

The School of Dance  
announces

A Healthy Communities project with  
Ontario Ministry of Health  
Promotion and Sport

Thursday, September 2, 2010  
For Immediate Release

**OTTAWA:** The School of Dance announced today that the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport has awarded The School a Healthy Communities Fund grant of \$50,395 to launch its new **Dance of Life** programme.

**Dance of Life** is a new collaborative outreach programme of The School of Dance that focuses on mental health and wellness, positive body image, nutrition, physical fitness, artistic expression and the celebration of community.

Organizations collaborating with The School of Dance include Dovercourt Recreation Centre, Bruyère Continuing Care, Hopewell Eating Disorders Centre, the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre and many other local schools and organizations

Asked to describe the new programme, Merrilee Hodgins, The School's Artistic Director said, "Our world is full of confusing messages and images – we are bombarded every day with emails, media messages and photographs about who we should be, what we should look like, even what we should think and feel. We hear about how much we should weigh, what we should eat, how we should stretch, how we should feel about this piece of art or that piece of music. We have access 24 hours a day to information that is difficult to shift or balance. It is no wonder that many are confused about their own image, their own self-worth, their own health. There is a deep need in our community for a programme focused on wellness originating from a place of simple communication. Enter **Dance of Life** – a dance arts programme which will provide solid information based on important scientific content through the means of creative workshops that celebrate the individuality of the participants."

As indicated in the approval for funding letter, the Ontario Minister of Health Promotion and Sport, Minister Best stated: "I commend The School of Dance for its contribution to health promotion. As a key partner, your organization's work builds on our efforts to facilitate initiatives, educate and motivate Ontarians to lead healthy lives. By working together to foster a positive culture of health and wellbeing in Ontario, we are laying an important foundation for healthy future generations."

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For more information or interviews, contact:  
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The School of Dance is a registered, non-profit charitable, educational organization currently celebrating its 32<sup>nd</sup> anniversary season.

The School of Dance  
**Dance of Life**  
Funding provided by the Government of Ontario