



Regional Dance America 101

The mission of RDA/Pacific is to raise the standards of American ballet through education, performance, and community engagement

Regional Dance America is a national organization of pre-professional dance companies. Our Pacific Region is currently made up of 21 companies from California, Arizona, Utah, Oregon, Washington and Idaho. The criteria of the Pacific Region includes that the companies are primarily ballet companies, and exacting standards of technique, choreography, performance and organizational qualities are upheld by our region. New companies have to pass a strict standards review by our Membership committee, and must prove their consistency in participation at two consecutive festivals.

ANNUAL FESTIVAL

Each Spring the member companies assemble for a Festival. The Festival is not a competition, but rather a three and a half day event where all of the dancers of member companies take master classes and perform for each other. It is more like a convention, where new friendships are forged and ideas shared. The dancers are assigned a class and seminar schedule, and performing dancers are scheduled for technical rehearsals on stage before their performance. Emerging Choreographers are also showcased, as the continuing education and development of new choreographers is an important part of RDA's mission.

Also at the Festival, the company directors hold a bi-annual meeting, where budgets are approved, standards are discussed, new companies mentored, plans are made. In 2013, the Pacific Region held its first region-hosted Festival. The event was such a success, that we have only held region-hosted Festivals since. In a region-hosted Festival, each company director has a job to do related to the event. Some jobs are huge, others are smaller, and some are committee-based. This manner of Festival hosting has garnered camaraderie between our members, as everyone must be responsible and work together to make the event a success. Region-hosted Festivals also alleviate the monetary burden of the event from one host company. It behooves us all to stay within budgets and plan carefully.

RDA/P ventures to uphold high standards in its ranks for the benefit of all of our companies. We learn much from

watching companies with different training methods, not to mention different choreographers. The Adjudicator, chosen each year from a list of candidates, evaluates each company in detail. Having an outside professional with a unique eye and vast experience is ultimately helpful for each Artistic Director. He or she gives us valuable critiques about every facet of our company's training, performance and organization. We all strive to continue to improve, and the annual Adjudication Report is a valuable tool to our continued education.

OUR DIRECTORS' DUTIES AT RDA

Santa Cruz Ballet Theatre Directors have performed the same Festival jobs now for several years. Robert Kelley has been the region's V.I.P. Coordinator, which means he welcomes visiting luminaries, whether they be on the Festival faculty or are local dignitaries. He also plans the initial Artistic Directors party. The past few years he has also served as Master of Ceremonies at all of the performances and the Gala banquet. Last year he gave up this job to a new member. Robert stays involved behind the scenes, helping out backstage at the theater or serving on the Scholarship committee. Robert is also on the board of RDA, so he attends the long and detailed budget meetings twice a year.

Director Diane Cypher has organized the Adjudication Tour for several years in a row and is the go-between for the region's membership to the Adjudicator as the process moves along. The job begins with presenting several Adjudicator candidates for the following year, then arranging schedules and drawing up contracts for the Adjudicator. The job continues with booking the Adjudicator's travel and forwarding forms from each company for all pieces to be viewed on the tour. In her role as our region's Standards Chairman, she also educates the Adjudicator about our standards evaluations. The Adjudicator is solely responsible for evaluating each member company throughout the process from Adjudication through Festival. The job of Standards Chairman finishes for the moment with the final evaluation marks for each member company being noted for archival purposes. These final marks establish Honor Company status for one year.

Diane also serves on the Scholarship committee, for which she creates the scholarship certificates awarded at the culmination of the Festival. For the region, Diane also serves on the Membership Committee. In recent years, RDA/Pacific has gained full member companies Marin Ballet, Idaho Regional Ballet, Juline Regional Youth Ballet and Maple Youth Ballet. In 2016, new companies Dance Connection Ballet Company and Sacramento Ballet Youth Ensemble will be re-evaluated for full membership. If they are successful, as full member companies they will qualify for all of the perks of RDA: scholarships, awards and recognition.

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL EXPOSURE

One of the most valuable perks of being an RDA member company is the exposure it garners for our dancers, especially those who aspire for a career in dance. Recent achievements of the region include the attendance by a long list of college and university dance program recruiters. These professionals, just like scouts for professional companies and schools, get a chance to see our dancers in action. Not only do many of them offer scholarships and early-entrance awards, but they add to the fabric of professionalism at the Festivals.

In recent years, many of our dancers have been acknowledged at the Festivals. Brittany Duncan was offered a professional contract with Alabama Ballet by then Artistic Director Wes Chapman after seeing her in performance at the Festival. Kaelyn Magee was offered a professional contract with Utah Regional Ballet, which included Artistic Director Jacqueline Colledge watching her in an array of classes. Jackie watched Kaelyn in jazz and

modern classes in addition to ballet and pointe, because her company dances a wide array of styles. Sam Fulk was also offered a contract by Utah Regional Ballet at a Festival.

Scholarships awarded our students at Festival include Bonnie Costa to the American Ballet Theatre School in New York City, Lia Aquino to Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, Jeffrey Avila as a choreographer to the RDA National Choreographic Intensive, Lauryn Winterhalter to Pacific Northwest Ballet School, Emerson Moose to the Kirov Academy in Washington D.C., and many many others. Several of our dancers have earned early-acceptance to prestigious university dance programs, including Butler University, LINES/Dominican College Dance Program, UVU Dance Department, University of Utah Ballet Department, BYU Department of Dance, Cornish School of the Arts, along with others.

Santa Cruz Ballet Theatre has been honored to earn the distinction of Honor Company since 1983. This is a feat we do not take for granted, and work hard for each year.

Last but not least, our mentor Barbara Crockett is also one of our region's Founding Directors, pictured below surrounded by member company directors celebrating her birthday in 2010. At 95 years of age, our founder still manages to inspire us with her dedication and commitment to the region she helped form over 50 years ago. We pay tribute to her professionalism and generosity at each Festival. We aspire to continue the Pacific Region of Regional Dance America to her standards for years to come.



In 2010 RDA/P Directors and 2011 Adjudicator Lyn C. Wiltshire celebrated Founding Director Barbara Crockett's 90th Birthday in Las Vegas, with Elvis, of course! SCBT and South Bay Ballet co-hosted the 2011 Festival in Las Vegas.