



North American Same-Sex Partner Dance Association  
Embracing and Welcoming All Dance Couples and Dancers

## From the President

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A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!!!

NASSPDA's Board of Directors hopes that you all had a good start into 2024! May this year bring us all joy, peace and lots of dancing!

NASSPDA membership numbers are up again as of this month, having almost doubled since January 2023! As reported in the January 2023 eNewsletter, "NASSPDA's numbers of active members that pay annual dues have dwindled over the past two years, clearly as a result from the pandemic and the subsequent lack of training and events" (<https://nasspda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/january-2023-newsletter.pdf>). In response, NASSPDA's Board of Directors, placing Scholarship and Activity Grant on hold to divert funds from these two programs, initiated an Event Sponsorship program in support of NASSPDA sanctioned events that guaranteed NASSPDA members a discount on admission and registration fees.

Based on the apparent success of this measure, NASSPDA's Board of Directors, not wanting to fully let go of financially supporting individual competitors and queer dance activities as well, combined these three programs under the heading of 'Grant Program' for 2024. Event Sponsorship (requires organizational membership and event sanction), Activity Grant (requires individual, couple, student or organizational membership) and Competition Scholarship (requires individual, couple or student membership) will grant financial support in the range from \$200 to \$1,500 to organizations, community leaders and individuals, if applied for and approved. While the related page on NASSPDA's website is still being built (<https://nasspda.org/grants/>) and the all newly designed forms are made available, please email [grants@nasspda.org](mailto:grants@nasspda.org) with any questions or desire to apply.

This already resulted, even before the program has been made accessible online, in NASSPDA's very first Event Sponsorship for 2024 of the NASSPDA sanctioned event named 'Grading Rounds' at the 2024 Manhattan Amateur Classic (MAC) on January 12, 2024, held in Newark, NJ. The event was very well received by spectators and competitors alike, being its first kind of collaboration between NASSPDA and a well-established mainstream competition held annually and organized by The Greater New York Chapter of USA Dance. Four categories of multi-dance competitions were offered, International Standard, American Smooth, International Latin and American

Rhythm. Under NASSPDA's Competition Rules (<https://nasspda.org/competition-rules/>) grading in this event was done by consensus of the 5 NASSPDA approved judges as well as declaration, having only one couple in the Men's category. All other couples were graded for the Open-Role category into A and B Grades/Classes in International Standard as well as American Smooth. Please be on the lookout for the scoresheets of the event on NASSPDA's website that will be posted soon (<https://nasspda.org/nasspda-sanctioned-competition-results/>). NASSPDA is hoping to have and working towards more of these kinds of collaborations in the future

Additionally, the Board has created a new committee to explore a closer relationship with the college circuit of competitions in the USA. This 'Collegiate Outreach Committee,' chaired by Board Member Emma DiFrancesco, will work on forming closer ties to this community, which has traditionally welcomed queer dancing and encouraged USA Dance to become more inclusive. A closer collaboration with colleges nationwide, which have dance clubs and organize annual competitions, would help further expand opportunities for NASSPDA's constituency as well as could enhance the circuit's events, having gotten sanctioning from NASSPDA and using NASSPDA's system of grading for multi-dance events, as done at this year's MAC.

With Boston Open Dancesport taking a hiatus for 2024, the 2024 'Floorplay LA' will be the next event sanctioned by NASSPDA (<https://www.floorplayevents.com/>). Exact date and location are still to be determined as well as what titled events will be hosted, such as the 2024 USA and/or North American Championships. Under consideration is also getting IFSSDA's authorization to host the 2024 World Championships, with the next IFSSDA World Championships officially slated for the 12th Gay Games in 2026, hosted by Valencia in Spain.

The final report from the Chair of NASSPDA's Promotion Committee, Kalin Mitov, showed that NASSPDA's campaign to promote Dancesport at the 11th Gay Games hosted by Guadalajara from November 5 through 8, 2023, reached through Facebook and Instagram over 12,000 people. This and other efforts of NASSPDA, such as the financial support extended to NASSPDA's constituency through NASSPDA's Grant Program (see above), is only made possible through dues collected from members (<https://nasspda.org/membership-levels/>) and generous donations (<https://nasspda.org/asp-products/donate-to-nasspda/>). If you are currently an active member of NASSPDA, the Board of Directors thanks you much for your continued support, hopes that you spread the word about what NASSPDA does and encourages you, as always, to contact us with any thoughts, comments and/or suggestions you might have by emailing to [board@nasspda.org](mailto:board@nasspda.org). And if you aren't yet a member, we encourage you to join, in order to show your support for and have a vote in our community.

As every year, the two-year terms of some Board members will expire by mid-year and most have agreed to stand again for reelection. Due to family issues though, that demand her full attention, Jo Popadynetz has resigned from NASSPDA's Board of Directors this month. NASSPDA and its constituency is very grateful for her years of service! Susie Hoskins, as reported in NASSPDA's previous eNewsletter, had already resigned in November 2023, which leaves the current Board with 7 Directors, a size of the Board that NASSPDA started with and is according to NASSPDA's By-Laws still within the required margins ["...shall have not fewer than five (5) nor more than eleven (11)..."]. And even though vacancies may be filled by appointment until the next elections, the Board feels that the number is an adequate representation of its number of active members at this time and will naturally grow again to its

previously reached level of 11 Directors. Members of the Board up for re-election are Eddie Alba, Debbie Esparza, Lee Fox and Kalin Mitov. If you know of anyone, especially a candidate that would contribute to the gender, race and geographical diversity of NASSPDA's Board of Directors and that might have a specific set of skills that could be valuable to the work NASSPDA does (any questions about that, please contact me directly at [bsoencksen@nasspda.org](mailto:bsoencksen@nasspda.org)), including yourself, please visit the page on NASSPDA's website that informs you about the process and links to two required Google forms to be submitted (<https://nasspda.org/board-member-election/>).

NASSPDA's Board continues looking for candidates for the Ambassadorship Program as well, 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 \$250 stipend to cover some expenses and the provision of promotional material. Should you be interested or know of anyone being interested and qualified, you can find more details on NASSPDA's website along with the application form (<https://nasspda.org/nasspda-ambassador-program/>).

Please stay well, happy and healthy throughout this year!  
ENJOY YOUR DANCING!



### **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.

[Please use this link to access description and details as well as the application form](#)

*(\* please contact us if you encounter problems with accessing this form. A Gmail account login is required)*



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## Competition Calendar

- **NASSPDA Sanctioned Competitions in 2024**

### **FLOORPLAY - LA**

**June or July of 2024, exact date will be announced later on.**

<https://www.floorplayevents.com/>

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## 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](mailto:webmaster@nasspda.org) if you'd like to be added to the directory (being added is a privilege available to NASSPDA members only).

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### **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](https://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>

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