re enhancing learning in ways that engage both the mind and the body, empowering our students to excel academically and think critically. I have seen firsthand how the integration of dance into our lessons transforms how students approach learning, with increased enthusiasm, engagement, and deeper understanding of the material.”

Today, Curriculum in Motion™ reaches approximately 150 students in 12 classrooms each year. In addition to Monument Mountain, the program also operates in two other Berkshire County Public Schools: Becket Washington Elementary School in Becket and Conte Community School in Pittsfield. Through partnerships with a wide variety of artist educators, the program has demonstrated significant positive results: students improve critical thinking skills, enhance their creativity, and increase communication, teamwork, social, collaborative, and leadership skills. The program has been featured on Public Radio International’s *The Best of Our Knowledge*.

Support for Jacob’s Pillow Curriculum in Motion™ is provided by the Bessie Pappas Charitable Foundation; Central Berkshire Fund, a fund of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation; The Dr. Robert C. and Tina Sohn Foundation; and the U.S. Department of Education.

ABOUT JACOB'S PILLOW

Jacob's Pillow is a National Historic Landmark, recipient of the National Medal of Arts, and home to America's longest-running international dance festival, which will celebrate its 93rd season in Summer 2025. Jacob's Pillow acknowledges that it rests on the ancestral homelands of the Muh-he-con-ne-ok or Mohican people. We pay honor and respect to their ancestors and elders past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all. In addition, we acknowledge the Nipmuc, the Wampanoag and other tribal nations who also made their homes in what is now known as Massachusetts.

Founded by Ted Shawn in 1933, each Festival includes national and international dance companies and free and ticketed performances, talks, tours, classes, exhibits, events, and community programs. The School at Jacob's Pillow, a prestigious professional dance training center, advances the careers of the upcoming generation of performers and choreographers; during the Festival, 100 international dancers evolve as artists in ballet, choreography, contemporary, musical theatre, tap, and other genres, and year round, artist faculty and accomplished alumni nurture younger dancers in a series of Jacob's Pillow 360 workshops and intensives offered in partnership with leading dance institutions worldwide. The Pillow also provides professional advancement opportunities across disciplines of arts administration, design, video, and production through its seasonal internship program. Through its community engagement programs, the Pillow serves as a partner and active citizen in its local community. The Pillow's extensive Archives, open year-round to the public and highlighted online at danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org, chronicle more than a century of dance in photographs, programs, books, costumes, audiotapes, and videos.

Notable artists who have created or premiered dances at the Pillow include choreographers Antony Tudor, Agnes de Mille, Alvin Ailey, Donald McKayle, Kevin McKenzie, Twyla Tharp, Ralph Lemon, Susan Marshall, Trisha Brown, Ronald K. Brown, Wally Cardona, Andrea Miller, and Trey McIntyre; performed by artists such as Mikhail Baryshnikov, Carmen de Lavallade, Mark Morris, Dame Margot Fonteyn, Edward Villella, Rasta Thomas, and hundreds of others. On March 2, 2011, President Barack Obama honored Jacob's Pillow with a National Medal of Arts, the highest arts award given by the United States Government, making the Pillow the first dance presenting organization to receive this prestigious award. The Pillow's Executive and Artistic Director since 2016 is Pamela Tatge. For more information, visit www.jacobspillow.org.

MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR JACOB'S PILLOW IS GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY: Arison Arts Foundation, Barr Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Doris Duke Foundation, Ford Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, Mellon Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, Shelby Cullom Davis Charitable Fund, The Shubert Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Education. As of November 1, 2024.

#####