



RESPONDING • REFLECTING • REGENERATING

Heart of Dance



IMPACT REPORT
2020 - 2021



“Every week I got to learn more steps and meet new friends. I love the feeling of being together with people and knowing I can just BE. Right now I really miss my dance teachers and friends but I'm glad we still have online lessons to work with.”

- Cameron, 5th Grader



Ember Reichgott Junge and I founded Heart of Dance six years ago to make the mental, physical and emotional benefits of partner dance available to those who need it most-

from school children struggling with self-esteem, to senior adults striving to maintain quality of life. We've succeeded with over 9,000 Minnesotans since our start in 2015!

On reflection, I believe our most valuable outcome is the connection our programs create. As we begin to rise out of this long isolation, our work is critical. Partner dance brings people and cultures together. Our programs create a safe space for people with different lived experiences to work together, take on challenges and master new skills, look each other in the eye, and treat one another with respect. When strangers become friends, racial, cultural, and economic differences disappear.

When many non-profits have closed, Heart of Dance has responded nimbly and become stronger. Now, with your help, we are regenerating. Together, we will continue to connect hearts and minds, empower people, and ensure a more joyful future for young and old!

In partnership,
Andrea Mirenda - Founder, Executive Director



It's so exciting to be back in the classroom after 18 months of COVID-19 isolation!

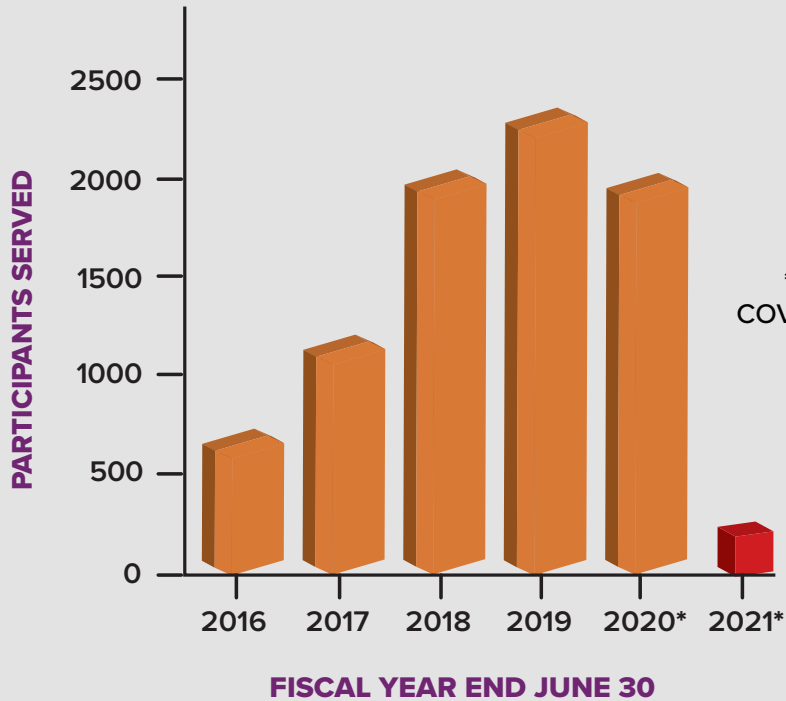
For everyone at Heart of Dance, the pandemic has been challenging, but our creative and resilient staff did a remarkable job providing virtual classes, Zoom dance parties, and no-touch techniques to keep the joy of partner dance alive and well.

Heart of Dance prevailed thanks to your generous support and two PPP loans from Citizens Bank & Trust of Hutchinson. I am so grateful to Tim Ulrich and Mandy Baldry of CB, as well as HOD co-founder Ember Reichgott Junge who connected us to them, and our many donors who believe in the benefits of our programs.

With your continued support we can develop more young people into future leaders with Dancing Classrooms - teaching the value of respect, teamwork, elegance, and social skills; and Dance for Life - providing opportunities for social engagement while building brain focus, physical strength and improved balance for senior adults.

With deep gratitude,
Dede Ouren - Board Chair, Dance Volunteer

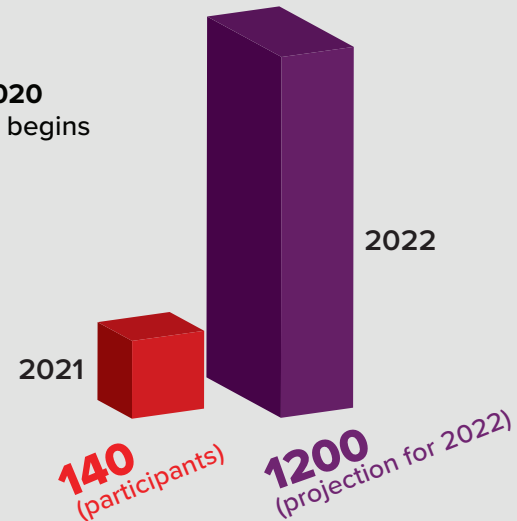
PARTICIPANTS SERVED



Covid-19 forced us to create innovative solutions to keep our programs viable in the face of lockdowns and social distancing.

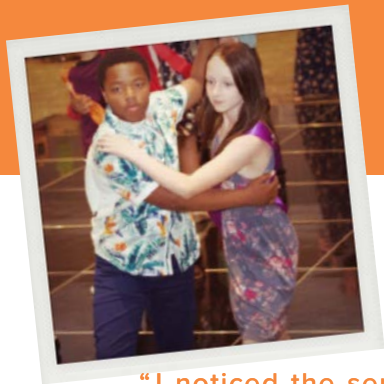
WE DID IT AND WE'RE BACK!

*March 13, 2020
COVID lockdown begins



DANCING CLASSROOMS

Through the joyful practice of social dance, youth learn life skills like confidence, teamwork, gender and multi-cultural respect, motivation, persistence, and listening.



“I noticed the sense of self-confidence that grew when they were able to try something new and see that they could do it. That’s a big thing for kids to feel that that sense of accomplishment.”



DANCING CLASSROOMS Why the Work We Do Is Important

Social, Emotional, & Physical Well-Being

- CULTIVATES KEY BEHAVIORAL SKILLS**
In 10 weeks, the Dancing Classrooms residency supports effective learning and student ownership of their learning, with 85% of students seeing increased engagement and motivation, 88% increase in self-discipline and focus.
- 10 WEEKS TO STRONG NEURAL CONNECTIVITY**
The arts literally make your brain grow. Participating in the arts for as little as 10 weeks has been shown to increase the resiliency and neural connectivity of the brain, making for increased self-awareness and better memory processing.
- DEVELOPS SOCIAL AND COLLABORATIVE SKILLS & RELATIONSHIPS**
The program enhances social confidence through partnering with and supporting classmates and adults. 83% strengthened collaborative and team skills, 71% demonstrated greater social confidence.
- CONTRIBUTES TO A MORE ACTIVE LIFESTYLE**
Dancing Classrooms program allows children to have another avenue to be physically active in addition to P.E. classes. This contributes to helping children meet the necessary 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily and may encourage healthy lifelong activity habits.

SOURCES:
ARTSRESEARCH - RESEARCHER OBSERVATIONS 2018
HTTPS://WWW.AMERICANHEALTHANDWELLNESS.ORG/SOCIALIMPACT
AMERICAN JOURNAL OF HEALTH PROMOTION, JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2012, VOL. 26, NO. 2

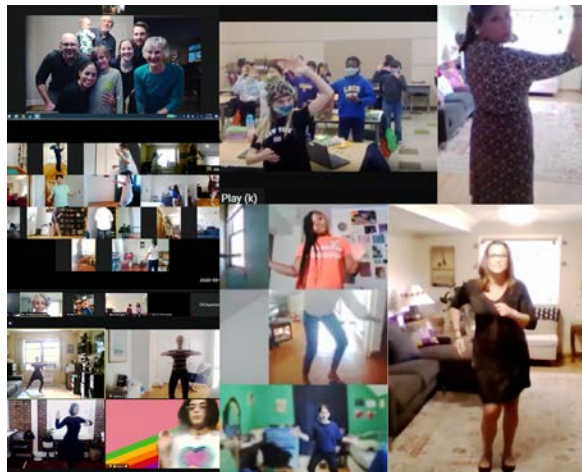
Graphic courtesy of DC Global. For an enlarged view, point your phone's camera to the purple QR code above.



When COVID shut down schools, we quickly produced the remaining lessons on video to provide much-needed Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and peer connections to our school partners.



As the lockdown continued, we restructured our traditional in-person residency to allow for the challenges of distance learning. Dancing Classrooms Homeroom Edition (DCHE) provided high-quality recorded and live virtual SEL and physical content to enhance student engagement and motivation. Although programming was at an all-time low, we used the time to modernize our approach, embracing more culturally responsive practices and updating to current social references in our teaching, ensuring this 25+ year-old evidence-based program remains relevant to today's youth.

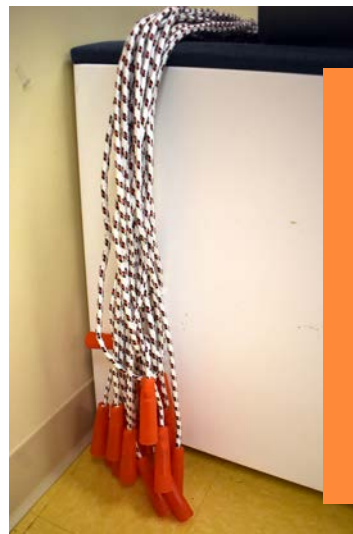


“One girl, Elliana, was acting out in the beginning. By the end of the residency, she amazed me because she was really involved and engaged! Elliana was helping the younger kids find outfits and practice the dance moves so they could participate in the final celebration performance. It was special to see someone who wasn't very invested in it in the beginning, show such kindness and empathy by the end.”

- Carrie Carpinteyro
Rancho Los Amigos Director

“Families really appreciated the chance to learn together about the origin of each dance, in addition to putting the dance rhythms and steps in motion to music.”

- Tammy Diehn
2bContinued
Founder, Executive Director



We returned to in-person classrooms this fall with a staff and volunteer vaccine mandate. Social distancing “connectors” were used to maintain health safety while encouraging a partnered network.



LOOKING FORWARD TO DANCING TOGETHER ONCE AGAIN!

COLORS OF THE RAINBOW TEAM MATCH

May 15, 2022

(COVID restrictions permitting)



DANCE FOR LIFE

Numerous studies show partner dance can delay or diminish dementia significantly more than other mental and physical activities, also improving strength, flexibility, balance and social connections to reduce frailty.



“Many people my age are worried about their memory. (Dancing) helps me stay sharp. It makes me feel light, young and happy. I've also acquired a whole community of friends that I wouldn't otherwise have.”

- Sam B.

To hear more from Sam and Ken in their own words, point your camera's phone at the QR code or go to:
<https://www.heartofdancemn.org/dance-for-life>



“Dance for Life provided great exercise and really helped with balance. I noticed a difference as I lost weight. It combines physical activity with mental challenges...thinking ahead and problem solving.”

- Ken M.



“One of the best things was that it was twice a week. I found I had forgotten a whole lot when (I took classes that were) only once a week. When it's twice a week it makes it so much easier to learn.”

- Dance for Life Participant

CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

As the lockdown of schools and senior living communities continued, we forged new partnerships to deliver our programs in creative ways.



“Dancing Classrooms Home Edition was a creative way to promote mental wellness through physical activity during the pandemic. It was an exceptional, comprehensive program that aligned well with our mission to increase awareness of suicide prevention and support mental health and wellness.”

- Tammy Diehn
Founder, Executive Director



“I really appreciated the short lessons on different values like empathy, respect and safe space. We’re working on emotional intelligence in the home right now. It’s important to give names to those topics and talk about them openly.”

- Carrie Carpinteyro
Rancho Los Amigos Director



“Dancing is good medicine! It helps me build up stamina, endurance and balance - it’s great exercise! Dancing affects my mental well-being, improves my concentration, and helps my social well-being. Through the rhythm of the music and being present with others, my spirit comes alive!.”

- Steve R.
Participant

MORE TO COME (BACK)!

These newer pre-COVID programs will return later this year.

DANCING CLASSROOMS ACADEMY



A financially accessible enrichment experience for DC alumni to more deeply explore various dance styles, with multiple performance opportunities to build confidence and self-esteem.

BARRIERS INTO BRIDGES



A personal/professional development workshop engaging entire teams in collaborative exercises to examine our inherent assumptions about ourselves and others and how these can inhibit communication and real human interaction.

JOIN US ON OUR JOURNEY



As the founding Board Chair of Heart of Dance, and now as Chair of the Volunteer Engagement Committee, I have seen this organization grow and adapt to the challenges we all face with the COVID pandemic. Thanks to the solid structure built by founders Ember Reichgott Junge and Andrea Mirenda,

and the dedication of our staff and volunteers, we were able to offer limited but ingenious programming this past year. Now, with adaptations to allow for social distancing, we are rebuilding!

Your ongoing support, of both time and money, means more youth will feel connected, and that they belong. More senior adults will be active, healthy, and engaged with the world around them. Both are critical after the isolation of the pandemic. Heart of Dance uses social dance as a tool to connect people on many levels. We partner with schools, community centers and senior living communities to teach the value of human beings truly seeing each other. I encourage you to volunteer to experience it for yourself.

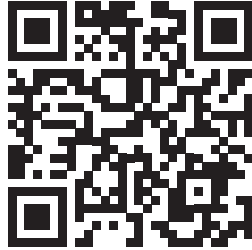
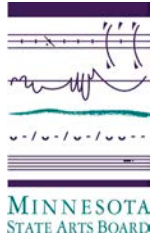
Thank you all for your continued support!

Dennis Yelkin

Board Member, Chair of the Volunteer Engagement Committee

WITH HUMBLE GRATITUDE

We wouldn't have survived the past 18 months without your generous, continued support. Many thanks to our community partners and grantors featured below.



THE POWER OF DANCE AND YOU

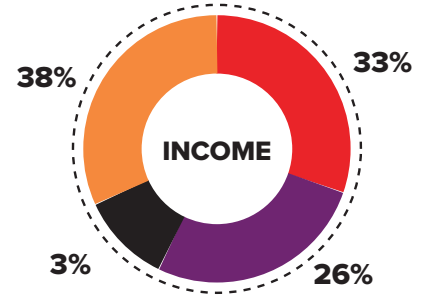
We especially appreciate the five-year commitment of support from members of our Dance Champion Circles:

- READY TO RUMBA - \$1,000/year**
- TEAMWORK TANGO - \$2,000/year**
- WINNING WALTZ - \$5,000/year**

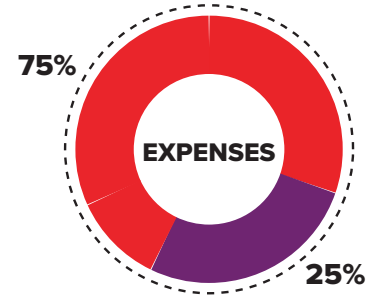
We are grateful for every individual gift, great and small, of time or money, from each of you!

- Ecolab Foundation
- Elmer L. and Eleanor J. Andersen Foundation
- F.R. Bigelow Foundation
- KPMG US Foundation, Inc.
- Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research
- McNeely Foundation

- Minnesota State Arts Board
- St. Paul & Minnesota Foundation
- The Lulu Foundation
- Think Mutual Bank (Rochester)
- Thomas and Julianne Youngren Foundation



- \$75,595 Grants and Organizations
- \$65,600 Forgiven PPP Loan
- \$52,070 Individuals
- \$4,717 Program Service Fees



- \$150,417 Program Service
- \$51,401 Management and Fundraising



MISSION

To transform lives through the physical, mental, social, and emotional benefits of partner dance.

VISION

Helping people discover all they can be through partner dance. Offering youth, senior adults, veterans, and communities from all walks of life an environment in which to connect and thrive.

VALUES

Respect, Elegance, and Teamwork

INSPIRED? JOIN US

VOLUNTEER: Support youth and senior adults in class and at events.

DONATE: Invest in the future of your community through partner dance. Sponsor a residency for \$2,000, transform one life for \$84, or provide continuity with a monthly gift.

CONNECT: Help Heart of Dance reach more partners.



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A Minnesota Nonprofit