Colleen Panega
Colleen has been teaching dance for the Village of Orland Park Recreation Department since 1994. Colleen trained with Twyla Tharp in New York and Roland Dupree in California and has performed at Drury Lane Oakbrook, Drury Lane South, and at the Marriott Lincolnshire. She also performed in The Nutcracker for five years and appeared in Phantom of the Opera at the Ritz Carlton. Colleen was a director and an instructor at the Beverly Art Center’s Dance Department for more than ten years before leaving to open her own Longwood Dance Studio in 1992, a facility that she owned and operated for eight years. Colleen has served on the Village’s Arts Commission. Colleen has her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education and is currently a school teacher at Jerling Junior High School in Orland Park.

Kristin Lux
Kristin began dancing when she was two years old. She trained at Applause Dance Academy in Chicago for over 14 years and later studied under Jay Fagan, an internationally recognized tap master and choreographer. She is trained in many areas of dance including ballet, tap, jazz and hip hop. As a student of dance, she participated in various competitions and workshops, all of which help her succeed as an instructor today. Kristin has choreographed for many community projects and area schools, most recently Curtain Call Community Theater. She has also choreographed for several area high school dance teams. She continues her dance education by attending master classes, workshops and conventions regularly. Kristin loves teaching dance and sharing her passion with others at the Village of Orland Park Recreation Department for the last 10 years. She hopes to inspire her students as much as they inspire her!

Kathie Horan
Kathie began dancing at the age of seven with the Dennehy School of Irish Dance. She began teaching with them, under the instruction of Dennis Dennehy, a founding member of Irish dance in Chicago, when she was sixteen years old. She is still teaching at the Dennehy School in Chicago to this day and is proud of the history that she is able to share with the dancers. Kathie competed at the regional, national, & world championship level, travelling throughout the United States and Ireland. She loves to teach children how to dance and has been with the Orland Park Recreation Department for twenty years.
Ashley Costa

Ashley started dance classes at Stage Door Dance Academy at the age of 5. By 12 she realized that dance was her passion and continued her training at the American Dance Center where she was selected as an Illinois Delegate to compete in an International Dance Competition. She was a company dancer with The Young Americans performance arts company in California. She received her bachelors degree in Science, majoring in Elementary Education from Saint Xavier University. After graduating Ashley became the Youth Dance Education Director at a private studio where, as the studio’s only instructor, she created, choreographed, and directed an entire recital with all the classes she taught. Ashley was the Varsity Dance coach at Mount Assisi Academy and created the first competitive varsity team at Queen of Peace High School and has been a dance teacher at the Village of Orland Park since 2013. She has choreographed numerous projects for school fundraisers as well as choir and musical performances. Ashley has been trained in the areas of jazz, hip-hop, ballet, tap, lyrical, musical theatre, and swing. There is nothing that gives her greater joy than sharing her passion of dance with her students and watching them grow as individuals throughout their training.

Jackie Lewis

Jackie started dancing at the Orland Park Recreation Department at two years old and continued until she was sixteen. She was a member of the Orland Park Dance Company for six years while adding to her training at Lou Conte Dance Studio in Chicago and Dance Images in Tinley Park. At Lou Conte, she trained under renowned ballet mistress Birute Barodicaite and modern dancer Kristina Fluty amongst notable others and took part in Hubbard Street’s Summer Intensive three years in a row. She is trained in ballet, modern, pointe, jazz and aerial dance. While studying Art History at DePaul University, she was recruited by Noumemon Dance Experience and performed at various venues and festivals such as Dance Chicago. She has been working with the Recreation Department since 2011.

Jessica Talwar

Jessica (“Jess”) Talwar is one of the Village of Orland Park’s very own. She has participated in the Village’s dance program in some capacity (student, teacher’s aide, and now instructor!) for nearly 20 years. She has been trained in ballet, jazz, tap, Pointe, lyrical, and modern under the wing of Colleen Panega, Kristin Lux, Ashley Costa, Gwen Gonwa and Victoria Alatorre, in addition to the South Asian dance genre "Bhangra" she has studied as an Indian-American. Beyond being a dance student, Jess is a recent graduate of Loyola University Chicago, where she studied Statistics and Political Science. She lives in downtown Chicago and works in business management/IT consulting in the West Loop. As a Chicagoan, Jess pursues her passion of teaching and working with youth outside of the dance studio as a volunteer with Chicago Public School students in the after-school tutoring program "Tutoring Chicago." The lessons learned as a tutor with Tutoring Chicago inform her work with students at the Village, and vice versa. She is excited for another year ahead with her beloved students!