

Councilmember Sophie Hahn
City of Berkeley, District 5

CONSENT CALENDAR

April 26, 2022

To: Honorable Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember Sophie Hahn (Author), Mayor Jesse Arreguín, Councilmembers Terry Taplin and Kate Harrison (Co-Sponsors)
Subject: Budget Referral for Accessibility Renovations for Luna Dance Institute

RECOMMENDATION

Refer a grant of \$150,000 for the benefit of Luna Dance Institute to the FY2023-2024 budget process to support the renovation of 931 Ashby Avenue and create a fully accessible, permanent dance education center for children, families, artists, teachers and the public. Funds will be directed to accessibility upgrades allowing the new Luna center to become Berkeley's first and only 100% ADA accessible studio, rehearsal, performance, and teaching space.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Luna Kids Dance, Inc. dba Luna Dance Institute is a California 501(c)(3) Not for Profit Corporation, established in 1992, that has moved nine times due to the volatile Bay Area real estate market. Luna's most recent move from its West Berkeley facility at 605 Addison Street was precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic and propelled by an unforgiving landlord. Luna is currently offering Professional Learning services and MPACT (Moving Parents & Children Together) classes virtually, school-based dance programs onsite, and its studio programs are temporarily paused. The organization has an office at the David Brower Center while completing the purchase and renovations at 931 Ashby Avenue.

For the past decade, Luna has been searching for a permanent Berkeley home for the organization, to expand their mission with the local, national, and international communities Luna serves. Committed to staying in Berkeley, Luna has attempted to identify, purchase, and finance a number of spaces without success - until now. The 931 Ashby property is well-suited for the organization's comprehensive services. This site is inviting for families, artists, and teachers accessible to public transit, and is a block away from local eateries and Berkeley Bowl West.

Luna has been committed to dance access for all people since its inception. They have designed and implemented programs in schools for children in special education and inclusion programs; consulted for AXIS Dance Company, whose mission is to challenge perception of dance and disability; hosted Dance & Disability panel presentations; and as a nationally recognized expert in dance and special education, Kennedy Center VSA has awarded Luna

multiple contracts to support youth with special needs, and invited them to present at national conferences and webinars focused on Universal Design for Learning.

Luna program participants reside and work in neighborhoods that are inclusive of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused. Many of the artists and educators in Luna's community teach in the public education and child welfare systems.



Planned permanent home of Luna at 931 Ashby Avenue Berkeley (Potter St. View)

Luna began a more active facility search and capital campaign in 2018. Generous individual donors and foundations invested seed money for a \$910K down payment on the \$2.41M building. Foundation support of \$460K received for the purchase of 931 Ashby include contributions from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Banks Family Foundation, Louis L. Borick Foundation, and the Bernard E. & Alba Witkin Charitable Foundation. In addition, \$450,000 has been contributed from individual donors, including several Berkeley residents. Community Bank of the Bay is lending an additional \$1.5M in financing to purchase the property.

Because buildings that are appropriate in size, location, and price are rare in Berkeley, Luna is acting now to purchase 931 Ashby with the financing already in hand. Achieving the purchase with the support of these many charitable partners has been a long and demanding process, and Luna's success in securing funds for the purchase is testimony to the organization's fiscal responsibility and local and national stature.

Luna now must raise an additional \$1.5M to renovate the property for full ADA accessibility. The entire facility will be made accessible by installing an elevator, ramps for mobility access to two dance floors, and ensuring accessibility to all bathrooms. It is in support of these accessibility renovations that Luna seeks funds from the City of Berkeley.

BACKGROUND

Luna Dance Institute is a Berkeley-based organization with local, national and international renown. Luna received an Isadora Duncan Dance award from the regional SFBA dance community for its excellence in service of youth education, its MPACT program was recognized by the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award as one of 50 arts organizations with exemplary youth program, and research into MPACT was supported with an Alameda County Behavioral Health Services innovation award and published in the *International Journal for Education and the Arts*. Luna's founder and Berkeley resident Patricia Reedy received a Community Excellence Award from the Red Oak Opportunity Fund.

The mission of Luna is to bring creativity, equity, and community to every child through the art of dance. To achieve its mission, Luna's local programs and services for children, families, and artists include creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for regional dancers and choreographers; gathering space to investigate issues of equity and creativity vital to our community and field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their communities.

Partnerships have included Berkeley Head Start and Lifelong Medical Services' residential treatment center Project Pride where mothers and children dance together through Luna's nationally recognized MPACT program. In addition to being a community center for children, families, and artists, Luna's Professional Learning (PL) programs provide professional development to regional artists, teachers, and social workers, as well as attracting dance educators from across the state, nation, and from other countries who come to Luna to study and learn from their innovative dance education programs.



Luna's impact is exponential. Typically, 300 or more dance educators attend Luna's Professional Learning activities every year, *bringing dance education to more than 50,000*

children each and every year, meaning over a half million students are served by Luna-trained and Luna-inspired teachers over the course of a decade.

In addition to workshops, in-depth learning institutes, coaching and mentorship, curricula, and practitioner exchanges, Luna offers internships, fellowships, inquiry panels, and podcasts that lift up the expertise of local education and dance experts. Current fellows are investigating dance in relationship to disability awareness and special education, family dance and embodied parent education, and the pedagogy of culturally specific dance forms.

Equity has been at Luna's core since its founding in 1992 with Luna faculty instigating or leading race and equity initiatives in local, state, and national organizations, as well as assuring continuous training and study groups for staff. To fulfill the organization's mission of creativity, equity, and community for all children through the art of dance, Luna must return to pre-COVID levels of service delivery and realize its vision to expand service in an accessible location that cannot be taken away.

As Berkeley families emerge from the pandemic, they are calling on Luna – asking when they can return to dance again. Learning and working on Zoom for two years underscored the deep human need to move one's body in community. During the pandemic, teachers came to Luna for support in unprecedented numbers. Luna has a finger on the pulse of what teachers need now to stay engaged in their careers and revitalize their pedagogy and purpose.

Educators come to Luna because they believe teaching is a social justice act--they need a place where they can dance and embody the ideas they will use in their classrooms. Dance teaching artists, who are also dance-makers, need a place to study, rehearse, teach, and research their practice. Bay Area choreographers, new dance education leaders, and small dance companies need a home base.

All children need a dance space where they can explore their truest nature, and create and express their dance ideas freely. Parents need a comfortable space where they can strengthen the bond they have with their children through play-based classes in a safe environment. Berkeley's public needs a place to engage with the art of dance in a non-elitist way. All of Luna's constituents need a place to belong.

Luna's permanent home will be this place — a community asset that is accessible and inclusive to all who practice dance as an act of liberation and freedom. For 30 years in nine different rental facilities, Luna has created a reputation for inclusivity, creativity, and belonging. The boundaries of who can dance, what dance is, and where dance lives have expanded. While keeping these values at the core, Luna seeks to expand programs through public engagement, research, and work/career development because there will be ample space for constituents to delve into their own interests and interact with others to create new possibilities for dance.

Luna's Mission:

Luna believes that everyone has the right to dance. In serving children and families, and artists and educators who reflect the diversity of the children and families they teach, Luna is

committed to equity which requires accessibility. Program participants reside and work in neighborhoods that are inclusive of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused.

Many of the artists and educators in Luna's community teach in the public education and child welfare systems. They live at marginal levels where they can barely afford to live in the San Francisco Bay Area. These teachers often represent their students ethnically, with 90% of non-European descent. Their students attend Title I schools and are predominantly of Latinx, African-American, and Southeast Asian heritage. Local constituents using Luna's services come from Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Solano, Santa Clara, and Marin Counties, favorably impacting the local economy.

Luna Dance Institute's arts education programs for children, families, artists and teachers have been recognized twice by the City of Berkeley Council—most recently at their 25th anniversary festivities where they were presented by proclamations from the City and the State of California. Luna is embedded in the arts education ecosystem of the San Francisco Bay Area, providing professional resources for artists and teachers through past and current partnerships with BUSD, Berkeley Head Start, Bahia Preschool, University of California's student-led Dance the Bay, AXIS Dance Company, OUSD, and San Francisco Ballet Dance In Schools & Communities outreach program. Luna is an active member of Berkeley Cultural Trust (BCT) and their staff reinstated the Berkeley Arts Education Steering Committee in 2017 and chaired BCT's Equity & Inclusion Committee when it first began.

Regionally, statewide, and nationally, Luna is recognized as a thought-leader in the dance education sector. All of the Berkeley Unified School District dance teachers have received Luna's PL services and continue relationships as leaders in the arts' community. Luna was instrumental in working with the California Dance Education Association, CREATE CA, and Senator Ben Allen to reinstate the dance and theater teaching credentials for public instruction and was the sole non-profit arts organization on the California Department of Education's recent revision committees for the Visual and Performing Arts standards and framework for public instruction.

Luna's directors, Nancy Ng, Patricia Reedy, and John-Mario Sevilla are on the editorial board of the National Dance Education Organization's (NDEO) *Dance Education in Practice* journal, and Ng and Sevilla also serve on NDEO's Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion initiative. Ng serves as a board trustee for the National Guild for Community Arts Education and is co-chair of their racial equity committee.

Luna was a key contributor and stakeholder in creating the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018.

The updated Arts and Culture Plan cites a Vision where:

- The City of Berkeley is a place where the arts are fully integrated into civic life and community identity.

- Our public spaces inspire, promote dialogue and serve to engage all who live and work in Berkeley, and all who visit our city.
- The city provides a supportive environment for artists and arts organizations to prosper and thrive. The arts are inclusive and empowering and serve to strengthen collaboration within our community
- Quality arts education for all ages inspires creativity, builds community and facilitates cross-cultural understanding.
- The economic contributions of local artists and arts organizations are valued, prioritized and supported.
- Berkeley is known regionally, nationally and internationally as a place where anyone can experience the transformative power of the arts in a variety of settings and locations.

The Opportunity of a Permanent, Fully Accessible Home in Berkeley:



Luna’s purchase and renovation of 931 Ashby Avenue completely embodies the City’s Arts and Cultural Plan vision. In Ng’s role as BAESC chair she worked with the Civic Arts Commission to create Goal 3 of the Arts and Culture Plan to “expand high quality and equitable arts education.”¹ Luna’s 20 Points of View open studio showing, public Equity and Inclusion panels, and Dance Education forums have welcomed the city of Berkeley into meaningful dialogue about where and how dance manifests social justice, arts, and change. With more than 9000

¹ [City of Berkeley Arts and Culture Plan, 2018-2027 Update, Page 32](#)

square feet of programming space, they will expand opportunities to fully participate in Berkeley's arts ecosystem.

Luna's light-filled accessible multi-level community dance center will be a home for children, families, artists and educators. Community members will enter on the ground floor (on Potter St.) which will accommodate an open reception area with offices, parent area, lounge space for artists, and a restroom. Ground floor offices will include partially subsidized work spaces for artists and arts organizations. Two dance studios (one with capacity for audience seating) restrooms, dance education library, conference room, and additional offices will be housed on the 2nd floor, and 3rd-level mezzanine. All spaces and entry ways will be fully ADA accessible through ramps to the sprung wood floors, an elevator, and accessible doorways. The dedicated spaces for teaching and sharing will include technology for in person and virtual learning.

As a 30-year-old organization, Luna's current Co-Executive Directors, Ng and Reedy have been tenacious in their commitment to manifesting equity in dance education. Realizing their vision has been burdened and delayed by repeated relocations. Thus, they are adamant that the next generation of Luna's leadership not be saddled with the same obstacles while also intent on creating a dance home for other dance artists and companies in the East Bay. Building renovations will include office space for peer dance artists/organizations that Luna hopes to be able to partially subsidize. This forward-thinking strategy for organizational health and stability ties directly into Luna's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion goals by leaving a legacy of a permanent dance education home for the community.



Grants like this to support nonprofit arts organizations have precedent in Berkeley. In 2015 the City Council voted to allocate similarly sized grants to Kala Art Institute and the UC Theater, and in 2019 to the Capoeira Arts Foundation (CAF). KALA and UC Theater organizations needed support from the City to upgrade their facilities that would make their operations viable and

sustainable for the long run, and CAF sought support to purchase the building they were leasing.²

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The purchase of 931 Ashby is imminent and funds for accessibility renovations are needed as quickly as possible. Escrow is expected to close on the property March 31, 2022. Luna Dance Institute needs to have renovation funds secured to begin work this summer. A grant of \$150,000 is sought from sources to be identified by the Budget and Finance Committee and City Manager, to be disbursed to the organization early in FY2023.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Developing a permanent, fully accessible dance and arts facility adjacent to several bus lines with frequent service that link directly to the Ashby Bart station will encourage the use of public transit. Keeping Luna within the core of the Bay Area means users from throughout Berkeley and the region can access important arts and dance programming without use of private vehicles.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Sophie Hahn, (510) 981-7150

Attachments:

- 1: Luna Leap Land Soar Capital Campaign Brochure
- 2: Support Letter from BCT colleague member

²[Allocation of Funds to UC Theatre and Kala Art Institute, 11-3-2015](#)

LUNA DANCE INSTITUTE



\$2.5 MILLION

CAPITAL
CAMPAIGN



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SECURE LUNA'S LAUNCHING PAD TO SOAR INTO THE FUTURE

Luna was founded in 1992 to serve as a home for dance teachers displaced by the Loma Prieta earthquake. Three decades later, Luna has grown from a local dance studio to a nationally-recognized, innovative teaching and learning center supporting 300+ artists and educators to bring the transformative power of dance to tens of thousands of children each and every year.

As the San Francisco Bay Area emerges from the devastation of COVID-19 on its arts ecosystems, Luna continues its commitment to serving community through the art of dance. Like many nimble arts and education organizations, Luna pivoted to online programming in March 2020. Because it was not practical nor financially prudent to maintain a lease when we could not meet our clients in person, we relinquished our dance studio and administrative offices in West Berkeley. This unplanned closure marked the ninth time in 30 years that our mission to bring dance to all children was disrupted because of the instability of the expensive and competitive Bay Area real estate rental market.

Luna turns 30 soon, and we enter our fourth decade with a focus on securing resources for the next generation of Luna leaders to grow our future. Controlling our own space is a pillar of our legacy strategy. To achieve this goal, we are accelerating our **LEAP LAND SOAR Capital Campaign** to raise a minimum of \$2.5 million toward purchasing a building and customizing it to stabilize our ongoing work as a local cultural asset and dance education trailblazer.

When Luna was founded, Bay Area dance teachers and artists joined together to create a place to create, perform, and connect. Their efforts were supported by many people and organizations. Now, we need those who believe in the arts as a life-giving force to help us create a permanent home for dance. Please consider a generous gift to propel our vision to **LEAP** to new heights, **LAND** in a new space of our own, and **SOAR** into the future, together.

A permanent home will be a game-changer for Luna's life-changing dance programs. Circumstances beyond our control forced us to leave our rented Berkeley studio in 2020. This was the 9th time in our 30-year history that we were forced to move. Now is the time to secure the launching pad—the position of financial stability—that is vital to Luna's future.

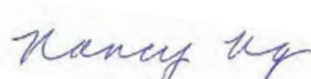
— DENISE OLDHAM
LUNA BOARD PRESIDENT

Patricia Reedy



Executive Director,
Creativity & Pedagogy

Nancy Ng



Executive Director,
Creativity & Policy



LUNA DANCE INSTITUTE

Bringing creativity, equity, and community to every child's life through the art of dance.



LUNA'S PLACE AS A LAUNCHING PAD FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Dance educators and artists come together at Luna to shape and give voice to collectively emerging questions about the power of dance to create more healing, more inclusivity, and more freedom for children everywhere. New questions lead to new awareness, discovery, and possibility.

Luna's [Theory of Change](#) is guided by inquiry, an ongoing questioning of assumptions and investigation of possibilities. We are dedicated to defending and furthering children's freedom by challenging inequitable practices and policies in dance and education. All children are born into this world with an innate curiosity to discover, create, and connect through their moving body. Yet systemic educational and economic structures reinforce exclusivity, and limits access to dance experiences.

Our inquiry-driven organizational culture centers artists and teachers as powerful agents of change,

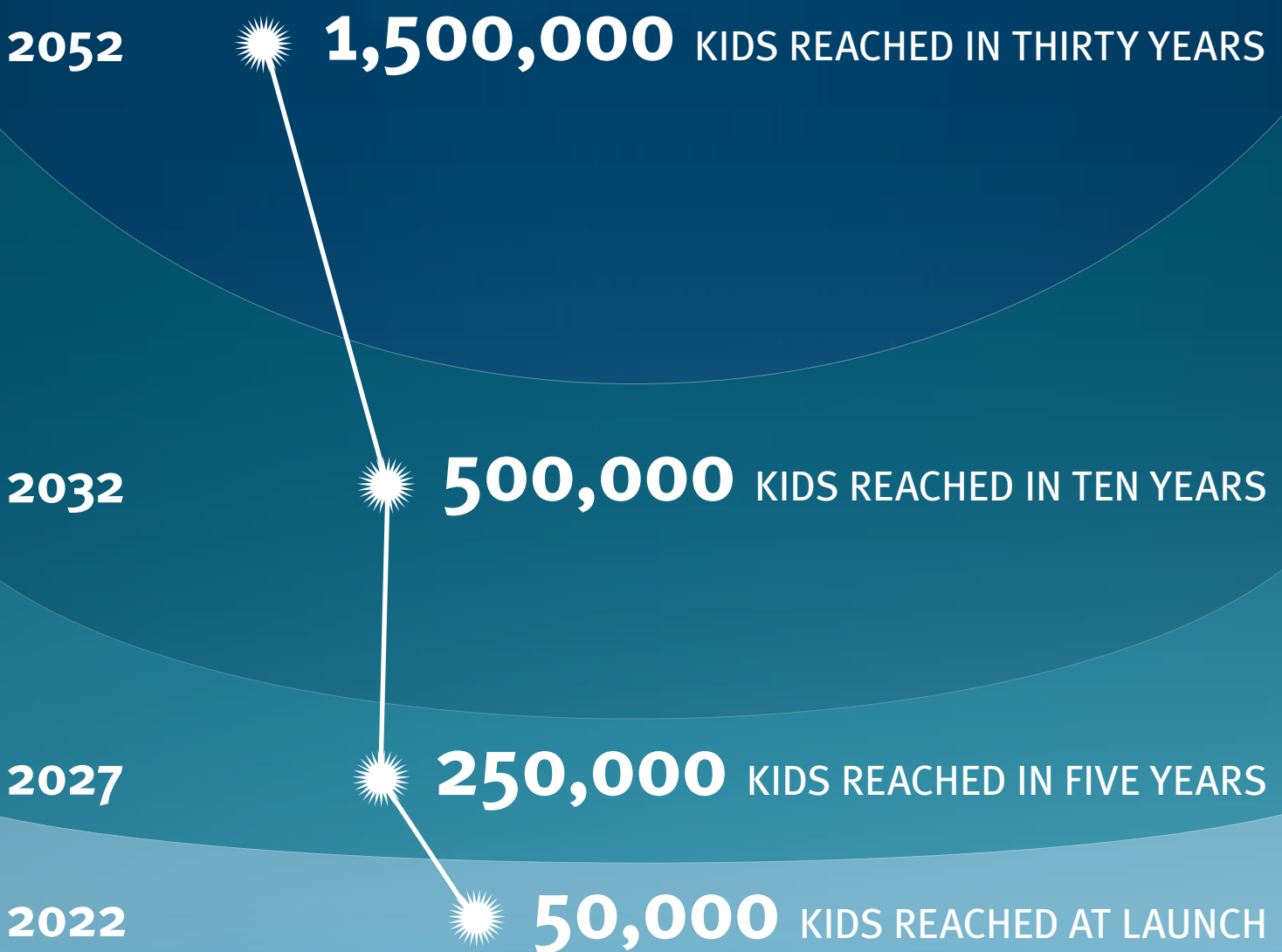
uniquely equipped to reveal what equity in dance looks like. These leaders create ripple effects of change that extend from our dance institute in Berkeley, California to their classrooms, studios, neighborhoods, and communities everywhere.

Throughout recorded history, the wondrous spirit of human creativity, including its expression through the arts, has preceded and shaped societal progress. We believe that gifting future generations of children the freedom to dance has the power to reveal a new era of human actualization and empathy-rooted interconnection.

Because to dance is to fly, and when we fly, we can soar. When we soar, we are free. A stable and sustainable space for Luna is essential to unleashing the full potential of dance to help children everywhere experience liberation.

LUNA'S REACH OUR VISION FOR THE NEXT THIRTY YEARS

EACH YEAR, LUNA DANCE INSTITUTE TEACHERS
REACH **50,000** KIDS



Artists and teachers at Luna bring dance to students in public schools, social service agencies, libraries, Head Start programs, and many other environments, making dance accessible to children who might be excluded because of socio-economic, language, or special education barriers. Since 1992, Luna has already reached 300,000+ kids.

LEAP LAND SOAR

space for dance education

THE LEAP LAND SOAR CAPITAL CAMPAIGN WILL BUILD AN ENDURING HOME FOR DANCE EDUCATION

Dance is integral to a holistic education that supports children’s physical and cognitive development, health and well-being, and creative expression. With the reinstatement of the California dance teaching credential, after a 50-year demise of dance in schools, now is the time to restore access to high-quality dance education for all children. Luna has a unique and distinct role to fulfill to support dance educators.

— TOM DECAIGNY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CREATE CA
STATEWIDE ARTS EDUCATION ADVOCACY
AND POLICY ORGANIZATION

When children are dancing, they are home



LEAP . . . LIFTING DANCE UP



Over three decades, Luna Dance Institute has grown from a local dance studio to a nationally recognized dance education leader. Luna’s programs work together with equity and policy initiatives to expand dance education for children.

Luna’s Professional Learning department offers a creative haven for artists, teachers, and practitioners to investigate their practice, improve their teaching, and grow as leaders and change agents. They return to their communities

and schools as innovators, generating greater access to creative, high-quality dance education for all children. Luna’s community of teachers successfully advocated to reinstate California’s dance teaching credential through the 2017 Theatre and Dance Act (TADA!). Stabilizing Luna’s operating capacity with a permanent, dedicated space for dance teachers provides a foundation for collaboration as they collectively continue to advocate for dance at local, regional, and national levels.

Creating community through dance



LAND . . . CREATING A PERMANENT HOME

To thrive and grow, Luna Dance Institute must secure a permanent space to:

STRENGTHEN & STABILIZE PROGRAMS

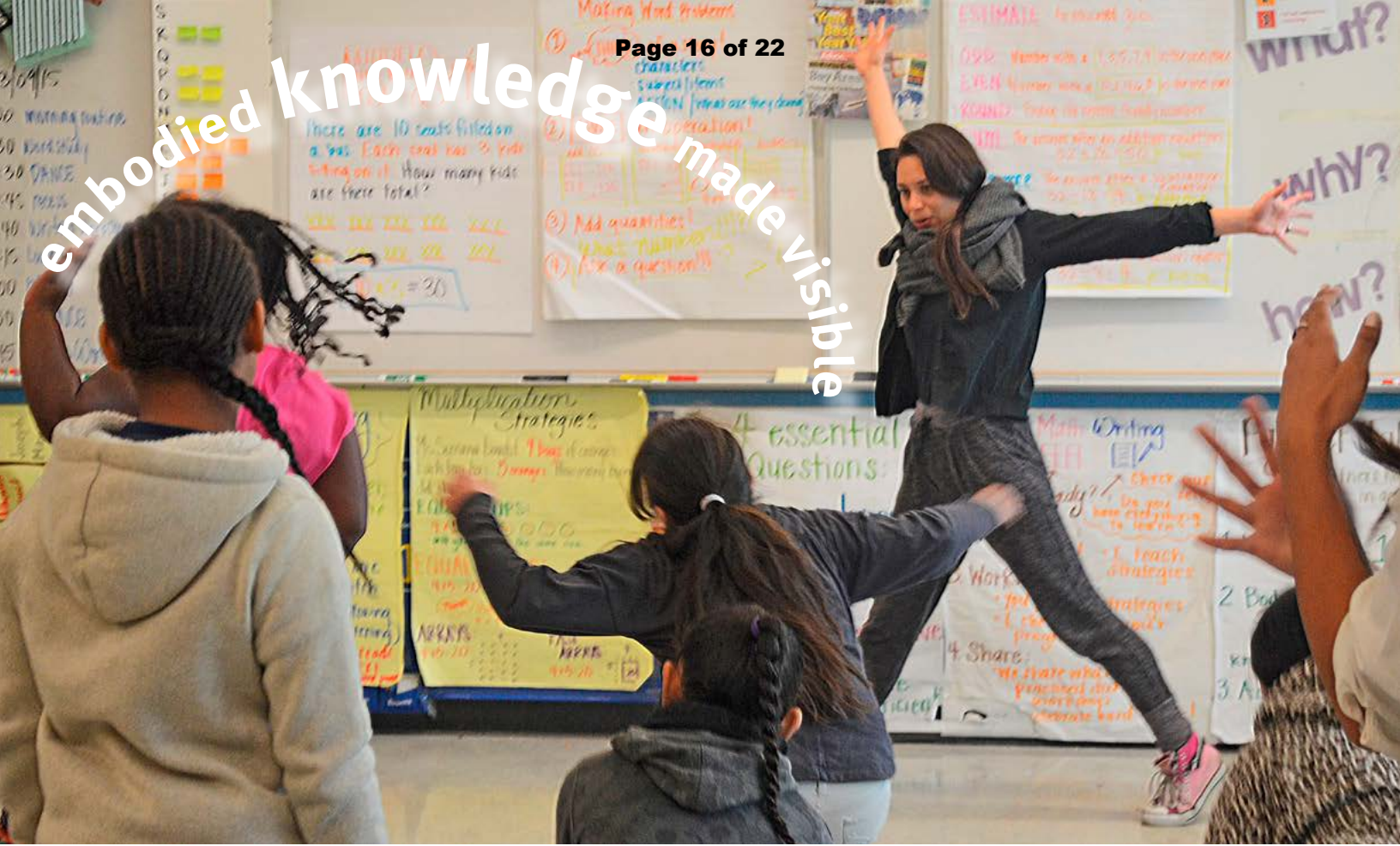
- Restart our temporarily-paused in-person programming
- Expand opportunities for teaching artists and educators to develop as leaders and researchers
- Raise the profile of dance by bringing children, families, artists, and teachers together to learn, dance, and grow in community



CREATE A NEW COMMUNITY ASSET

- Support Luna’s future leaders to continue its mission of access and equity in dance
- Embed Luna’s excellent creative programs and research in a region that prides itself as a leader in arts and culture
- Host collaborative ventures as part of the greater Berkeley arts ecosystem
- Increase the number of local studio spaces designed for dance-making, learning, and performing

embodied knowledge made visible



SOAR . . . LAUNCHING OUR FUTURE



In a permanent Berkeley location, Luna will SOAR into our next phase as an organization that is a vital cultural asset to the San Francisco Bay arts ecosystem. With a stable home, Luna will provide local services to diverse children, families, artists, and teachers as it continues to strategically participate in state and national arts education policy initiatives that affect our region

and ripple throughout California. Luna’s current and future leaders will explore new ideas and develop programs to meet the evolving needs in arts education. A successful LEAP LAND SOAR Capital Campaign propels us into the future—positioning us to lead excellence in dance education. Now is the time to take a giant leap forward and secure a long-term space for Luna Dance Institute.

TOGETHER CHANGING THE WORLD



Luna gives dance educators a home and community. In a profession where many dance educators are isolated, Luna gives them a place to connect and to grow.
— SUMMER INSTITUTE PARTICIPANT



Luna's Professional Learning and Community Programs work are intertwined – internships, seminars, and extended Institutes help Luna reach more children and families. The field research of Luna's community of artists and teachers show policymakers what is possible in dance education.



LUNA DANCE INSTITUTE'S EVOLVING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

California's only arts resource solely focused on supporting dance educators teaching youth ages 0-17. Educators maximize creativity in all dance curricula, establish collegial communities, research their practice through seminars, internships, and fellowships, and become change agents in the fields of dance and education. As they become confident leaders in their communities, they create a ripple effect that fulfills Luna's mission to bring all children to dance.

[Read More...](#)

I have known Luna since I was pregnant with my son Schuyler. First, as a teacher and dancer accessing their professional resources, then as the parent of a child and pre-teen taking classes at their studio, and also as a board volunteer. My son is 15 now, and Luna continues to be a shining resource for the community and all who believe in the power of dance to change lives.

— HEIDI SAWICKI
EAST BAY TEACHER AND PARENT

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

School & Community Alliances Luna builds high-quality, standards-based dance programs as core educational experiences for all children through partnerships with schools and districts.

Moving Parents & Children Together (MPACT) family dance and embodied parent education classes support parents and children in the child welfare system who are in the process of reunification, including incarcerated women, women living in domestic violence or homeless shelters, women in residential treatment facilities, and immigrant families.

Studio Lab is the first and the only dance program on the west coast that focuses solely on building the dance-making skills of young choreographers, ages 5-17. Students discover the elements of dance — the body moving in space, energy, and time — as they create and perform their own choreography.

Early Childhood Education A cornerstone of Luna's work, children 0-5 dance through Studio Lab, MPACT, and partners that include California Head Start centers. We provide professional development to Early Childhood Education teachers using our unique Love, Move, Play framework.

[Read More...](#)

freedom in new and unpredictable ways



PROPOSED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

We envision a light-filled accessible space where artists, educators, children, and families will create a community through dance. Dance is a live embodied art form to be experienced in-person. These vital features are needed for Luna’s permanent Berkeley home:

DEDICATED SPACES TO DANCE, LEARN & SHARE

- 2 Dance Studios
- Parent Area
- Library
- Research & Resource Centers
- Capacity for Audience Seating

FACILITY & OPERATION

- 7600 square feet with space to grow
- ADA-Compliant Access
- Efficient HVAC
- Technology for In-Person & Virtual Learning

ORGANIZATIONAL STABILITY & SELF SUFFICIENCY

- Shareable Community Asset
- Accumulation of Financial Equity
- Earned Income Potential

For nearly 30 years, through the power of community, Luna has reached tens of thousands of children, their teachers, and their families. A home base gives all of them a creative space of belonging to move out from and return to.

— PATRICIA REEDY
FOUNDER

LEAP LAND SOAR

HELP LAUNCH OUR FUTURE THROUGH YOUR INVESTMENT



After leaving our last studio as a result of the pandemic, we searched for a new space to resume our in-person work to bring dance to all children. In February 2022, we entered into contract on a space with all the potential described above. Your investment in the LEAP LAND SOAR Capital Campaign will turn this building into a permanent home for Luna Dance Institute.

Your support centers Luna within Berkeley’s community of arts organizations and helps to continue innovative programs in dance pedagogy. Rising dance educator leaders will have the collegial space and the resources they need to serve hundreds of thousands of children.



WAYS TO SUPPORT

All contributions make a difference, and there are many ways to support LEAP LAND SOAR. Learn more about how you can help our capital campaign [here](#).

GET IN TOUCH

Nancy Ng, Co-Executive Director, welcomes the opportunity to meet with you and share our commitment to creativity, equity and community through the art of dance. To schedule a meeting, contact nng@lunadanceinstitute.org.



LUNA DANCE INSTITUTE

I supported Luna Dance Institute after seeing the power of embodied dance to bring parents and young children together in the MPACT program. I'm committed to helping Luna find a permanent home to expand its programs to bring the joy of dance and movement to all children.

— KAREN BANKS
BANKS FAMILY FOUNDATION
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN LEAD DONOR

kalaART

I N S T I T U T E

March 14, 2022

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

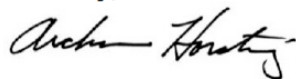
As the Founding Director of Kala Art Institute, serving and supporting artists in Berkeley and beyond since 1974, I submit this resounding endorsement for Luna Dance Institute's request for a grant of \$150,000 from the City of Berkeley to establish its permanent dance education center at 931 Ashby Avenue. Luna will infuse West Berkeley and the city of Berkeley arts scene and local economy of culture, technology, industry and retail, with generous dynamism and spirit.

Luna, like Kala, shares an important mission to serve the community through the transformative power of the arts. Luna provides paradigm-shifting dance education that bring creativity, equity and community to children, families and schools, and to professional artists and educators. Luna provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities; resources to investigate issues of equity and creativity vital to the dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies bringing benefits of dance to stakeholders.

In addition to its focus on children and families, Luna provides professional learning for artists, teachers, and social workers, attracting and inspiring educators internationally with its innovative pedagogy. Luna internships, fellowships, inquiry panels, and podcasts build practice and advocacy for significant issues, like disability awareness and special education, embodied family and parent education, and teaching culturally diverse dance forms. Throughout its 30 years of its existence, Luna has been recognized as a thought-leader in arts education. Luna was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan, and an active member in Berkeley Cultural Trust –reinstating the Berkeley Arts Education Steering Committee, and co-chairing the Equity and Inclusion committee.

A permanent home for Luna would create a necessary asset for Berkeley, a safe space where *all* bodies would be welcome to join Luna's inclusive vision of community. There, children will be empowered to explore their truest nature, imagine, create, and express their ideas freely; families will be able to strengthen bonds through trust, empathy and joyful play; *any body* will be able to discover a love for dance, beauty and life-long learning. I urge you to support the building of Luna's new home, which I attest will be an important hub for community service and activation and an incubator for the stewardship of an equitable, sustainable, vibrant Berkeley.

Respectfully,



Founding Director, Kala Art Institute



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MEDIA CENTER
GALLERY

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A Non-profit Organization