

Councilmember Sophie Hahn
City of Berkeley, District 5

SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA MATERIAL for Supplemental Packet 1

Meeting Date: April 26, 2022

Item Number: 28

Item Description: Budget Referral for Accessibility Renovations for Luna Dance Institute

Submitted by: Councilmember Hahn (Author), Mayor Arreguín (Co - Sponsor), Councilmember Taplin (Co - Sponsor), Councilmember Harrison (Co - Sponsor)

The attached letters were submitted to the District 5 City Council office in support of the Luna Dance Institute budget referral.

1. Bonnie Lewkowicz, Co-Founder AXIS Dance Company
2. Nadia Adame, Artistic Director & Choreographer AXIS Dance Company
3. Natalia Neira Retamal, Executive Director La Peña Cultural Center
4. Jessica Lynn Bohn, parent and future Luna neighbor
5. Chantal M. Sampogna, Administrative Law Judge & Dancer
6. Kris Perry, Deputy Secretary California Health and Human Services Agency/Senior Advisor to Governor Gavin Newsom
7. Mary Claire Heffron Ph.D., Medical Staff Emeritus, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland & William Issel, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, San Francisco State University
8. Leah Shelleda, Professor Emeritus College of Marin
9. Laurie Rich, Executive Advisor David Brower Center
10. Patrick Dooley Artistic Director Shotgun Players
11. Daniel Nevers, Co-Director Berkeley Art Center
12. Rebecca Navarrete-Davis, Dance Teacher & Berkeley Activist
13. Alisa Rasera, Dance Educator
14. Hannah Ayasse, Youth Dance Educator, Shawl-Anderson Dance Center
15. Olallie Lackler, Teaching Artist, Emerson Elementary, John Muir Elementary, Berkeley High School
16. Avilee Goodwin, Dance Program Director & Teacher, De Anza High School
17. Diana Bohn, Luna parent and grandparent

Bonnie Lewkowitz
1427 Grant St.
Berkeley, CA 94703

March 21, 2022

Dear Councilmember Hahn,

As a long-time Berkeley resident and voter in your district, I am writing to you today to ask for your support in helping Luna Dance secure city funding that will enable them to renovate their new space at 931 Ashby and become a model accessible venue where the community can come together to create, play, and thrive.

I first moved to Berkeley for a 6-month internship at Bay Area Outreach & Recreation Program because BORP was only one of a handful of adapted sports programs in the U.S plus Berkeley had a reputation for being a disability friendly place to live. More than 38 years later I'm still here for those same reasons but also because of the disability culture I am a part of and helped to create. While I haven't been visibly politically active, I have been very active behind the scenes advocating for greater accessibility to sports, recreation, and nature. I left the politics to my late husband, Paul Church, who worked for 10 years as Berkeley's ADA coordinator. It was during his tenure that Berkeley won an award for the most accessible city in the country.

My connection to Luna Dance is both as a supporter and as someone that has greatly benefitted from their teacher training programs. I am one of the co-founders of AXIS Dance Company, an internationally acclaimed professional dance company comprised of dancers with and without physical disabilities. We got our start in Berkeley some 35 years ago. In the beginning we were primarily a performance company but soon realized that we had something unique to offer and started teaching integrated dance, as it was called back then. In our quest to become better teachers we discovered Luna Dance and their teaching institute. Everything I know today about teaching dance I credit to Luna. Not only did I embrace their teaching philosophy and practices but just as importantly, I felt welcomed and valued as a person with a disability which at that time was a rarity. Many of AXIS's dancers have been trained by Luna and several even went on to work for them. In my opinion, Luna is a breeding ground for training teachers, both classroom and dance teachers, in how to awaken and foster creativity in their students in an inclusive, supportive environment. Youth more than ever need to have creative outlets to help them express their feelings.

Anyone that works in the disability community knows how challenging it is to find accessible, affordable, and available space in Berkeley to hold classes, performances, and meetings of any kind. The few spaces that do exist have very limited availability if at all. As we shift to more in-person activities there is an urgency to have access to space that is well ventilated and universally accessible. Luna's new facility will be able to fill that need as their vision is to create a community space where all feel welcome. As with the last studio space where they sought my expertise to help ensure they were providing maximum usability by people with disabilities, I will again offer to work with them on their new building.

I roll around town a lot in my wheelchair rather than drive because there has been a significant loss of accessible parking and sadly, I see a town that is becoming less accessible to elders and people with disabilities rather than more, so I for one would love to see the city take a proactive step to increase access in the city by financing Luna's building renovation project at 931 Ashby. With their track record of inclusion, tenacity, community-building, fiscal and social responsibility, they are perfectly poised to create and sustain a welcoming community space. Let's put Berkeley back on the map as an accessible city.

Kindly,

Bonnie Lewkowitz



P.O. Box 26272
Berkeley CA
94702

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As the Artistic Director of AXIS Dance Company, which, has been dedicated to serve, engage and connect the Bay Area community and abroad through support for the arts and investment in artists, 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. I firmly believe that Luna will infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkeley neighborhoods, arts scene and local economy of culture, technology, industry and retail, with generous dynamism and spirit.

Luna, like AXIS Dance Company, shares an important mission to serve the community through the transformative power of the arts. Luna provides foundational and paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity and community to children, their families and schools, and to professional artists and educators. Luna uniquely provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their stakeholders. They collaborate, for example, with Lifelong Medical Services' residential treatment center Project Pride in a nationally-recognized program that brings together recovering mothers and their children to bond.

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. Luna's professional participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems. Their students often attend Title I schools and are predominantly of Latinx, African-American, and Southeast Asian heritage.

Throughout its 30 years of existence, Luna has been recognized as a thought-leader in arts education. As fierce advocates for early childhood education, they have partnered with Berkeley Head Start. All of the Berkeley Unified School District dance teachers have received its services and continue relationships as leaders in the arts community. Its programs draw local participants from Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Solano, Santa Clara, and Marin Counties. Luna worked with the California Dance Education Association and Senator Ben Allen to reinstate the dance and theater teaching credentials; was the sole non-profit arts organization on the State's recent revision committees for the Visual and Performing Arts standards; and was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018.

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 creativity and community. There, children



dance company

P.O. Box 26272
Berkeley CA
94702

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.

If you need any further information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kindly,

Nadia Adame

She/her pronouns

Artistic Director & Choreographer

artistry@axisdance.org

AXIS Dance Company

P.O. Box 2627

Berkeley CA 94702

****Please note: AXIS administrative staff continue to work remotely at this time***

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April 6, 2022

Dear Mayor Arreguín & Berkeley City Council,

As the Executive Director of La Peña Cultural Center - an internationally recognized institution dedicated to social justice through BIPOC arts since 1975 - and as Co-Chair of the Berkeley Cultural Trust's Equity & Inclusion Committee, I am enthusiastically writing you in support 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. I admire the integrity that Luna has shown over the years in creating a more equitable Berkeley, and I have witnessed first hand the impact their culturally-relevant arts education programs for youth have had for Berkeley's most at-risk students. We know that the arts are needed more than ever in South and West Berkeley, and I firmly believe that Luna will have a major positive impact in the neighborhood's youth, culture, spirit, arts scene and local economy.

Luna, like La Peña Cultural Center, nurtures activists and supports artist-led social justice efforts. Luna does this through paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity and community to children, their families and schools, and to dancers and educators. Luna uniquely provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their stakeholders.

In addition to its focus on children and families, Luna provides an invaluable pipeline for diversifying Berkeley's arts administrators, artists, teachers and social workers through its professional development opportunities such as Luna internships, fellowships, inquiry panels, and podcasts to build practice and advocacy for significant issues, like disability awareness and special education, embodied family and parent education, and teaching culturally diverse dance forms. Luna's program participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides.

Luna has been recognized as a thought-leader in arts education for 30 years. They are active members of Berkeley Cultural Trust (BCT) and through the leadership of their staff, BCT's Equity and Inclusion committee was founded, and the Berkeley Arts Education Steering Committee was reinstated. Luna was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018.

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 creativity and community. There, *any body* will be able to discover a love for dance, beauty and life-long learning. I urge you to support the ADA accessible renovation 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Natalia Neira Retamal". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Natalia Neira Retamal
Executive Director, La Peña Cultural Center



Co-Chair Berkeley Cultural Trust Equity and Inclusion Committee

April 13, 2022

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As a Berkeley resident and voter in district 5 for 24 years, 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 fully accessible, permanent dance education center at 931 Ashby.



My children attended Luna's classes for 9 years beginning when they were 4 years old. My oldest son especially enjoyed Luna because he was free to express himself and incorporate his love of martial arts, not just learn a routine someone was teaching him. Luna gave him a strong feeling of community and belonging. I first studied dance with Luna's founder, Patricia Reedy, when I was 12 years old in middle school. When I began taking her class, it truly changed me, opening my eyes to the passion and joy dance can bring. When I became a student at Berkeley High School, Patricia was still my teacher, mentor and steadfast supporter which enabled me to choreograph my own dances as part of Berkeley High's Dance Production. I loved it! I always kept in touch,

and when I became a mom, it was a given that my children would join Luna Dance! I was so excited to have them be a part of the comforting and encouraging Luna community! As they moved from location to location, we followed, and their recent purchase of a permanent home will be a point of stability for this vital nonprofit arts organization. Also, it will infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkley arts scene and local economy of culture, technology, industry and retail, with generous dynamism and spirit.

Luna's program participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems. It is because of their commitment to social justice that I have been a steadfast volunteer for more than a decade.

Luna's commitment to equity requires a fully ADA accessible building. This will for create a necessary asset for Berkeley, a safe space where *all* bodies would be welcome to join Luna's inclusive vision of creativity and community. 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 ADA accessible renovation of Luna's new home.

Respectfully,
Jessica Lynn Bohn
1639 Prince Street
parent, community member, and future neighbor of Luna Dance Institute !

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As a UC Berkeley alum and Berkeley dancer and attorney, 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. I firmly believe that Luna will infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkeley neighborhoods, arts scene and local economy of culture, technology, industry and retail, with generous dynamism and spirit.

Luna nurtures activists and supports artist-led social justice efforts. Luna does this through paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity and community to children, their families and schools, and to dancers and educators. Luna uniquely provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their 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. Luna's program participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems.

Throughout its 30 years of existence, Luna has been recognized as a thought-leader in arts education. They are active members of Berkeley Cultural Trust (BCT) and through the leadership of their staff, BCT's Equity and Inclusion committee was founded, and the Berkeley Arts Education Steering Committee was reinstated. Luna was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018.

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 creativity and 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 ADA accessible renovation 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.

I met Patricia Reedy in 1991 when taking modern dance and ballet through the UC Berkeley Physical Education Department. Within months I met Luna Dance and I have since been an avid learner of its teachings of creativity, choreography, child development, accessibility, and social justice, and an ardent supporter of its many visions and accomplishments. Early on in my legal career, I had the opportunity to work at Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund. I then developed a career as counsel to parents and children separated due to abuse or neglect, and I served as a judge pro-tem hearing these matters in Alameda County. Throughout this time, I

taught creative dance with Luna and served on its Board, and I took countless dance classes and performed at Berkeley Ballet Theater and Shawl Anderson Dance Center. I have since relocated to Southern California and serve as an Administrative Law Judge for the Office of Administrative Hearings. In this capacity, among other duties, I hear matters related to individuals' eligibility for Regional Center services and special education services

Through my work and dance experiences, I have seen the myriad of physical barriers, as well as service and program delivery barriers, faced by our community. These barriers prevent individuals with physical and cognitive differences, as well as individuals with mental health and trauma challenges, from accessing buildings, from accessing buildings which hold dance, and from accessing programs that can meet their needs. Without question, Luna is a Berkeley and national leader in dismantling these barriers. Luna builds relationships with its professional partners in the arts, educational, and governmental communities, and in the community at large, and Luna builds relationships with the children and families it serves. These relationships are built on trust, authenticity, and integrity, with Luna always staying true to its word and commitments and upholding the importance of these relationships. Through this process, Luna creates space and curriculum accessible to all. I fully support 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 so Luna can create a permanent space in Berkeley accessible to any body.

Respectfully,

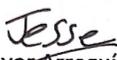


Chantal Sampogna (A56 11 2022 07:17 PDT)
Chantal M. Sampogna

Administrative Law Judge

Dancer

April 11, 2022


Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

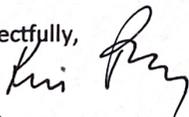
As a Berkeley resident and voter in district 5 for more than 20 years, I submit this resounding endorsement for Luna Dance Institute's request for a grant of \$150,000 from the City of Berkeley to establish its fully accessible, permanent dance education center at 931 Ashby Avenue. I believe that Luna will infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkley arts scene and local economy of culture, technology, industry and retail, with generous dynamism and spirit.

As a child advocate with decades of experience serving families in the East Bay, Bay Area and State of California I know that vibrant community based organizations are the backbone of our city and transform neighborhoods. Although I'm not a dancer, I know the power of the arts in lifting children up, sending them the message they're valuable and worth our collective investment. What could be more fitting for the City of Berkeley than to leverage the hard won capital Luna Dance has already raised to be part of the future we all create for kids.

In addition to providing professional learning for artists, teachers, and social workers, Luna's 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. Luna's program participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems.

Luna's commitment to equity requires a fully ADA accessible building. This will for create a necessary asset for Berkeley, a safe space where *all* bodies would be welcome to join Luna's inclusive vision of creativity and community. 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; *anybody* will be able to discover a love for dance, beauty and life-long learning. I urge you to support the ADA accessible renovation of Luna's new home.

Respectfully,



Kris Perry
Deputy Secretary California Health and Human Services Agency and Senior Advisor to Governor Newsom
1899 Catalina Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As a Berkeley resident and voter in district for 30 plus years, we submit this resounding endorsement for Luna Dance Institute's request for a grant of \$150,000 from the City of Berkeley to establish its fully accessible, permanent dance education center at 931 Ashby Avenue. I am a psychology and medical staff emeritus at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland and have been very enthusiastic of how Luna works to provide services to so many communities. My husband Bill Issel is a historian and writer interested in community empowerment. He contends that a community is measured in part by the resources that are freely available to its residents for development and expression of ideas. We live in southwest Berkeley and I believe that Luna will infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkley arts scene and local economy of culture, technology, industry and retail, with generous dynamism and spirit.

Luna provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes to children; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their stakeholders. I worked with Luna early on to help them develop innovative parent child dance programs for families in the child welfare system and families in drug treatment settings. I was impressed with their creativity, their ability to partner with others to create meaningful services, and the impact of these services on the mental health and well-being of those involved. Supporting organizations like Luna who know how to engage and involve does a great deal to help create a sense of meaning and community that sparks connection, learning, beauty and mastery.

While we know that this is a resource for the whole city and indeed our region, as residents in Southwest Berkeley we are thrilled that a first-rate cultural institution will be located here to expand opportunities for the arts to thrive offering new opportunities for children and families. There are so many ways that this institution will be able to enhance, enliven, and increase well-being and build a strong tradition creativity through embodied movement and dance. Luna is a strong collaborator and I look forward to the ways that this organization will blossom now that they have a permanent home.

Luna's commitment to equity requires a fully ADA accessible building. This will for create a necessary asset for Berkeley, a safe space where *all* bodies would be welcome to join Luna's inclusive vision of creativity and community. 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 ADA accessible renovation of Luna's new home. Respectfully,

Mary Claire Heffron Ph.D.
Medical Staff Emeritus, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland

William Issel, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus, San Francisco State University

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As a Berkeley resident and voter in district 5 for almost 30 years, 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 fully accessible, permanent dance education center at 931 Ashby Avenue. As a poet, dancer and retired educator myself, I believe that Luna will infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkley neighborhoods, arts scene and local economy of culture, technology, industry and retail, with generous dynamism and spirit.

Luna nurtures activists through paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity and community to children, their families and schools, and to dancers and educators. Luna provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their stakeholders. It is a fact that dance education enhances performance in other subject areas as well, increases confidence in young students, and acts as an achievement motivator.

In addition to providing professional learning for artists, teachers, and social workers, Luna's 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. Luna's program participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems.

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Respectfully,

Leah Shelleda
Professor Emeritus College of Marin
1031 Shattuck Ave
Berkeley, CA 94707



April 7, 2022

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As Executive Advisor for the David Brower Center, which, has been dedicated to inspiring and educating the Berkeley community and abroad through environmental arts and artistic support, 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. I firmly believe that Luna will infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkeley neighborhoods, with necessary culture, spirit, and artistic energy.

Luna, like the David Brower Center, shares an important mission to serve the community through the transformative power of the arts. Luna provides foundational and paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity and community to children, their families, and schools, and to professional artists and educators. Luna uniquely provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their stakeholders. They collaborate, for example, with Lifelong Medical Services' residential treatment center Project Pride in a nationally-recognized program that brings together recovering mothers and their children to bond.

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. Luna's professional participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems. Their students often attend Title I schools and are predominantly of Latinx, African-American, and Southeast Asian heritage.

Throughout its 30 years of existence, Luna has been recognized as a thought-leader in arts education. As fierce advocates for early childhood education, they have partnered with Berkeley Head Start. All of the Berkeley Unified School District dance teachers have received its services and continue relationships as leaders in the arts community. Its programs draw local participants from Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Solano, Santa Clara, and Marin Counties. Luna worked with the California Dance Education Association and Senator Ben Allen to reinstate the dance and theater teaching credentials; was the sole non-profit arts organization on the State's recent revision committees for the Visual and Performing Arts standards; and was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018.

DAVID BROWER CENTER

2150 ALLSTON WAY, SUITE 100

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94704

A permanent home for Luna would create a critical asset for Berkeley, a safe space where *all* bodies would be welcome to join Luna's inclusive vision of creativity and 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.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie Rich". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Laurie Rich
Executive Advisor
David Brower Center



1901 Ashby Avenue, Berkeley California 94703
TEL 510.841.6500 FAX 510.841.7468
E-MAIL info@shotgunplayers.org
www.shotgunplayers.org

April 11, 2022

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As the founding artistic director of the Shotgun Players, which since 1992 has been dedicated to creating great works of theatre that challenge our artists and audience to reexamine our lives and the world around us, I submit this heartfelt and unequivocal endorsement for Luna Dance Institute's request for a grant of \$150,000 from the City of Berkeley to renovate its permanent dance education center at 931 Ashby Avenue for ADA accessibility. I firmly believe that Luna will continue to infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkeley neighborhoods, arts scene, and local economy of culture, technology, industry, and retail, with fresh dynamism and spirit.

Luna, like the Shotgun Players, were both established in 1992, and since that time we've both been dedicated to access and affordability. Luna does this through paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity, and community to children, their families and schools, and to dancers and educators. Luna uniquely provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field.

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. Luna's program participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides.

Throughout its 30 years of existence, Luna has been recognized as a thought-leader in arts education. They are active members of BCT and through the leadership of their staff, BCT's Equity and Inclusion Committee was founded, and the Berkeley Arts Education Steering Committee (BAESC) was reinstated. In addition, Luna was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018. Luna is a north star in the spectacular constellation of arts organizations in our city.

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 creativity and community. I urge you to support the ADA-accessible renovation 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,

Patrick Dooley
Artistic Director
Shotgun Players

BERKELEY ART CENTER

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Laili Gohartaj, Treasurer
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CO-DIRECTORS

Kimberley Acebo Arteché
Daniel Nevers

April 10, 2022

Berkeley City Council
2180 Milvia Street
Berkeley, CA 94704

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Councilmembers:

As one of the co-directors of the Berkeley Art Center (BAC) and a co-chair of the Berkeley Cultural Trust, I am writing to express my very enthusiastic support 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. Given their incredible track record, I know that Luna will infuse the surrounding West Berkeley neighborhoods with a sense of vitality, dynamism, and spirit, and that they will continue to be a force for economic and cultural growth in the City of Berkeley.

Luna and BAC share an important mission to serve the community through the transformative power of the arts. Luna provides foundational and paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity, and community to children, their families and schools, and professional artists and educators. Luna uniquely provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their stakeholders. As just one example, they collaborate with Lifelong Medical Services' residential treatment center Project Pride in a nationally recognized program that brings together recovering mothers and their children to bond.

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 such as disability awareness and special education, embodied family and parent education, and teaching culturally diverse dance forms. Luna's professional participants reside and work in neighborhoods made up of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and people who are unhoused. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems, and their students often attend Title I schools and are predominantly of Latinx, African American, and Southeast Asian heritage.

1275 Walnut Street
Berkeley, CA 94709
510.644.6893
berkeleyartcenter.org

Throughout its 30 years, Luna has been recognized as a thought leader in arts education. As fierce advocates for early childhood education, they have partnered with Berkeley Head Start and have worked with all the dance teachers in the Berkeley Unified School District. Their programs draw local participants from Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Solano, Santa Clara, and Marin counties. Notably, Luna worked with the California Dance Education Association and Senator Ben Allen to reinstate the dance and theater teaching credentials; was the sole nonprofit arts organization on the State's recent revision committees for the Visual and Performing Arts standards; and was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018.

A permanent home for Luna would create an invaluable and necessary asset for the City of Berkeley — a safe space where *all* bodies would be welcome to join Luna's inclusive vision of creativity and community. There, children will be empowered to explore their truest nature, and to imagine, create, and express their ideas freely; families will be able to strengthen bonds through trust, empathy, and joyful play; and *any body* will be able to discover a love for dance, beauty, and lifelong learning.

I urge you to support the building of Luna's new home, which I *know* will become an important hub for community service and the activation of an equitable, sustainable, and vibrant Berkeley.

In community,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel Nevers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Daniel Nevers
Co-Director

April 6, 2022

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As the President of the Berkeley-Palma Soriano Sister City Association, a 4th generation Berkeley resident, and a 27-year veteran public school Dance Teacher, 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. I firmly believe that Luna will infuse the city of Berkeley with generous dynamism and spirit.

Luna nurtures activists and supports artist-led social justice efforts. Luna does this through paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity and community to children, their families and schools, and to dancers and educators. Luna uniquely provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their 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. Luna's program participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems.

Throughout its 30 years of existence, Luna has been recognized as a thought-leader in arts education. They are active members of Berkeley Cultural Trust (BCT) and through the leadership of their staff, BCT's Equity and Inclusion committee was founded, and the Berkeley Arts Education Steering Committee was reinstated. Luna was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018.

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 creativity and 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 ADA accessible renovation 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,

Rebecca Navarrete-Davis

Rebecca Navarrete-Davis
Dance Teacher and Berkeley Activist
510-548-6914

April 11,2022

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As Dance Teaching Artist & Educator who has worked for decades in the City of Berkeley , 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. I firmly believe that Luna will infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkley neighborhoods, arts scene and local economy of culture, technology, industry and retail, with generous dynamism and spirit.

Luna nurtures activists and supports artist-led social justice efforts. Luna does this through paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity and community to children, their families and schools, and to dancers and educators. Luna uniquely provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their 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. Luna's program participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems.

Throughout its 30 years of existence, Luna has been recognized as a thought-leader in arts education. They are active members of Berkeley Cultural Trust (BCT) and through the leadership of their staff, BCT's Equity and Inclusion committee was founded, and the Berkeley Arts Education Steering Committee was reinstated. Luna was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018.

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 creativity and 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 ADA accessible renovation 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. Additionally, this is crucial for continuing to move the field of dance education forward as an inclusive practice that invites all bodies to dance.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alisa Rasera". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alisa Rasera
Dance Educator

April 13, 2022

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As a youth dance educator with Shawl-Anderson Dance Center and Berkeley resident, 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. I was born and raised in Oakland, grew up dancing in studios throughout Oakland and Berkeley, and currently live in the neighborhood where Luna will be located. I firmly believe that Luna will infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkeley neighborhoods, arts scene and local economy of culture, technology, industry and retail, with generous dynamism and spirit.

Luna nurtures activists and supports artist-led social justice efforts. Luna does this through paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity and community to children, their families and schools, and to dancers and educators. Luna uniquely provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their 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. Luna's program participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems.

Throughout its 30 years of existence, Luna has been recognized as a thought-leader in arts education. They are active members of Berkeley Cultural Trust (BCT) and through the leadership of their staff, BCT's Equity and Inclusion committee was founded, and the Berkeley Arts Education Steering Committee was reinstated. Luna was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018.

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 creativity and 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 ADA accessible renovation of Luna's new home. As a 2018 alumni of Luna's dance pedagogy Summer Institute, I can attest that Luna is a unique and invaluable hub for artists, educators, and activists looking to support each other, support families and children, and thereby support our beloved Berkeley community. A useful and accessible physical location for this important work is absolutely necessary.

Respectfully,

Hannah Ayasse *Hannah Ayasse*
Youth Dance Educator, Shawl-Anderson Dance Center

Thursday April 7, 2022

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As a teaching artist at John Muir Elementary and Berkeley High School, Cal State East Bay Dance Credential candidate, dancer/performer/choreographer, and Berkeley resident, 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. I firmly believe that Luna will infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkeley neighborhoods, arts scene and local economy of culture, technology, industry and retail, with generous dynamism and spirit.

Luna nurtures activists and supports artist-led social justice efforts. Luna does this through paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity and community to children, their families and schools, and to dancers and educators. Luna uniquely provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their 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. Luna's program participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems.

Throughout its 30 years of existence, Luna has been recognized as a thought-leader in arts education. They are active members of Berkeley Cultural Trust (BCT) and through the leadership of their staff, BCT's Equity and Inclusion committee was founded, and the Berkeley Arts Education Steering Committee was reinstated. Luna was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018.

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 creativity and 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 ADA accessible renovation of Luna's new home, which I have experienced in the past and continue to experience as an incredible hub for dance educators and practitioners to gather, share knowledge, and create meaningful and powerful pedagogy together.

Respectfully,

Olallie Lackler



Dance Teaching Credential Candidate, Cal State East Bay

Teaching Artist, Emerson Elementary, John Muir Elementary, Berkeley High School

DE ANZA HIGH SCHOOL
WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
5000 VALLEY VIEW ROAD RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA 94803
PHONE (510) 231-1440 FAX (510) 223-7984

Christopher Pierce
Principal

Chris Hurst
Superintendent

April 12, 2022

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council,

As the Dance program director at De Anza High School, as well as a dancer and choreographer with Terrain Dance Collective based in West Berkeley, I would like to submit a wholehearted 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. I firmly believe that Luna will infuse the city of Berkeley, and especially the West Berkley neighborhoods and arts scene, with its unfailingly generous spirit.

Luna nurtures activists and supports artist-led social justice efforts. Luna does this through paradigm-shifting dance education services that bring creativity, equity and community to children, their families and schools, and to dancers and educators. Luna provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their 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 student-centered pedagogy. This is where Luna's programs have affected me personally: as a long-time dance educator, my teaching was changed forever after experiencing Luna's creative dance workshops and then the Summer Institute. While I had always endeavored to be a caring and compassionate teacher, I had no idea what truly student-centered learning was until I encountered Luna's methods. From an early focus on helping students to be excellent dance technicians, with the skills and pedagogy I learned from Luna I was able to broaden my focus into helping young artists to find their own creative voices. In recent years my high school students have collaborated to create evocative dances expressing their responses to subjects meaningful to them, ranging from youth violence to othering to gender equity. Without Luna's guidance, I would never have been able to effectively make the transition to nurturing these young artists.

Throughout its 30 years of existence, Luna has been justly recognized as a thought leader in arts education. They are active members of Berkeley Cultural Trust (BCT) and through the leadership of their staff, BCT's Equity and Inclusion committee was founded, and the Berkeley Arts Education Steering Committee was reinstated. Luna was a key contributor to the City's arts and culture plan adopted by the Berkeley City Council in 2018.

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 creativity and 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 ADA accessible renovation of Luna's new home, which I believe will be an invaluable asset to Berkeley's vibrant dance community and to the community as a whole.

Respectfully,



Avilee Goodwin
dance teacher and dance program director,
De Anza High School

Dear Mayor Arreguín and Berkeley City Council Members,

As a Berkeley resident and voter in district 5 for 54 years, 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 fully accessible, permanent dance education center at 931 Ashby Avenue.

My daughter attended Luna's classes and performed with Luna when she was in high school. It was a wonderful experience for her, and it was an incredible experience for me to watch the wonderful performances! My grandsons attended Luna classes and performed with Luna when they were in elementary school. These were also great experiences for them as well as for me as the proud grandparent.

Our family was part of the Luna community as they moved from location to location and their recent purchase of a permanent home will be a point of stability for this vital nonprofit arts organization. Also, it will infuse the city of Berkeley, especially the West Berkeley arts scene and local economy of culture, technology, industry and retail, with generous dynamism and spirit. Luna provides creative dance, family dance, and choreography classes to children; rehearsal and performance opportunities for artists; resources and room to investigate issues of social justice and creativity vital to the community and dance field; and partnerships with education and social service agencies seeking to bring the benefits of dance to their stakeholders. Luna's program participants reside and work in neighborhoods of multiple ethnicities and languages, immigrants, disabled people, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated, and the unhoused, building bridges across divides. Its artists and educators work in the public education and child welfare systems. It is because of their commitment to social justice that I have been a steadfast volunteer for more than a decade.

Luna's commitment to equity requires a fully ADA accessible building. This will create a necessary asset for Berkeley, a safe space where all bodies would be welcome to join Luna's inclusive vision of creativity and community. 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 ADA accessible renovation of Luna's new home.

Respectfully,

Diana Bohn

Diana Bohn
San Luis Road, Berkeley