Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 185

Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?

Yes

According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?

Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

Hartford

Will this activity occur after February 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

Roberts2020

Organization Name

Justice Dance Performance Project, Inc.

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

223064328

Principal Contact Name

Jennifer Eifrig

Title

Development & Communications Director

Email

jennifer@jdpp.org

Phone

(860) 527-9800

Address

75 Charter Oak Ave
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
United States
Map It

Website

http://www.jdpp.org

Amount requested this application

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 185

$10,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

Moving for change since 1989, Justice Dance Performance Project (formerly Judy Dworin Performance Project) is an award-winning, critically acclaimed dance and multi-arts organization. Its mission is to educate, inspire, and ignite awareness, bridging the boundaries of art and social justice to create a more equitable society in ways that spark individual growth and collective action.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

JDPP began as a collective of professional artists in Hartford and New York who shared a commitment to societal change and advancement through various artistic forms. Rooted in artistic discipline, JDPP's award-winning repertory and pioneering residency programs on stage, in schools, and in prison communities offer a fearless, joyful, and transformative approach to challenging issues. JDPP is based in Hartford, Connecticut, under the artistic direction of founder Judy Dworin.

The **JDPP Ensemble** enriches public dialogue and awareness of social justice through dance-based, multi-arts performances that examine contemporary social and individual issues. Known for its innovative fusion of dance, text, music, and visual design, the JDPP repertory searches the darkness to discover the light, drawing audiences into worlds that illuminate understanding and reflection. The company's award-winning work can be seen throughout New England in theaters, at colleges and universities, prisons, and inner-city schools. Its collaborative repertory has been performed in major cities across the United States and Europe.

The longest-running arts-in-education program within the Hartford Public Schools, ***Moving Matters!*** is recognized as a national model that brings collaborative dance-based, multi-arts residencies into elementary and high schools. This ground-breaking program strengthens children and teens socially and emotionally, by increasing self-knowledge and awareness, expanding cognitive skills, and building lifelong skills for resilient living.

Bridging Boundaries helps incarcerated individuals and their families reconnect, reenergize, and regain communication skills through the arts. In tandem with social service professionals, teaching artists lead participants in individual and collaborative storytelling through dance and movement, autobiographical narratives, visual arts, and song-making. The program includes both men and women in prison and those returning to the community.

Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.

JDPP's focus is serving and empowering disadvantaged populations by amplifying voice and presence. In 2021, JDPP served a total of 2385 people through our performances and programs. We estimate that 46% of that population are people of color and 60% female-identifying. 88% come from greater Hartford, and approximately 10% reside in New London County, where York CI is located. The remaining 2% are from other regions in Connecticut, out-of-state-, or abroad.

Describe your organization's governance.

JDPP's board consists of 12 voting members and two ad hoc members, who meet five times each year (85% average attendance in FY 2021). They represent the financial, K-12 educational, legal, social service, higher education, arts, and criminal justice sectors, and reside mostly in greater Hartford. All board members have made a donation of record to the organization within the past year.

Describe the diversity of your board.

Currently, JDPP's board is 33% Black/African American; 8% Latino/Hispanic/LatinX, and 59% white. 88% are female-identifying. In 2020, the board began a review of the strategic plan action steps to ensure alignment with DEI and is currently

leading an organization-wide consult to further explore ways in which we can respond to equity and diversity and formulate strategies to more fully engage communities of color with our work.

What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?

100% of the board has made a financial contribution of record to JDPP in the past year. Board members also attend events, trainings, and JDPP-sponsored activities in the community such as performances.

Project Name

In the Presence of Trees

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

Yes

Will the artists associated with this project be financially compensated?

Yes

Project Description

In the Presence of Trees is a series of dance/theater performances (in-person and virtual) exploring our relationship to trees and the environment. Happening from October to May in selected parks in Greater Hartford, the pieces illumine the way forests can be models for our own communities. At each location, the dancers will perform solo responses to trees there, eventually coalescing into a group expression of community and connection with each other, the trees, and the environment. Throughout, the audience/viewers will be encouraged to sense the healing and calm of the forest in its seasonal iterations and how its communication network (through underground fungus links between diverse trees) maintains the health of both individual and community. The culminating piece will be accompanied by an installation at a nearby gallery that recreates the series on video juxtaposed with artwork depicting the reality of where we stand with trees and climate change and how we can take action.

Total estimated project budget

$44,047.62

Project start/opening

08/01/2022

Project end/closing

06/30/2023

Project venue

Farmington River Park, Bushnell Park

Project town

Bloomfield, Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

In FY 2021, JDPP's board voted to make all performances "pay what you can" to ensure they are accessible to all. Tickets are free, with donations gratefully accepted.

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 185

We expect the following in-person and online attendance:

10/16/2022, Farmington River Park - 75 attendees

2/16/2023, winter trees video filmed at various Greater Hartford locations (virtual only) - 75 viewers

4/28/2023, Bushnell Park and Pump House Gallery - 150 attendees

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

We have learned that strong, frequent, and consistent messaging is essential to marketing JDPP events. We have already begun using trees and tree images in our general and fundraising communications and will send branded email to our subscribers (1500+) twice weekly for three weeks prior to each event. We will post regular updates on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) throughout 2022-23 highlighting project milestones, and pitch targeted reporters and editors in Hartford and CT media.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

The project will involve 7 Ensemble dancers, a composer, poet, visual designer, sound engineer, videographer, and photographer. JDPP has applied to CT DEEP and George A. & Grace L. Long Foundation and will seek additional gifts and grants. Roberts funding will be used for expenses related to the Bloomfield and Hartford in-person performances, including performer fees, costume design & construction, set elements & construction, photography, videography, sound, and marketing.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

JDPP is pleased to recognize the Roberts Foundation on our web site (www.jdpp.org); Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and in our monthly email newsletters; in publications and press releases relating to the in-person performances and gallery installation; in the performance playbills; and as requested.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

JDPP defines artistic excellence as collaborative creation in the fulfillment of an artistic vision. The strongest performance works result from trained and confident artists bringing their knowledge and experience together under a clear directorial eye in the metaphoric telling of a story whose meaning is greater than the sum of its parts. We seek to produce works in which multiple disciplines accrete to provide multi-sensory immersive experiences that connect performers with audience through authentic voice and presence, acknowledging our common humanity and shared responsibility for the well-being of ourselves and our communities. The work is based on a firm belief in the power of performance to activate new perspectives and encourage audiences on a visceral level to move forward toward an enlarged vision of what is possible.

How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?

In the Presence of Trees is led by Judy Dworin's conceptual and artistic vision drawn from the collective explorations of the ensemble of performers, expanding on the *ColorFields* project that examined the body's response to the natural environment. This experience led Dworin to further investigate the outdoors as an essential and healing environment and topic for performance. Here, her 12-year collaboration with visual designer Marcela Oteíza continues to develop the site-specific interest they share in new ways. Research and improvisational exploration with the Ensemble will be shaped and structured compositionally into the final performance events. The addition of visuals, sound, text and costume ultimately brings the work into a seamless whole.

This project advances JDPP's mission by allying the arts with informed science to suggest how trees and forest communities provide a model for more successful human communities and interrelationships with each other and the natural world.

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 185

How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?

Trees are critical to the survival of the planet, and this series encourages us to recognize their incredible value. By participating, audiences will slow down, listen, and learn:

- Diversity and mutual support are the foundations of healthy communities
- Trees are essential to human strategies for surviving climate change
- How to apply the strategies that make forests resilient in their own lives
- That action is needed now for a better future
- The arts are an important messenger of change

In addition to scheduled performances, audiences will be invited to attend in-process explorations on site and provide feedback post-rehearsal. Following the live performances and virtual film showing, there will be a dialogue between the audience, director, designer and dancers, to answer questions, build interest, and encourage action supporting the health and longevity of our forests and our earth.

How will this project be evaluated?

As a result of this project, we expect to create

- A site-specific series of performances (2 in-person and 1 virtual), each attended by 50 to 80 adults and youth
- A feature-length video to be shown at the Pump House Gallery in April 2023 and later premiered as a standalone event(s).
- Increased public awareness of the importance of urban forests, as measured through audience self-reporting
- Increased feelings of connection to the natural world, as measured through audience self-reporting
- Increased interest in taking action on behalf of urban forests, as measured through audience self-reporting

JDPP will again work with Dr. Anita Baker of Evaluation Consultants to develop an audience self-assessment instrument to measure the project's success in achieving the outcomes outlined above.

Cover letter

- JDPP_RobertsFdn_cover_letter.pdf

Board list

- JDPP-Board-members-FY-22.pdf

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- JDPP-IRS-Determination-Letter-amended-name-copy.pdf

Financial statement

- JDPP-FS-FINAL-6-30-21-copy.pdf

Last year operational budget

- last_year_PL-copy.pdf

Current year operational budget

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 185

- current_year_PL-copy.pdf

Balance sheet

- 22-0331-Balance-Sheet-copy.pdf

Project budget

- JDPP_robertsfdn_budget_FY23.pdf

Does your organization produce an annual report?

Yes

Annual report

- JDPP-Annual-Report-FY2021.pdf

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

Yes

Strategic plan

- JDPP-board-approved-strategic-plan.pdf

Does your organization have a formal policy or organizational commitment to ensure that visual artists are financially compensated?

No

JDPP will film work performed at the various sites to create a standalone video shown at the Pump House Gallery on 4/28/2023, along with sculpture and images curated by Marcela Oteíza that underscore the importance of maintaining human connection to nature. After the grant period, we plan to show the film in theaters and online.

We have received positive response from all community contacts, including Hartford Tree Commission and Forester, Bushnell Park Foundation, Bloomfield Parks & Rec and Public Art Commission, Keney Park, and CT DEEP. We hope to tour the piece to other sites in the future including Riverfront Recapture, Elizabeth Park, and Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center in West Hartford.

As with all outdoor projects, planned dates are weather dependent and subject to adjustment.

Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?

Yes

Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?

Yes