

Rose Marie Piper Foundation
Grant Application: Due August 1, 2020

Applicant:

Sonoma Conservatory of Dance
561 Broadway, Suite B
Sonoma, CA 95476
www.sonomaconservatoryofdance.org

Applicant's Federal Tax ID# 81-3649673

ATTACHMENT: IRS Tax Exemption Notification

ATTACHMENT: Board of Directors list

Percentage of Board of Directors who gave financially to Sonoma Conservatory of Dance in 2019:

100% of board members contribute annually.

ATTACHMENT: Form 990

ATTACHMENT: Sonoma Conservatory of Dance Operating Budget

ATTACHMENT: Budget for project for which funds are being sought

ATTACHMENT: SCD Scholarship Program Application (received)

Contact name and Title:

Patricia O'Reilly, A.R.A.D., Executive and Artistic Director; Lead Instructor

Email address:

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Phone Number:

(707) 938-1424 (office) (707) 312-1076 (O'Reilly mobile)

Key Organizational Staff:

Patricia O'Reilly, A.R.A.D., is the executive director, artistic director and lead instructor of Sonoma Conservatory of Dance. She received her teaching certificate from the Royal Academy of Dance and completed the Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced Executant Examinations after extensive training with Katie Heil, a graduate of the Royal Ballet School's Teacher Training Program in London, England. O'Reilly performed professionally with Oakland Ballet, Santa Clara Ballet and Khadra International Dance Theatre before devoting her career to teaching. She re-envisioned Sonoma Conservatory of Dance after 12 years of directing the Vallejo Ballet Conservatory, which she had founded in 1993.

Additional Staff:

Anna Cline (Administration) and helps with rehearsals and substitute teaching. Cline trained with O'Reilly at SCD from age 12 through 18; she danced some of the main roles in our productions and was a cast member with the original staging of *Por La Luz de la Luna*.

Siobhan O'Reilly (Administration) trained with Patty O'Reilly from age three until age 15. She has danced many main roles with SCD and graduated with a BA in Theater from UC San Diego in 2020.

Krissy Marchus (Yoga, Contemporary and Pre-Ballet instructor) received her BFA from Boston Conservatory and her MA in Dance Education from UCLA. She is also a Registered Yoga Teacher. Classically trained in Vaganova Ballet and Modern since age nine, she has danced professionally for companies in NYC, Boston, Los Angeles and Sonoma for the past 28 years. She is currently on the faculty of Santa Rosa Junior College, Yoga Community, Sonoma Preschool Academy and Hanna Boys Center.

Michelle Dondero (Jazz instructor) began training in dance at age seven in ballet, jazz and contemporary. She has studied at the Ohman School of Ballet, the Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute in New York City, at the Centro de Movimento de Deborah Colker (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) and in Los Angeles under choreographer and creative director Dana Foglia. She enjoys connecting with students on a deep level, focusing on technique, musicality and dynamics.

Leigh Donlan (Ballet and Pointe instructor) is a former ballerina trained in Vaganova technique and a variety of folk and modern dance techniques. She was children's ballet mistress at the Washington School of Ballet and director of the Athenaeum School of Ballet. She studied English at the University of Oregon and public relations at Georgetown University. She is a dance artist, writer and teacher in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Organization Mission Statement and Purpose:

The mission of the Sonoma Conservatory of Dance (SCD) is “to nurture the creative spirit of our community through dance.”

SCD has provided wide-ranging dance education, scholarships and high-quality dance performances for youth and adults since its founding in 1970. With the mentorship of an excellent artistic staff, students are exposed to a diversity of cultures through music and dance. Full-length productions offer a blend of classical ballet and other socially-relevant or culturally-diverse themes that both benefit the students and provide entertainment and inspiration for the public.

Through the school year and summer programs, Conservatory students interact across cultural, racial, educational and socio-economic lines. The classroom becomes a microcosm for the community at large filling the need for better communication, acceptance and understanding among strangers who may ultimately become friends and colleagues.

SCD gives participants not only a comprehensive education in dance technique, but also fosters valuable life skills like team and relationship building, problem-solving and body awareness that lead to self-mastery, self-esteem and enhanced maturity. SCD-trained dancers have been accepted into some of the most prestigious dance programs locally, nationally and internationally, including: American Ballet Theatre, Joffrey Ballet, Kaatsbaan Extreme Ballet and the Royal Ballet School of Antwerp.

Sonoma Conservatory of Dance serves its community with the following goals: to provide aspiring dancers the opportunity to study locally while receiving an excellent dance education from top-level instructors; to expose multiple dance forms and associated cultures to youth who have never had the opportunity to learn about or try them before; and to offer financial aid to those students who have the desire to dance but not the means to pay.

Funds are requested for:

Sonoma Conservatory of Dance Scholarship Fund and COVID-19 Recovery

Program Description:

During the COVID-19 shutdown, Sonoma Conservatory of Dance created over 80 classes which we posted online and provided free of charge during April, May and June. Now that we have opened up again, we have returned to billing tuition for in-person classes at the same amount as before Shelter in Place (SIP).

Those families choosing Zoom classes are being billed at 50% tuition. This discount is based on dance studios' best practices and makes accommodation for the limitations of at-home dance study (i.e. many students do not have an ideal space for practicing ballet). Despite the challenges, students taking virtual classes are able to receive feedback and technical corrections from the instructor.

Using a hybrid model of in-person and online classes, our teachers have been resumed their regular teaching schedules but with only 50% of the revenues, compared to our pre-SIP income. This income reduction is due to dramatically lower enrollment (34 students currently compared to 90 at the beginning of March) caused by the reluctance of many families—for health reasons—to expand their social bubbles.

At the same time, our students are desperate to return to dancing! In deference to their happiness and well-being, we have chosen to continue a class even if only one or two students are enrolled. The result is an imbalance between the number of teacher hours vs. tuition income. It may take months before some parents are comfortable with in-person classes, but we hope that once families see that SCD is following strictly all safety protocols, they will be more willing to return to the studio.

We also expect that more students will need financial assistance in order to participate, due to the extensive job loss in our community following several rounds of business closures and other circumstances related to the pandemic.

Besides subsidizing individual student dancers, a grant from the Rose Marie Piper Foundation will also help SCD recover from the months when no tuition was being paid, and will help cover the increased costs of “doing business” both in person and virtually, always with the safety of our students and our community in mind.

These additional costs include:

- yearly subscription to Zoom for online classes;
- professional cleaning service for the facility (twice per week);
- PPE for teachers and students (hand disinfectant, masks, etc.) and sanitizing materials following each class;
- increased hours for administration and teachers to accommodate socially-distanced classes.

Number of Children Served:

During the time period from January 1 to March 30, 2020, nine students out of 90 enrolled received financial aid. Traditionally, including this term, we have had 10% of our student base in need of assistance.

After conducting only online classes for three months, we were able to open the studio on June 22 for in-person classes; but then, as of July 13, per the governor's orders, we had to again close the indoor facility for instruction. However, we are continuing classes *outdoors* on the property of Trinity Episcopal Church in Sonoma, thanks to the generosity and grace of the pastor, Fr. Jim

Thomas. And we are still providing a modified of online classes for students and families who prefer that option at this time.

Currently we have 34 students taking 68 classes, including four that are Zoom-only enrollments. This compares to 90 students doing 163 classes before the March SIP. For our three-week Summer Dance Camps, we expect to have approximately 30 enrollments vs. 54 from the summer of 2019.

In addition to the loss of tuition income and the added expense of online learning and safety protocols through a series of closings and openings, Sonoma Conservatory of Dance was also deprived of income from our shows and fundraisers. Our spring performance of *The Magic Grove*, the Teddy Bear Tea Party (benefit for our scholarship fund) and our holiday performance of *The Snow Maiden* were cancelled due to the coronavirus.

Amount Requested: \$10,000

Sonoma Conservatory of Dance and the families it serves are grateful for funds received from the Rose Marie Piper Foundation in the past. The assistance has truly changed lives.

In the foreseeable future, the financial survival of many nonprofits that are vital to the health and well-being of our community, is threatened. We hope that the Rose Marie Piper Foundation will take into consideration the financial hardship of the SCD studio itself, as well as the financial hardship of the families it serves, when awarding its grants for 2021.

NOTE: Tuition assistance is based on the need of the family and the merit of the student. (Please see the Financial Aid Application Form in this packet for the rights and responsibilities of scholarship recipients).

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Here are recent testimonials from parents of Sonoma Conservatory of Dance students:

From Betty Borloz, mother of scholarship student 9-year-old Mia, who is in the Elementary I class. (email of May 31, 2020)

Mia really enjoyed attending class! It took the mystery out of ballet and gave her what she needed. She enjoyed being part of a team (sports are not her thing) and she looked forward to getting dressed and getting to class to learn what was being taught. She also enjoyed sharing what she learned with us all the days between class. She looks forward to returning!

From Alice King, mother of scholarship student 16-year-old Camille, who is in the Intermediate II class. (email of May 27, 2020)

The performance block tuition assistance not only gave Camille the opportunity to perform and benefitted her personal growth, but seeing the top companies in action was inspirational. She has been keeping up with two barres a week at home (in spite of flooring that is not ideal!)

From Jerome Smith, M.D., father of 7-year-old Diego who is a rising Elementary I student. (email of July 14, 2020)

First of all, I want to thank you for pivoting in record time to keep "on with the

dance.” Your dedication to these kids and this art form is a bright light in these times. Thanks again.

From Trycel Pihl, mother of Harper (age 3) and Ella (age 5) who are in the Friendly Finches and Dazzling Firebirds classes, respectively. (email of July 12, 2020)

Harper and Ella couldn't not have been more excited to resume class with you yesterday! They were beyond happy as we found all the tights & leotards and could not stop practicing afterwards. Thank you so much for getting the classes back open and all the efforts to stay safe!

And finally, here is an excerpt from a longer letter from Cameron McKesson, the mother of a 16-year-old student who cried for happiness when we resumed in-person classes in June.

...Once the SIP was partially lifted, the opening of in-person classes was a much-needed option for Maren. The change in her mental health as soon as she began having a schedule with classes was clear. She smiled more. She woke up with purpose the day she had classes and felt calm and grounded at the end of each session.

Now that we have shifted yet again, the studio's quick resourcefulness to allow outdoor classes is just another example of the dedication you and your staff maintain for all the lucky dancers in your studio. Thank you so much for all you do. We feel truly blessed.

Sonoma Conservatory of Dance Grant Request Authorization:

I, Patricia O'Reilly, declare that I am authorized to sign this application on behalf of the organization listed above as the organization applying for a grant and that said organization has a tax exempt status under IRS Section 501(c)(3) which has not been revoked or modified, and continues to maintain classification as a public charity under the Internal Revenue Code.



Patricia O'Reilly, Artistic Director, Sonoma Conservatory of Dance Date: August 1, 2020

All organizations receiving funds must **submit a report** related to the project implementation and the **detailed utilization of grant funds before June 1, 2021**. Failure to comply with this request will exclude your organization from consideration for future funding.