

The average retirement age for a dancer is 29. Career Transition For Dancers is the launching pad for the next 70 years of life!
—Chita Rivera

Photo: Laura Marie Duncan



How do you document success? Is it how many tickets your theater sells? How many people visited your museum? Maybe even how many hits your website gets? For Career Transition For Dancers, it is how in demand our services are.

By Anka K. Palitz, Vice President

Since I joined the board 12 years ago, the organization's active clients have increased by almost 320%, from 1,100 to over 4,600. The number of weekly career counseling hours increased by 40% and the grants we award each year increased by 260%. I am proud of these accomplishments, but am aware that a greater demand for services requires an even greater demand for funds.



Winter Heat Chairs **Janice Becker & Fe Saracino Fendi**, with **Jean Shafiroff**. Photo: Jerry Ruotolo

What we are doing now

The recession has effected many nonprofit organizations in New York City and Career Transition For Dancers has not been excluded. To ensure no dancer is turned away, my colleagues and I on the board have pledged not to reduce any of our program related expenses, which has led to deficit budgets in 2008 and 2009. To help us meet this increased demand, renowned dancer Sono Osato has presented us with a one to one challenge grant of \$250,000 in 2010. The grant is intended to enhance our educational scholarship program and ensure that our general fund ends the year with a balanced budget. Our donors have been receptive to this challenge, having already donated \$100,000, knowing that their gifts will be worth double if we meet the goal. But we still have \$150,000 more to raise, which combined with our other fundraising efforts can truly become a challenge.



Edward Villella and I at the Palm Beach Fashion Awards.
Photo: Maya Johnson / Palm Beach Today

What we have done

Fifteen years ago when I chaired the organization's first fundraising gala, we raised \$59,000 and felt like heroes, but knew we could do more. Last year, we raised \$950,000, but still felt like there was more to be done. As a fundraising chair, I have been part of many successful fundraising projects, like Winter Heat created by Janice Becker and Fe Saracino Fendi that recently raised almost \$59,000, or the Palm Beach Fashion Awards, created by myself and sought-after fashion designer Alfred Fiandaca that raised over \$65,000 in its first year alone. Through these efforts we have developed new relationships with donors and raised vital funds, while having a great time in the process.



Rolex at Sardi's: Hosted by **Allen Brill**, President & CEO of Rolex Watch USA.
Photo: Jerry Ruotolo

What we need to do

Every year the number of grants we award increases. In the past five years alone, grant awards have increased by 95%. Being committed to education, I have personally donated over \$60,000 to create educational scholarships, which has helped over 30 dancers pursue careers in medicine and law, to name a few. Last year we held a special scholarship campaign to meet the budgetary needs of this program and this year we must raise double to ensure no dancer is denied access to this resource. Again, thanks to the help of Sono Osato, if we raise \$150,000 she will match it, essentially doubling the funds for this campaign. For our 25th Anniversary Silver Jubilee, I will be joined by Allen Brill, Michele Herbert and Nicole Sexton as Anniversary Chairs with a goal to raise \$1.1 million for counseling and scholarships. As Career Transition For Dancers sets the stage for success for dancers nationwide, so do our fundraising efforts, which is why we hope you can continue to support us as we continue to connect dancers to their future successes.

Our History 1989 Career Conversations, a series of group counseling seminars, is created to address specific issues relating to career transition.

Executive Director's Message **Starting the future in the present**

By **Alexander J. Dubé**

Mahatma Gandhi said, "The future is what we will do in the present." Having recently completed a strategic planning process, the organization will implement a plan to achieve stability and sustainability for the organization's future. Our goal is to ensure the growth of our vital programs and services while addressing the ever-growing needs of our dancer-clients for the next 25 years.

How will we accomplish this? My colleagues Cynthia Fischer and Anka Palitz have eloquently addressed this question in their messages. However, I would like to add that since we are the only service organization of its kind in the USA that addresses the needs of dancers, we are truly unique in the dance community. Not only do we partner with and complement the mission of each and every dance company, we are the 'safety net' for all dancers who will face the inevitability of transition.

We are blessed that so many individual patrons, corporations and foundations have identified Career Transition For Dancers as a beneficiary of their funds. Without such support we would not exist. The words "thank you" can never

be said enough for allowing us the rare and special privilege to serve dancers. We are thankful for our past, grateful for our present, and extremely hopeful for our future thanks to all of you.

Dancers live to wake people up, to make them really live. Career Transition For Dancers exists to help dancers really live. –Ann Reinking



Transition Tales **Karen Giombetti**

Twenty-five years ago, I was sitting at my dressing table preparing for the matinee performance of "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" when the stage manager called the dancers into a meeting. A representative from Actors' Equity had come to introduce us to the newly formed Career Transition For Dancers program.

"Career transition for dancers?" we thought, amused—we had just been moaning about our aches and pains, getting older, and wondering how long we could go on doing 8 shows a week. We then heard the question we all feared: "So, have any of you thought about what you will do when you can't dance anymore?" Well, who really thought about those things 25 years ago? After all, we lived in the moment because the moment was so completely fulfilling. Only the walls of our dressing rooms knew the angst we felt when considering a future devoid of the joy and fulfillment of dance.