

As we say goodbye to this shocking year, the Board of Directors would like to share some thoughts with you as we all look forward to a better year for dance in Saskatchewan. We know that the pandemic affects all of us in so many different ways and to such different degrees, while conditions change it seems from day-to-day. Your board members and Elaine recognize the deep personal and professional losses that many of you have suffered and express our condolences.

Despite these setbacks, the eligibility process is ongoing and to date the signs are positive. We still have more work to do and are aiming to be back on our dancing feet this summer. As you will have seen, the Board has issued a request for proposals to carry out a province-wide review, and our aim is to have that started early in the new year. We will introduce the successful firm at the Zoom 2019-2020 Annual General Meeting February 14, and we very much hope to see you there.

With just over 50% of our full complement the Board of Directors has been working steadily and carefully on your behalf. To conclude the eligibility process, meet the challenges ahead and exploit the new opportunities that we know will emerge from the review, we need to operate with a full and committed board. The Board has just struck a Nominating Committee consisting of board members Karla Koeble, Kathy Bond, Trina Gueffroy and Pat Gabel-Yablonski with thanks to DSI past president Ann Kipling Brown and former SaskCulture General Manager Rose Gilks for agreeing to join us. Please consider putting your name forward when the Committee gets in touch and talk with your colleagues about this opportunity to serve.

You have just received notice of a COVID-19 member funding program, and we strongly encourage you to take advantage of it. We believe that this is the best use of the very limited funds available to us right now. We are not in a position to continue with DSI's traditional granting programs until the review has taken place and our Sask Lotteries Trust status and associated funding has been clarified.

As well as the funding program, we are also establishing a continuing web presence regarding the state of COVID-19 as it relates to dance in the province. Everyone appreciates that there has been real confusion about the status of dance - where it fits, who can take lessons, etc. Board representatives have met with provincial officials, and we will be working with them to help you get the best current information. Given the current shutdown, we don't expect any relaxation or increased flexibility over the next 2-3 weeks but will be preparing a brief for the Government to consider when things improve. We do recommend that you check out the Saskatchewan Government's own *Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan* for the most up-to-date information and guidelines, including permissible dance and fitness age groups, gathering sizes and distancing regulations.

While most of our membership services and programs have been on hold in 2020, we do encourage everyone to renew your memberships in support of the revitalization in 2021 of Dance Saskatchewan that is both necessary and desirable. Loyal members are the key to the success of our organization and its broader service to Saskatchewan's dance community.

Thanks to all of you for your support and encouragement during 2020: attending member meetings, renewing your membership, keeping an active interest in our progress. Thanks to SaskCulture for the ongoing support, advice and guidance of its Eligibility Committee, its management and Board of Directors. A huge thank you to Elaine for the incredible effort she has put forward and the key role she continues to play in keeping DSI moving forward. As our status is clarified, we hope to bring on a new Executive Director in the summer to join her and help lead us forward into our new reality. And finally, thank you to Jeremy Morgan, our consultant who has worked tirelessly to guide us and advise us through this difficult time. We could not have made the progress that we have without him!

Our sincere wishes for a peaceful and healthy holiday season and new year. See you at the AGM.