



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

End of the year

From the President

SEASON GREETINGS TO ALL!!!

NASSPDA's Board of Directors hopes that you all had a good year and will have an excellent start into 2024! May this coming year bring us all joy and peace!

My report on what happened this year in the world of NASSPDA starts with the latest development. The Board of Directors just approved a sanction request as well as an application for Event Sponsorship in the amount of \$500 for a portion of the Manhattan Amateur Classic, titled 'Grading Rounds' (MAC -- <https://www.macnyusadance.org/> or <https://nasspda.org/home/>) and organized by The Greater New York Chapter of USA Dance. This portion of the MAC will be run under NASSPDA's Competition Rules, be adjudicated by NASSPDA approved judges, take place on January 12, 2024, in Newark, NJ, and due to the sponsorship offer a \$10 discount on registration or admission to the ballroom for NASSPDA members. We have been looking for this kind of collaboration for some time now, expanding NASSPDA's outreach, and are very grateful to the organizers of the MAC, especially former NASSPDA Board member Daphna Locker, for creating this exciting opportunity for our community.

Also just approved by the Board of Directors is a newly designed Grants Program, which combines three programs of financial support of NASSPDA under one heading. Two of these had been placed on-hold for 2023 and replaced with a temporarily created Event Sponsorship program (see January 2023 eNewsletter -- <https://nasspda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/january-2023-newsletter.pdf>). The 2023 Event Sponsorship Program was bestowed upon three well-established and NASSPDA sanctioned events, the 'Boston Open DanceSport Championships,' 'April Follies' and 'Floorplay LA.' The Board determined that the program was successful and subsequently warrants to be continued alongside the others. The newly formatted Grant Program therefore, starting in 2024, offers three forms of financial support, equally drawing from available funds. Each requires that the applicant has an appropriate and

currently active membership with NASSPDA, attainable through the portal on NASSPDA's website (<https://nasspda.org/membership/>).

1. Event Sponsorship (requires organizational membership and event sanction)
2. Activity Grant (requires individual, couple, student or organizational membership)

3. Competition Scholarship (requires individual, couple or student membership)
With this program, organizations, community leaders and individuals have the opportunity to apply for financial assistance helping with the organization of events, such as competitions or other dance related activities that promote and welcome queer dancing, as well as with the related costs for an individual attending any NASSPDA or IFSSDA sanctioned event. The amount of financial support granted will be assessed once an application has been received and approved and will range from \$200 to \$1,500, depending on what kind of support and funds are applied for. Once approved and funds paid out, applicants will be required to submit a report on the usage of the awarded funds along with documentation that proves the intended use. Any inquiries and questions may be emailed to grants@nasspda.org, even before the program has been made available with the related forms online through NASSPDA's website. Already, the very first Event Sponsorship under the new rules and procedures has been approved for 'Grading Rounds' at the MAC in January 2024 (see above).

The Board of Directors also worked on a revision of NASSPDA's Competition Rules that redefines the eligibility requirements of competitors at NASSPDA sanctioned events to garner approved NASSPDA titles, namely North American, national, regional and state champion titles, based on residency and membership with NASSPDA (<https://nasspda.org/competition-rules/>). The most significant change is that as of the effective date October 15, 2023, all competing participants in a North American and National Championship must have an active NASSPDA membership at the time of the event, in order to garner the title, with the exception of the teacher in a 'Student/Teacher' couple, who isn't eligible garnering any title of a NASSPDA sanctioned and title authorized event, unless specifically created for these competitors. All other criteria have pretty much remained the same, but for more clarity the entire section has been reformatted.

This year also due to the pandemic, which lasted longer than many of us anticipated and had far reaching effects, the organizing committee of one of NASSPDA's longest running and biggest sanctioned competition, 'April Follies,' decided with a heavy heart to discontinue its work of putting up this event. Therefore, celebrating for the last time all the years that our community enjoyed many special moments and excellent dancing at this event, a free, non-competitive event, featuring performances and a social dance was offered. By all accounts, the event was a resounding success (see report in May 2023 eNewsletter -- <https://nasspda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/May-2023-E-Newsletter.pdf>) with many good performances and a tear shed here and there. Thank you so much for this last effort by Bridget Scadeng, Ellen Levitt and Susan Hoskins! Additionally, many thanks to Susie Hoskins for many years of serving on the NASSPDA's Board of Directors, a position she unfortunately had to resign from in November due to other circumstances!

On the other hand, we also were able to witness three other competitive events during this year, two NASSPDA and one IFSSDA sanctioned, that finally brought back our community onto the dance floor. The '2023 Boston Open DanceSport Championships' (see report in NASSPDA's April 2023 eNewsletter - <https://nasspda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/April-2023-E-Newsletter.pdf>) took place on April 1, 2023, hosting NASSPDA's 2023 USA

Championships, and the '2023 Floorplay LA' (see report in NASSPDA's July/August 2023 eNewsletter -- <https://nasspda.org/newsletters/>) took place on July 22, 2023, hosting NASSPDA's North American Championships. Many thanks to Kalin Mitov and his team at Boston Open DanceSport and Eddie Alba and his team of Floorplay making these events happen, considering the devastating effects of the pandemic on our community! And the 11th Gay Games co-hosted in November this year, postponed from 2022, by two cities, Hong Kong (China) and Guadalajara (Mexico). Dancesport was only offered in Guadalajara from November 5 through 8, 2023, hosting also IFSSDA's 2023 World Championships (see report in this issue and results at <https://nasspda.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/GG11-All-Results.pdf>). In this case, I would like to extend our thanks to the organizing team in Guadalajara led by Ana Vasquez and the invited head judge Lee Fox, Treasurer of NASSPDA and Competition Director of IAGLCWDC, as well as one of the invited adjudicators, also a Board member of NASSPDA, Eddie Alba, who lent a helping hand!

You might have noticed a new look on NASSPDA's website (<https://nasspda.org/home/>), which is due to the efforts of Erik Jaeger, NASSPDA's Secretary and Webmaster with the help of a consultant. This redesign was not only necessary to update the design, but also to improve functionality and ease of access. Along with the overhaul of NASSPDA's website, the Board had also asked Erik to make IFSSDA's website (<https://ifssda.org/>) more accessible, featuring IFSSDA's Constitution, adopted in 2013, and Competition Rules, adopted in 2020, as well as links to the websites of its founding members, ESSDA, NASSPDA and IAGLCWDC, for easy access to their respective calendars of events and other information. Please let us know, if there is anything you are still missing or would like to see improved (webmaster@nasspda.org).

Another outreach effort, NASSPDA's Ambassadorship Program, is still seeking 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. Many thanks to Kalin Mitov, Chair of NASSPDA's Promotion Committee, for developing and spearheading this program! Please find more details on NASSPDA's website along with the application form (<https://nasspda.org/nasspda-ambassador-program/>) or contact the committee directly with further questions (promotions@nasspda.org).

Please remember that all that NASSPDA provides, such as updated information on its website and through its eNewsletter (newsletter@nasspda.org), any marketing and promotion choices, financial support, etc., are made possible through the annual dues received from members as well as generous donations (<https://nasspda.org/nasspda-donor-wall/>). An excellent reason to join NASSPDA's community, to renew and to maintain your membership with NASSPDA, in order to help growing our community, have a voice and make history. Many thanks to those who have continued to renew their membership, have newly joined NASSPA (Welcome!) and/or have made a donation!

Please stay well, safe and healthy into the coming year!

HAPPY DANCING!

Benjamin Soencksen,



Post Gay Games Recap

Guadalajara, Mexico played host last month to the Gay Games XI Dancesport competition, a year later than normal due to the pandemic and the decision of the Federation of Gay Games to split the competition between Hong Kong and Guadalajara. With relatively short notice, the local organization team was able to secure an excellent location in the center of town and put together three days of competition for not only the Gay Games medals, but also the World Championships of the International Federation of Same-Sex Dance Associations (IFSSDA), of which NASSPDA is a founding member. A big “thank you” needs to go out to NASSPDA President Benjamin Soencksen for his help in getting the local Gay Games organization team ready for the competition. Other NASSPDA Board Members Lee Fox and Eddie Alba served as judges, with Lee taking on the role of Head Judge.

A former movie theater, now an arts center with theater and café called L.A.R.V.A, was the dramatic location for the competition. Organizers did an excellent job of getting the dance floor and spectator area ready, and there

were good facilities for the competitors to dress and warm up. A professional light-and-sound team was on hand for the whole competition to provide the necessary ambiance to motivate competitors and spectators alike.

While the competition was not as big as in recent Gay Games, overall 38 couples and two formation teams made the trip to Guadalajara from North America, Asia, Australia, and Europe to compete for the title of World Champion. North America was well represented, with one Canadian couple, 10 US couples, and 14 Mexican couples, and both formation teams hailed from the Bay area of California. Spectators filled the risers, tables and standing areas to approximately 95% capacity each day, and cheered on the competitors for hours on end. It was a very lively and engaged crowd throughout the event. The organizers invited cultural artists to perform for the crowd at the opening and closing of the competition. The government of Guadalajara hired a professional photographer to document the competition, and you can view the photo stream on Flickr via the following link: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjB57QS>

The results are available on the NASSPDA website, and we are very pleased that NASSPDA members did so well this year by winning a total of three titles in the A class, three 10- and 9-dance events, and the formation competition. Of these, James Repetti and Justin Miller, NASSPDA members from New York, took home four of the titles.

Given the delayed GGXI competition, there are now only three years until the next Gay Games, which will take place in the summer of 2026 in Valencia, Spain. Mark your calendars and start practicing, as it will be here before you know it!

Erik Jaeger
NASSPDA's Board Member



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)*



Competition Calendar

January 12, 2024 "Grading Rounds" at MAC (Manhattan Amateur Classic) - <https://www.macnyusadance.org/>



Outreach and Media



**National Academy
of Health and Physical Literacy**

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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