

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Steele Foundation Awards Generous Grant to Ballet Arizona *Grant Will Support Ballet Arizona's 2026-2027 Season of Community Engagement Programs*

PHOENIX – [Ballet Arizona](#) is honored to announce a generous grant from [The Steele Foundation](#), an organization that is dedicated to improving the lives of Arizona's children through investments in education. This grant will support several of Ballet Arizona's community engagement programs throughout its 2026–2027 season. Ballet Arizona's community engagement programs encompass a wide range of dance education initiatives, community performances, and lifelong learning opportunities.

These programs, including “Ballet Under the Stars,” Angel Nights, Student Matinees, Performance Hour, and Sensory Adapted Performance of “The Nutcracker,” bring Ballet Arizona's mission of igniting the human spirit to life. The funding will provide financial support for these initiatives, ensuring that more families from low-income households and underserved communities can participate.

The Sensory Adapted Nutcracker performance provides a welcoming, supportive environment for individuals with sensory sensitivities and their families, while “Ballet Under the Stars” brings free, fully staged performances to parks throughout the Valley, making professional ballet accessible to the broader Arizona community. Through its Angel Night program, Ballet Arizona also partners with social service and veteran organizations to provide complimentary tickets to children and families for its company productions.

To inspire and educate the next generation, Ballet Arizona offers engaging educational experiences for students and community groups. Student Matinees give school groups the opportunity to attend a theater performance featuring one act of a mainstage production, while Performance Hour provides a behind-the-scenes look at the inner workings of a professional ballet company, offering an immersive experience that showcases the many elements involved in bringing a production to the stage.

“The arts have the power to change lives, and every child deserves that chance.” said Marianne Cracchiolo Mago, President and CEO of The Steele Foundation. “This grant helps ensure that Ballet Arizona's programs are within reach, opening the door for families and students across the Valley to experience something truly special.”

Ballet Arizona's executive director, Jami Kozemczak, expressed profound gratitude to The Steele Foundation for their unwavering generosity and commitment to the organization's community engagement initiatives.

“At Ballet Arizona, we firmly believe that dance is a universal language that should be accessible to all,” Kozemczak said. “Our programs turn this belief into action by fostering emotional well-being, promoting physical health, and enhancing overall quality of life through the power of dance. To have the support of The Steele Foundation gives us the ability to strengthen and expand these programs.”

As the Valley's professional ballet company, Ballet Arizona strives to ignite the human spirit through the magic of dance. The company is dedicated to preserving and celebrating classical dance while creating and commissioning new innovative works. For more information about Ballet Arizona, visit balletaz.org/.

About Ballet Arizona:

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Since 1986, Ballet Arizona has been dedicated to preserving the tradition of classical ballet while advancing the art form through innovative performances and new works. Led artistically by internationally acclaimed choreographer Daniela Cardim, Ballet Arizona continues to inspire audiences with dynamic performances that honor ballet's rich heritage while embracing the future of dance. Under the executive leadership of Jami Kozemczak, the company has grown into one of the nation's leading regional ballet companies and a premier cultural institution in the Southwest, recognized for its artistic excellence, financial strength, and community impact. During its 40th season, the company will present "Romeo & Juliet," "The Nutcracker," "Don Quixote," "Pulse," and "Desert Lines." The School of Ballet Arizona, under the direction of James Payne, provides exceptional dance education and helps extend the organization's reach through free and low-cost community programs that serve more than 26,000 children and families each year. For more information, visit balletaz.org.

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