



North American Same-Sex Partner Dance Association

Embracing and Welcoming All Dance Couples and Dancers

NASSPDA Board Election Results

From the President

Greetings to all and everyone in our community from NASSPDA's Board of Directors! It is our sincere hope that despite the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic you are well and, in particular, are starting more and more to enjoy your own dancing again.

Many dance schools are back in swing, some closed permanently and some opened newly. In mainstream, competition events are back on schedule, though not quite yet as attended as in pre-pandemic times. One NASSPDA sanctioned event took place last October, the first since the start of the pandemic, the New England Open, but all other events are still on hiatus.

Organizing an event isn't only a question of health safety for all, but also whether the community at large had enough time to prepare for competing again and is ready to travel. A few couples are taking advantage of the rule/definition change NDCA and USA Dance have implemented regarding the composition of a couple. This certainly opens up more opportunities for our community, even though mainstream is still struggling with the integration of same-sex and reverse couples when it comes to costume regulations (though USA Dance did resolve this issue just recently), how to acknowledge in a score the degree of difficulty of switching lead within a dance and the judging criteria of interpretation of a dance, which is strongly rooted in mainstream with a particular presentation of gender roles in a couple. These unresolved difficulties in mainstream, NASSPDA's system of newly grading/classifying couples for multi-dance categories at each event and the extremely welcoming atmosphere of NASSPDA sanctioned events, gives NASSPDA still much relevance within its own community. That is why NASSPDA's Board of Directors is continuing to work on issues important

to its constituency and why the annual election of these directors should be and is still of importance to all involved. But of course only active members of NASSPDA are given the right to vote and unfortunately membership numbers have halved during the pandemic. Yet those still carrying a membership have shown a continued strong interest and involvement by a participation in this year's election of about 47%, which has been in previous years consistently more around 33%. Therefore, a particular big "Thank You!" to those members who have cast their votes in this 2022 election of NASSPDA's Board of Directors!

The terms of Board Members Eddie Alba, Debbie Esparza, Lee Fox, Horace Luong and Kalin Mitov had expired and all, but Horace Luong, agreed to stand for reelection. We are very grateful for the immense valuable contributions made to NASSPDA and its Board by Horace Luong, in particular for his efforts in cleaning up and updating NASSPDA's website and implementing a partner search tool (<https://nasspda.org/dance-partner-connections/>). No new candidates had stepped forward and all four candidates have been reelected, with almost all votes going towards each candidate. A heartfelt "Thank you" for continued service and "Congratulations" to Eddie Alba, Debbie Esparza, Lee Fox, and Kalin Mitov!

Following the elections in the beginning of May, the Board confirmed on Sunday, May 15, 2022, the results of this year's election and its officers and committee chairs as follows:

President: Benjamin Soencksen

Vice-President: Debbie Esparza

Treasurer: Lee Fox

Secretary: Erik Jaeger

Co-Chairs of the Competition Committee: Eddie Alba & Lee Fox

Chair of the Finance Committee: Lee Fox

Chair of the Membership Committee: Lee Fox

Chair of the Promotion Committee: Kalin Mitov

Chair of the Scholarship Committee: Benjamin Soencksen

Chair of the Website Committee: Erik Jaeger

Each committee has more than one additional member from the Board of Directors, with the Competition Committee also having two additional non-Board members.

Please feel free to contact the committees (<https://nasspda.org/contact/>) or members of the Board (first initial plus last name @nasspda.org) directly with any questions, comments and/or issues you might have.

One way that might help increase interest and subsequently again membership for NASSPDA is the Ambassadorship Program developed by the Promotion Committee. This program seeks individuals and/or couples that will spread the word about and impart the values of NASSPDA at events other than sanctioned by NASSPDA. This ambassadorship comes with a stipend to cover some expenses and the provision of

promotional material. With competitions coming back in mainstream, the Board is looking for suitable candidates. Should you know of anyone being interested or qualified, you can find more details on NASSPDA's website along with the application form (<https://nasspda.org/nasspda-ambassador-program/>).

NASSPDA's Activity Grant (<https://nasspda.org/grants/>) is another program that supports growth in our community, which is awarded to proposed events that advance NASSPDA's mission (<https://nasspda.org/mission-statement/>). Last year, grants were awarded to two teachers that offered free online workshops to our constituency and this year a grant has been awarded in support of the 2022 Sundance Stompede (<https://www.stompede.com/sponsorship.html>), an annual event, which had been cancelled the past two years due to the pandemic, which additionally hosted this year the 27th annual convention of IAGLCWDC, which offered subsequently more dancing than ever and which aimed to raise funds for charities (<https://www.stompede.com/beneficiaries.html>).

Currently, the Board of Directors is also looking into revamping NASSPDA's Scholarship Program (<https://nasspda.org/scholarships/>), so that it benefits and attracts more applicants, which hopefully also will assist increasing membership.

And, of course we know that events of all kinds help with growth in our community, which is why NASSPDA is striving to support these and is hoping that NASSPDA's circuit of sanctioned events will pick-up again next year (the New England Open won't take place this coming October, but possibly earlier in 2023; <http://www.bostonopendancesport.com/home.html> AND <https://nasspda.org/events/>). The other big event that was slated for November 2022, which takes place every four years, Dancesport at the Gay Games and with it IFSSDA's World Championship, had been postponed to 2023. And just recently due to the effects of the pandemic and changes in the political climate in the host city Hong Kong, the city that came in second in the preceding bid process for hosting, Guadalajara, Mexico, has been asked to co-host the 11th Gay Games in November 2023. The organizing team in Hong Kong has since then reevaluated the feasibility of offering the various sports that had been in the planning and concluded that Dancesport will no longer be offered at the games in Hong Kong, due to financial constraints. The team currently assembling to organize the various sports in Guadalajara has shown great interest so far to offer Dancesport (<https://gaygames.org/page-18123> AND <https://www.vacationer.travel/gay-games-2023-turning-point-for-guadalajara/>) and IFSSDA has offered its help.

IFSSDA's website (<https://ifssda.org/>) is currently under construction. Since the hosting of this site has generously been financed by NASSPDA's first and former President, Richard Lamberty, NASSPDA's Board of Directors has decided to hire a consultant to design and update the site, which will feature IFSSDA's Constitution, adopted in 2013, and Competition Rules, adopted in 2020, as well as a calendar of

events and links to the websites of its founding members, ESSDA, NASSPDA and IAGLCWDC.

All these programs and other services NASSPDA provides, such as website, eNewsletter, marketing, promotion, etc., are financially supported by the annual dues received from members as well as generous donations (<https://nasspda.org/nasspda-donor-wall/>). An excellent reason to renew and maintain your membership with NASSPDA (<https://nasspda.org/membership/>)!

If you have written and/or want to write about something or come across an interesting bit of news that might be of interest to our community of dancers, please don't hesitate to share and email us (email address: newsletter@nasspda.org).

Please be well, safe and healthy!
HAPPY DANCING!

Benjamin Soencksen, **President**

Scholarships for 2022 NASSPDA Sanctioned Events

NASSPDA's Board of Directors is currently reviewing the process and levels of support of NASSPDA's Scholarship Program, considering a broader approach that might include support for attending international events and different levels of financial assistance. Please stay tuned for updates!

[Please use this link to access the scholarship application form.](#)



Ambassador Program

In need of broader visibility, better promotion in the DanceSport world and advocating for same-sex competitive dancing, NASSPDA is looking to engage Ambassadors.

As many North American DanceSport organizations have changed their definition of a dance couple, we are witnessing interest and participation of newly formed same-sex, reverse role, and gender-neutral couples at their events. Many of those couples haven't been introduced or exposed to NASSPDA as an organization; hence, they also do not know the benefits of being a member of NASSPDA.

Donation

A Big Thank You!

The Board of Directors would like to sincerely thank all the individuals and businesses who have donated to NASSPDA (<https://nasspda.org/nasspda-donor-wall/>). All collected funds are and will be used to support programming, scholarships, maintaining our presence in the dance community and beyond and to help further our mission to expand.

Thank YOU!

[The donation link is still open to anyone who wishes to contribute.](#)

Competition Calendar

- **NASSPDA Sanctioned competitions in 2022**

April Follies, Floorplay LA, and New England Open have been cancelled again due to the ongoing effects of the pandemic.

- **Competitions Not Sanctioned by NASSPDA (featuring same-sex dance categories) in 2022**

ESSDA sanctioned competitions

Eurogames 2022

July 27-30, 2022

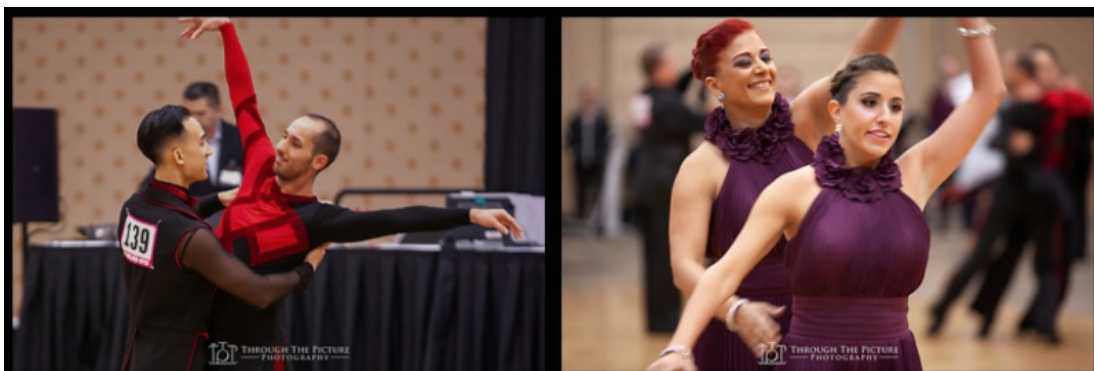
Nijmegen, Netherlands

[Ballroom dancing - Eurogames 2022](#)

- **IFSSDA sanctioned competitions in 2022 and beyond**

The XI Gay Games

November 3-11, 2023 Guadalajara, Mexico



Membership Information

Membership Directory

Have you checked out the [NASSPDA Membership Directory](#)?

This is a resource to allow NASSPDA members to connect with others in the community. Please contact Webmaster and their email webmaster@nasspda.org if you'd like to be added to the directory (being added is a privilege available to NASSPDA members only).

Dance Partner Connections

We understand how hard it can be to find a dance partner. Therefore we'd like to help by offering this connection service where individuals in our community interested in searching for a partner can proactively post an ad and/or passively review ads.

If you'd like to post an ad, [please complete this form](#). It does not cost anything and you can share as much or little information as you want.

Here is the Dance Partner Connections webpage: nasspda.org/dance-partner-connections

Outreach and Media



New partnership with The National Academy of Health and Physical Literacy (NAHPL)

NAHPL is a diverse organization that seeks to advance health and physical literacy in our society, especially in K-12 schools, higher education, and in dance and sport venues. NAHPL seeks to grow and advance professional leaders who will interact and network on regional, national and global levels to expand health and physical literacy opportunities for all children and adults.

As a member and mission centered organization, NAHPL encourages and facilitates active participation by all members, advocating for health and physical literacy.

NAHPL leadership and members plan and implement professional learning opportunities and events at the regional and national levels, and advocate for health and physical literacy in Pre-K-higher education and across society.

<https://nahpl.org>

