

Volunteering at DSW

Why Volunteer at DSW?

Dancers' Studio West is a small organization operating with a volunteer Board of Directors, a small staff, and a deep reliance on public funding from local, provincial and national levels of government. Like many arts organizations, DSW operates on a shoestring budget and struggles to maintain the day-to-day administrative and artistic tasks required to present wonderful dance and dance artists to the Calgary public. We also strive and struggle to move forward as an organization, providing more and better programming and outreach to Calgary's dance artists, nurturing their growth and development, while developing the city's dance audience as well.

We need your help! Our city and community has a wealth of talented individuals who are able to give of their time and talents for the benefit of organizations they believe in. One hundred percent of your time and efforts as a volunteer will go to assisting DSW in nurturing and developing contemporary dance in Calgary and beyond.

We value and appreciate our volunteers beyond words – without your help, we could not provide a space for working artists in this country to perform and grow. Thank you deeply in advance for your interest in DSW. Feel free to browse the available volunteer positions and contact us at 244-0950 or email admin@dswlive.ca to let us know your interests and how much time you can commit to DSW.

Yours in the spirit of dance,
The Staff and Board of Directors of Dancers' Studio West

About Us

Dancers' Studio West was founded in 1981 by Elaine Bowman and her husband Peter Hoff. Born in the spirit of building a dance community in Calgary's then-tiny artistic community, DSW has embodied a ethos of brave creation for more than 25 years.

From the beginning and for the past twenty-five years, DSW has always tried to make both the production and presentation of contemporary dance viable in Calgary. DSW has also strived to create an atmosphere where dance could flourish, and local artists could grow and make dance comparable to the best anywhere.

Our Mission

DSW nurtures artistic growth and public appreciation of contemporary dance through innovative presentation, professional development and educational programs.

Our Values

Creativity: Artistic freedom; fostering creativity in artists, programs and organization.

Integrity: A healthy relationship between DSW and the community; a reputation as a transparent, committed, and fiscally responsible organization that does meaningful work.

Quality: A reputation for consistent presentations of quality finished productions, and high quality individuals being associated with DSW's organization.

Passion: Drive, working hard, and an intense love for dance.

Recognition: A reputation for leadership and trail blazing.

Opportunity for Artists: A critical gap often confronts dancers after graduating from University. To continue on in advancing their aspirations in dance they need a place to perform and present their work to help build their careers and perhaps become professional artists. DSW plays an important niche role aimed at bridging that gap by making opportunities available to artists to continue their development.

Fiscal Responsibility: Ensure continuance of DSW with honesty and transparency.

Community: Public service; education and teaching; outreach; respect for audience and dancers; assess community sentiments and address what is actually there.

Risk Taking: A leading contemporary dance presentation group, known in the Calgary community for pushing the envelope, their vitality and change; a group who responds to opportunities in the community and reminds to us to keep pushing forward.

Fun: Enjoyment, passion, love, play, and an infusion of positive energy.

Autonomy: Artistic and organizational independence; a solid identity; boundaries

Volunteer Positions at DSW

Artist Photographer – build your photography portfolio while photographing dance artists for media, show archives and future marketing.

Videographer – see DSW's current production while assisting DSW by creating a video archive of each of our productions.

Publicity and Media Relations – use your contacts with the media to assist DSW in promoting our shows, classes and other events through editorial, radio or TV coverage. Might also be a good internship opportunity for a PR student.

Graphic Designer – build your portfolio while assisting DSW with the design and production of show programs, advertising, website, push pages.

Web Designer/Developer – development of dswlive.com, either on-going maintenance or training of DSW board and staff to manage updates etc.

Handyman/Facility Management Technician – talented and ‘well-tooled’ individual to ensure that our facility is safe for everyone and in good repair.

Arts Admin Associate – a perfect opportunity to learn the ins and outs of arts administration by getting real-life experience assisting DSW’s business manager in the day-to-day needs of the organization. May be a great internship opportunity for arts admin or dance students.

Fundraising Committee – to maximize fundraising opportunities from silent auction donations, prize donations, fundraising events, strategic alliances, etc.

Special Events Committee – organizing fundraising events, workshops, educational programs, community outreach.

Gaming Volunteers – courageous and dedicated souls to assist us as bingo and casino volunteers. While not the sexiest volunteer job we offer, this is the job that has the most direct impact on DSW’s financial health and wellbeing. Treats and benefits galore!

Front of House Volunteers – for all productions. Work the box office, concession or distribute programs and see DSW’s current production for free!

Dancer Liaison – this key individual or committee is charged with the responsibility to understand and communicate the needs of independent artists in the community, may advise DSW on how we can assist these artists through programming initiatives, residences etc.

Dance Explosions Committee – charged with clarifying the festival’s mandate and purpose and suggesting workshop, marketing and sponsorship initiatives.

Volunteer Appreciation Committee – in charge of motivational and thank-you treats for DSW’s valuable volunteers, creation of volunteer incentive programs – deals on space rental.