



Central San Pedro Neighborhood Council
Neighborhood Purpose Grant Proposal
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San Pedro City Ballet is requesting support from the Central San Pedro Neighborhood Council in order to bring free dance education classes to underserved students of the Central San Pedro community.

San Pedro City Ballet's mission is to identify, train and promote a world-class pre-professional dance company from the diverse population of the Los Angeles Harbor area that is founded in the base of classical works and traditions. The organization also explores new contemporary and original modern works and provides instruction in public schools throughout Los Angeles for arts education and after-school programs, in particular to diverse and underserved populations.

San Pedro City Ballet provides dance education classes free of charge to financially-challenged schools and students because we believe that arts education should be available to all students regardless of income, nationality or ethnicity. We aim to foster diversity in the world of dance and support arts education.

San Pedro City Ballet was created in 1994 by nationally recognized dancers and teachers Cynthia and Patrick David Bradley. Cynthia was inspired to create our programs because of her own dance experiences in her youth at prestigious dance schools in large cities. She became determined to bring dance education directly to underserved students who were missing dance opportunities, and has successfully done this through San Pedro City Ballet for almost 30 years.

San Pedro City Ballet's programs include:

DancEd Steps Up, providing dance instruction, arts education, and exercise to more than 3,100 underserved and underrepresented students at public schools throughout Los Angeles, with free after-school instruction for those who wish to develop their talents further. It includes a

new expansion at the Boys and Girls Club of the Los Angeles Harbor (BCGLAH), providing on-site dance instruction after-school 5 days per week at multiple BGCLAH locations, for elementary to high school age students;

Nutcracker, an annual production for families and individuals to view a classic Holiday ballet, with free tickets distributed to military families as well as unhoused and domestic violence shelters, with a free performance for DancEd Steps Up students;

Swan Lake, a new production for our annual Spring/Summer recital, which will take place at the Port of Los Angeles with DancEd Steps Up students included.

San Pedro City Ballet is seeking support for our DancEd Steps Up program at the Boys & Girls Club of the Los Angeles Harbor (BCGLAH) in order to expand and enhance the program. The DancEd Steps Up program currently provides on-site dance instruction to a diverse group of underserved, financially-challenged students at public schools throughout Los Angeles. Professional highly-qualified dance instructors teach students Ballet, Contemporary, Hip Hop, Jazz, and Modern dance styles. While we have a long history of conducting this program at Los Angeles schools, this summer we successfully launched this program at select local Boys & Girls club locations.

We are requesting support to launch the program at the Barton Hills Elementary School and Dana Middle School locations of the Boys & Girls Club. With new funding, we will be able to offer after-school dance instruction twice a week at each location for one month. We are currently soliciting support from other funders to continue the program through the summer and new school year.

The DancEd Steps Up program is a benefit to the community in many ways. First, it makes dance and arts education accessible to all, especially underserved students who might not otherwise have access. While public schools are decreasing the availability of arts education at an alarming rate, research shows that including arts in the curriculum strengthens students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills, adding to overall academic success, improved test scores and social skills, and overall development. San Pedro City Ballet created the DancEd Steps Up program to address this issue and provide a means to keep arts education available for public school children. We specifically located our studio in San Pedro in order to be accessible to the diverse population of the Los Angeles Harbor and to give financially-challenged students opportunities to explore their potential.

The second benefit of the DancEd Steps Up program is to add diversity to the ballet arts world by offering dance classes to individuals of color who are underserved and underrepresented. The program currently serves more than 3,100 students from diverse backgrounds: 51% are boys and 49% are girls, with 73% Hispanic/Latino, 10% Caucasian, 8% African American, 6% Asian, and 3% other.

Our most well-known former student is Misty Copeland. In 2015, she made history by becoming the first African-American female Principal dancer at the prestigious American Ballet Theatre in New York. Copeland was discovered by Cindy Bradley as a 13-year-old through one of San Pedro City Ballet's outreach programs at the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Los Angeles Harbor. Copeland shares that "this program changed the trajectory of my life. Because of San Pedro City Ballet's mission of bringing ballet to the Los Angeles community, I was trained in four short years to go on to dance with American Ballet Theatre in New York City, America's National Ballet Company."

A third benefit of the DancEd Steps Up program is to address the rise in childhood obesity. Data from the Centers for Disease Control shows that childhood obesity affects more than 14 million children in the United States, causing health risks, poor academic achievement and poor mental health. Obesity rates for 6-11 year olds has risen to 20%, with Hispanic children and non-Hispanic black children at the greatest risk at 25% and 24% respectively. In order to address this issue, the DancEd Steps Up program includes comprehensive educational workshops focused on healthy lifestyles, good nutritional habits, and good eating habits.

Finally, the DancEd Steps Up program fosters the social-emotional health of children. Expression through dance is a way for students to exercise, relieve stress, and understand healthy discipline, as well as learn about emotions, how to express them, and learn empathy and compassion while practicing with their peers. Since many students have never taken a dance class before, they form bonds with each other through the shared experiences of learning new things. The boys especially don't expect to enjoy dance classes, but end up thoroughly enjoying it. The dance classes promote social emotional learning to help students learn about themselves and relate better to their peers.

We look forward to the opportunity to partner with the Central San Pedro Neighborhood Council in order to expand our program to benefit the Central San Pedro community. Thank you for considering our request for support.