“This year has been difficult, disappointing, and shocking for all of us. From the moment we first heard about Covid-19, up until the promise of a vaccine around the corner, with all of the political, environmental, and social unrest in between, it’s hard to believe this chaotic year really happened.”

- Bella Bagley, Elevate Dance Academy, Draper, UT
With every welcome, there is a departure. But with every departure, brings new opportunities.

Hannah Bridgeo, an undergraduate student in Grand Canyon University’s Dance Department, has been honored to perform and teach in the UK, Greenland, Denmark and Brazil. Pursuing a degree in Dance Education, Hannah hopes to teach in a K-12 setting and potentially start her own school with an arts integration curriculum. While student teaching this semester, Hannah strives to provide an atmosphere that encourages expressiveness, creativity and curiosity.

2020 has been an emotional whirlwind which no one will soon forget. While the new year is here, we still find ourselves dealing with the repercussions of the past. 2021 is the beacon of hope many people have been waiting for, however, change begins in the hearts of people, not the number of the year. Creative expression is our way to carve a path of hope amidst a time of pain and sadness. Hannah plans to use art to bring encouragement to those in her community as well as the students she is honored to work with this year.

Joseph "jo" Blake | Advisory Board Director

jo Blake, Assistant Professor of Dance at Weber State University, has been honored to perform, teach, and choreograph throughout four continents. His interest in community-based engagement and social justice has led him to work with community outreach projects: Ogden’s YCC, Minding Motion for Graceful Aging, Yoga Behind Bars, as well as Mark Morris’s Dance for Parkinson’s Disease. jo is the Director of joBdance, an interdisciplinary movement-based experience.

Deanna Lynn Martinez, a second-year graduate student at New York University, pursuing a master’s degree in Teaching Dance (pre-K to 12). She has studied, performed, and taught in New York City, Italy, Trinidad and Tabago, and Uganda, throughout the private, pre-K to 12, and higher education sectors. Upon graduation, Deanna hopes to work with performing arts students and students who are immigrants, promoting the use of dance as a cultural and diplomatic tool of soft power.

2020 was a year of action and change. I engaged in dance diplomacy in Uganda (pre-COVID); created and submitted a curricular thesis on racial justice, representation, and diversification; authored a research article on remote learning with two wonderful professors; choreographed, edited, and shared a dance video on dismantling the patriarchy; and student taught in an incredibly progressive elementary school. I write this to remind myself that even and especially in the darkest of times, we can and must shed light. The work has just begun. In 2021, I will student teach at an institution whose commitment to anti-racism has projected it into the media and earn my master’s degree/certification to teach youth on an ongoing basis. Here’s to continued and active change. The world keeps spinning, as do we.

2021, a new year of transitions and welcomes!

SPECIAL SHOUT OUT!

Congratulations to Julie Pentz, NDEO’s Former Advisory Board Director of Student Initiatives, as she was elected to transition to her new position as NDEO Recording Secretary. Thank you, Julie, for providing us guidance and support throughout this process!
现代表现：2020年舞蹈教育中的舞者

A First Year Teaching Experience in 2020 at Camelback High School, Phoenix, AZ

Aliaza Smith，一位来自Grand Canyon University 2019的校友，开始她的第一年教学在Camelback High School。她解释说：“作为一名第一年教师，我一直在努力建立和学生之间的联系。随着教育和工作生活的持续变化，这一直是一个挑战。幸运的是，这个学期我成功地为我的三个班级制作了一个虚拟音乐会！这是一件美丽的事情，即使是在虚拟环境中，学生仍然对舞蹈充满热情！昨天，当我在和我的中级班级谈话时，他们告诉我他们有一个惊喜要给我，这就是我得到的东西！这使我非常高兴，知道我仍然可以通过电脑屏幕建立联系，而且他们对我努力工作表示感激。”

The dancers at Camelback also shared their experience on how dance has been a beacon of hope in the unknowns of this semester. Berlyn，一位Camelback舞者，分享了她的经历：“舞蹈一直是我在这个学期帮助我理解情绪的工具。它帮助我以一种我不经常做的事情来表达自己。Stephany解释，这种舞蹈“作为一种分心。它是我唯一考虑的，当我在技术上工作时，这会让我专注于我身体的每一部分。它让我欣赏我身体的动作，尽管有大流行病，但我仍然有舞蹈。”

Allyssa Takeda，中级舞者，说：“隔离、恐惧和流行病带来的极端变化对我们所有人来说都是一个冲击。对我来说，这使得我很容易专注于身边的负面事情。但舞蹈给了我一个可以放手让去的东西。当我关注技术时，它会让我专注于身体的每一个部分。它让我欣赏身体的动作，尽管有大流行病，但我仍然有舞蹈。”

Lauren Ng，中级舞者，解释说：“尤其是因为我们即将举行的虚拟舞蹈秀，舞蹈一直是我建立联系的手段；我们有一个共同的目标，无论我们相隔多远，这让我们团结在了一起。”

As a first-year teacher it has been really challenging to figure out how to build those connections virtually. It’s been hard trying to keep students motivated and focused on their education with everything going on. Luckily this semester I was able to succeed in creating a virtual concert for all three of my classes! It was beautiful to see that students were still excited about dancing even though it is in a virtual setting! Yesterday when I was talking to my intermediate class, they told me that they had a surprise for me, and this is what I got! It was so heartwarming to know that I still managed to make a connection through a computer screen and how grateful they were for my hard work!”

The Voices of West High School, Torrance, CA

Ashley Kim，West High School的高级舞者，说：“今年，我们遇到前所未有的挣扎。无论是应对家庭中的隔离，还是看到国家经历种族和政治动荡。舞蹈是一种通用的表达形式，舞者不需要分享语言、背景或经验，就可以理解他们的动作。舞蹈有能力超越界限，帮助我们团结起来。”

Alexssa Takeda，中级舞者，说：“隔离、恐惧和流行病带来的极端变化是突然的和令人震惊的。对我来说，它使我很容易专注于身边的负面事情。但舞蹈给了我一个可以放手让去的东西。当我关注技术时，这会让我专注于身体的每一个部分。它让我欣赏身体的动作，尽管有大流行病，但我仍然有舞蹈。”

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Private Sector | Reflecting on the Past | Inspired for the Future

The worldwide pandemic and social unrest, and political and environmental concerns have affected our dance education in many ways. Check out how dancers/teachers of Elevate Dance Academy (UT) and The Dance Zone (NV) persevered and sought out change.

How were you, and your peers, affected by the social unrest that involved social movements voicing concerns for inclusivity and equity amongst communities that came to light due to the pandemic?

"The social unrest that involved Black Lives Matter, LGBIGHT rights, women's rights, and more affected me in many ways. I truly believe in these organizations, and this time of reflection during COVID only strengthened it. In my dancer studio, we set aside time to allow anyone to share their feelings. My studio has a diverse company, and it makes me proud to know that I am a part of this program. Also, in my quest to apply and audition to colleges, they make it extremely apparent that all humans were welcome and all would be appreciated, which put a smile on my face."

Tabitha Burton, The Dance Zone, Las Vegas, NV (7 years of dance training)

"We had a senior on our team, Faith Merrell, who was the president of the OUR club at Skyridge High School. She choreographed a beautiful, heartbreaking piece on the dangers of child trafficking in our world today. She was able to bring awareness to so many who watched it, and those who passed it on. This includes even my family. We have gone to several meetings to learn more about what we can do to help, and my dad especially, has become passionate about this issue. I am inspired by the way dance can change someone's perspective about the world so simply. I am so grateful to be at a studio that trains dancers with integrity and courage to use their voices and make a difference."

Bella Bagley, Elevate Dance Academy, Draper, UT (2 1/2 yrs Elevate, 10 yrs Showcase Dance)

"At the studio, I feel we all collectively have the same beliefs and understanding on the subjects of BLM, LGBIGHT, women's rights, and many other movements because we are very diverse as a whole. Myself being half Black and half Asian in a time when both of my ethnic groups are being targeted, I take comfort in the fact that my teammates and closest friends are supporters of the above movements. We recently had a choreographer come in and create a piece based on society as a whole. She wanted to hear our opinions on the different subjects so we could incorporate it into the piece and we had expressed that we feel helpless in a time of chaos and that we also want to be heard. I'm proud to say that I am a part of a studio that is open to everyone and is guiding us in the direction of equality for all!"

Jasmine Alisca, The Dance Zone, Las Vegas, NV (15 yrs)

Do you see the new year of 2021 as a year of change? If so, how do you envision change occurring in dance? How do you envision change occurring in your dance studio?

"Personally I feel like the dance community is consistently a welcoming and encouraging group of humans and I'm always proud to be a part of it, but we can all still change for the better: being open to new ideas, teaching others in kind and inspiring ways, and learning how to be able to accept our own faults without becoming doubtful of our self worth. This all goes for my own studio as well, and I know that we will be able to accomplish these goals for positive change because we are all surrounded by motivating studio owners and each other to help along the way.”

Arianna Shariff

"Screen dance first of all, has had a great impact on the entire dance community, and especially my studio. In the past several months, we have completed at least four dance films that will be entered into festivals, and of course used for our performances. I wasn't exposed to this kind of dance before and I have loved the idea! The results have been amazing. I think 2021 will be looked at in a different way now. We have so many resources, substrates and new inspirations to share our passion for dance. I don't think we would have that if we weren't forced to explore our resources. There are so many negative things we can take away from this year, but if we focus on that, we don't see all the positive aspects of these unfortunate events. I believe this new inspiration will be revolutionary for the future of dance and all those who are a part of it. I am so excited to be one of those.”

Bella Bagley

"I see the new year as a year of change, but know that change is something that takes time. I hope that the new year brings new opportunities and brings us all some peace—I think it is much needed after the year we have all had. Above all, I hope it can at least be a beginning to the huge changes that need to be made in the world. I believe that dance is going to change, too; it has already evolved and adapted to the state of our world regarding the pandemic, and is being used to bring awareness to a number of issues. Dance can and will change greatly, but will always remain consistent in the fact that it is so incredibly important. All art is incredibly important.”

Deanna DeCola, Cornish College of the Arts, Seattle, WA (former dancer with The Dance Zone)

“2020 WAS A REFLECTIVE YEAR, WHICH WILL FUEL PEOPLE TO NOT ONLY VOICE CHANGE BUT TO ACT UPON IT.” - TABITHA
“These past two semesters at Rider have obviously been unlike any others due to the COVID-19 pandemic. My spring semester got cut in half, causing me to leave so many people thinking that I would be back soon and therefore not saying goodbye to them. I had to finish out the rest of my semester completely online, which was definitely strange and a hard transition to go through because I had never done that before. However, this semester I was actually prepared to be online. Although it was very hard at some times to be motivated to go to my classes and get all my work done, I pushed through. I persevered. I did not let being on Zoom all the time get the best of me, and my grades this semester ended up being the best they have ever been. I made the most out of this semester even though it was completely different, and I am so happy that I kept pushing my way through, no matter how hard it got. It felt so good to see all of my hard work eventually pay off. Clearly, I tried to be as positive as I possibly could during online schooling, because although this is a crazy and unforeseen time, it will eventually come to an end.”

Nicolle Alling, BA in Dance Studies and Elementary Education (4th year)
Rider University | Lawrenceville, NJ

“COVID-19 and the need to distance and mask-up certainly brought my MFA to an interesting close. One success was being able to complete writing my thesis and then defend it last month. While I am biased towards in-person interactions, the virtual world opened up new possibilities. First, I could invite family members from around the world to the defense on Zoom; they had heard about my studies and research, but now, they were actually able to experience the culmination of it. Another possibility was the ease with which I could document the occasion with Zoom’s recording features. The challenge during this time was teaching my studio classes with students ranging in age from 6 to 16, but I feel my awareness as a teacher (observing more in myself and in my students through the Zoom tiles), organizational skills and creativity have increased. My students have also become more expert at examining and articulating how movement feels in their bodies and at being supportive with one another, especially due to glitches on Zoom. While I look forward to being in the same physical spaces with others, the perspectives that the distance and virtual worlds have given me, will stay with me — for greater appreciation of what I have and for greater freedom when creating. Wishing everyone a restful and healthy season and a new year of hope and fulfillment!”

Sumana Mandalia, MFA in Dance (Fall 2020 graduate)
Arizona State University | Phoenix, AZ

“While I do think there is a future for this type of [digital] work, I didn’t think that us artists were wanting to continue to work in this way in the future. We were forced into it by a pandemic. However, it has given us the opportunity to develop skills that we may not have had the chance to explore. College students can submit screen dances and develop technology skills as they are creating work. This way allows for feedback from professors in the field, and we can improve these skills and creativity. I have also submitted weekly recordings of phrases that were given in class in which I received personal feedback.

The instructors have been able to find ways to teach class in ways that are more personal, which I think is vital in this time of social distancing. I have to say that my favorite part about distance learning is the opportunity to create screen dances. I have taken time to explore different ways of recording choreography as if it were an art itself. The new artists of the world coming out of college will bring the passions and energy back into the dance world with the newfound skill sets and mind-sets to learn, create, teach, and breathe dance.”

Tawni Pizzagioni, MFA in Dance (1st year)
Mills College | Oakland, CA

“While March 2020 came and the pandemic shifted the world as we know it, my immediate plans to audition and perform in New York City were halted. I had always known that I wanted to teach at a university dance program someday, and I saw this moment as the perfect time to pursue my graduate degree at New York University. Taking classes online has been a particular challenge especially in the dance field with so many embodied learning environments. Luckily, I have had access to the studios on the NYU campus under strict safety protocols. Throughout the semester, I have had to learn how to learn in an environment where the very social interactions we depend on are suddenly stripped away. There have been moments where my motivation or focus has suffered, and screen fatigue is real. But, in a strange way, the community that I have built with my cohort feels stronger than many other relationships. We all are pursuing this degree together in unprecedented times. We all show up everyday despite the many challenges that we face. The amount of dedication and resilience I have seen from my peers is unparalleled, and it gives me the strength to push myself further in my educational journey. The connections that I have made have helped to reignite my passion for learning and deepened my understanding of how I can make a positive impact within the dance community.”

Jonathan Flores, MA in Teaching Dance in the Professions: ABT Pedagogy (1st year)
New York University | New York, NY

“2020 in Higher Education”

“Despite the unprecedented challenges of the past 12 months, dance departments have adapted to the pandemic through virtual classes. We are in Zoom meetings almost every day of the week for technique and theory classes and department meetings. While moving in my apartment living room in Pilates and modern classes has been less than ideal, there have been bright spots to the current landscape as well. We have had weekly symposiums which have featured dance professionals with a variety of areas of expertise coming into our Zoom space and sharing their experiences and knowledge with us students. This has been an enriching addition to our curriculum! We have also had many opportunities to develop our skills through creating and curating online content for our virtual dance collaborative and festival, which will premiere at the end of January.”

Lisa McCabe, BS in Dance (3rd year)
Wayne State University | Detroit, MI

“...the occasion with Zoom’s recording features. The challenge during this time was teaching my studio classes with students ranging in age from the age 6 to 16, but I feel my awareness as a teacher (observing more in myself and in my students through the Zoom tiles), organizational skills and creativity have increased. My students have also become more expert at examining and articulating how movement feels in their bodies and at being supportive with one another, especially due to glitches on Zoom. While I look forward to being in the same physical spaces with others, the perspectives that the distance and virtual worlds have given me, will stay with me — for greater appreciation of what I have and for greater freedom when creating. Wishing everyone a restful and healthy season and a new year of hope and fulfillment!”

Sumana Mandalia, MFA in Dance (Fall 2020 graduate)
Arizona State University | Phoenix, AZ
With the shutdown of Broadway, and the nation’s social unrest, 2020 was a year for self-reflection and community conversation.

Top to bottom: Jacob Jonas Dance Company (Santa Monica, CA), Ballo Conserveto (Seattle, WA), and Doris Duke Theatre/Jacob’s Pillow (Becket, MA).

Top to bottom: Broadway (New York, NY) and BLM Movement (location unknown).

Our worlds intersect as do the NDEO sectors!

What are some of the ways in which you have experienced these topics in dance?

Inclusivity & Equity

Climate Change

Historic Losses

Social Movement

National Shutdowns
CALL TO STUDENTS |
NDEO Documentation/Research Project

The Front Runners of the National Dance Education Organization: Oral History Project

Visit NDEO Student Forum for Information or Contact Advisory Board Director of Student Initiatives, jo Blake at josephblake@weber.edu

23rd National Dance Education Organization National Conference
TBC

Friday, October 8, 2021 - Sunday, October 10, 2021

Pre-conference Intensives: Thursday, October 7, 2021

Hyatt Regency Bellevue, Bellevue, WA