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## **Ballet Arizona Board Member Receives Emeritus Status** *Former Board Member, David Thompson, Recognized for Long-Term Service*

**PHOENIX** – [Ballet Arizona](#) is excited to announce that former Chair, David I. Thompson, has been unanimously appointed Board Member Emeritus in May of 2022. Thompson joins the ranks of Jacquie Dorrance, Barbara Ottosen, Carol Schilling, and Gwen Hills, former board members who are still actively involved in the Ballet Arizona community. These illustrious individuals have shaped all that Ballet Arizona is today through the gifts of their time, philanthropy, and board service during the past twenty years.

“To be named a board member emeritus is the greatest honor a board can bestow upon a retiring board member,” said Mike Bolar, Ballet Arizona Board Chair. “This honor is earned through a long and dedicated successful service to an organization. Thompson now has the opportunity to remain engaged with the organization, offer advice, stay informed, follow the organization’s evolution, and to offer the lessons of history.

“For more than two decades, he has nurtured the organization with his wisdom, leadership, and dedication,” said Carol Schilling, board chairman emerita. “David has been a true pillar of strength for Ballet Arizona. He helped write the history of the organization at several key turning points: reuniting the school with the dance company, helping secure funding for the company’s signature production ‘The Nutcracker,’ chairing the board through pivotal times, finding a new physical home for the organization. Through it all, he has been and remains a quiet and legendary figure for Ballet Arizona.”

“I began my relationship with Ballet Arizona as a ‘ballet dad,’” said Thompson. “My daughter clicked with the passionate and committed teachers at the school and I clicked with the community leaders who supported Ib [Andersen] and his team in bringing Ballet Arizona into the forefront of American ballet companies. Having chaired the Board as we headed into the Great Recession of 2008-2009, and then again as we began to confront COVID in 2020, I sometimes feel like a walking bad-luck charm for the company! In all seriousness though, I have always gained much more from my association with Ballet Arizona than I have given.”

Thompson joined Ballet Arizona’s Board of Directors in 2004 and served as Chair for the 2019-2020 season, in addition to serving as Vice Chair from the 2016-2017 season to the 2018-2019 season. Thompson also served as Board Secretary for the 2015-2016 season. He has over 40 years of experience in law practice, specializing in providing legal advice and translating expertise to medium-sized businesses and healthcare companies of all kinds.

“On behalf of the entire artistic team at Ballet Arizona, we are truly grateful for David and the Board of Directors for their continued commitment to the organization,” said Ib Andersen, Ballet Arizona’s artistic director. “David’s guidance and support has helped the organization navigate some crucial moments throughout its history, including the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Ballet Arizona is the official ballet company of the State of Arizona, whose mission is to create, perform, and teach outstanding classical and contemporary ballet. The company is dedicated to preserving and celebrating classical dance while creating and commissioning new innovative works. To learn more about how Ballet Arizona continues to evolve, visit [balletaz.org](http://balletaz.org).

**Ballet Arizona**

Ballet Arizona is dedicated to preserving and celebrating classical dance while creating new and innovative works. Under the artistic direction of internationally acclaimed choreographer Ib Andersen – a former Principal Dancer with The New York City Ballet and The Royal Danish Ballet – Ballet Arizona follows his lead to the future of dance in Arizona. The School of Ballet Arizona promotes access to the art form of ballet through dance education, with a focus on excellence in the form, directing each student to a life-long love of dance. Following this vision, Ballet Arizona connects to more than 35,000 children and families every year through its free and low-cost outreach programs. For more information, visit [balletaz.org](http://balletaz.org).

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