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ODC ANNOUNCES THE NANCY PELOSI HEALTHY DANCERS PROGRAM AT ODC



"Today, it's hard to think of an organization more central to the Bay Area's dance ecology than ODC." – Rachel Howard for *Dance Magazine*

odc.dance/health

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, March 9, 2026 – ODC has announced the renaming of its numerous health initiatives under the banner of the **Nancy Pelosi Healthy Dancers Program at ODC**. The announcement was first made at ODC's Dance Downtown Gala on March 6, where the Speaker Emerita presided as honorary chair.

"To mark Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi's final year in Congress, and in recognition of her extraordinary advocacy for both the arts and health care – two pillars of our mission at ODC – we are deeply honored to rename ODC Health Initiatives as the Nancy Pelosi Healthy Dancers Program," said ODC Board Chair **Sean Dowdall**.

In 2005, ODC launched its first formal health initiative, the Healthy Dancers Clinic, offering diagnostic and educational services free of charge to ODC dancers. Today, under the volunteer medical direction of **Celina de Borja, M.D.**, the Clinic has widened its purview to see hundreds of dancers, students and community members each year, offering the ODC community free consultations with a growing roster of volunteer physicians, physical therapists, orthopedic surgeons, mental health specialists, nutritionists, and other health practitioners from the University of California-San Francisco, the University of San

Francisco, Stanford, Kaiser Permanente, Samuel Merritt University, and other regional institutions and independent practices.

Through musculoskeletal screening, injury data analysis, and diverse cross-disciplinary approaches, the Clinic advises individuals on injury prevention and management, recovery and longevity.

Rachel Recinos Abair, M.S., directs the full panoply of health initiatives at ODC. Under her guidance, ODC has added classes designed for seniors and people with Parkinson's and their caregivers. She also oversees the health and conditioning program for the members of ODC's flagship dance company, ODC/Dance, and ODC's health and fitness classes more generally. Among the classes and workshops currently offered are Tai Chi; Barre, Tone & Sculpt; MELT Method; and Body Mind Method.

ODC also provides individualized health coaching services throughout the year, and offers special programs like **Month for Dancers' Health** featuring four weeks of workshops, presentations and individual sessions – all offered free of charge. Finally, ODC is proud to partner with **Art Pharmacy**, addressing health challenges through social prescription including movement classes and cultural excursions.

"ODC's vast array of health offerings, now known as the Nancy Pelosi Healthy Dancers Program at ODC, gives witness to a powerful truth: dance is medicine," said Recinos Abair.

"For more than 50 years, ODC has been a vital part of San Francisco's cultural fabric, and for most of that time Speaker Emerita Pelosi has been instrumental in ensuring that organizations based on values like ours can continue to thrive," said ODC Founder **Brenda Way**.

"We are currently in the midst of an exciting expansion of our campus, a sign of our optimism in San Francisco as a global hub for art and wellness," added ODC Executive Director **Carma Zisman**. "Heroes like Nancy Pelosi embolden us to dream big as artists and organizations in service to our community."

For more information, visit odc.dance/health.

The Nancy Pelosi Healthy Dancers Program at ODC: By the Numbers

Year started: **2005**

Number of volunteer health practitioners: **28**

Number of class and workshop participants: **1000+**

Average number of classes and workshops offered per week: **15**

ABOUT ODC

Founded in 1971 by Artistic Director Brenda Way, ODC is a groundbreaking contemporary arts institution: a world-class dance company (ODC/Dance), a theater with year-round presenting and mentorship programs (ODC Theater), a training school for dancers and movers of all levels (ODC School), and a fee-free, educational Healthy Dancers' Clinic. Known nationally for its entrepreneurial savvy and artistic innovation, ODC is unique for its holistic vision, including a robust digital platform. With its home in San Francisco's Mission District, ODC makes a dynamic contribution to the Bay Area's vibrant dance and arts ecosystem, cultivating artists, inspiring audiences, engaging the community, and fostering diversity and inclusion through dance performance, training and mentorship.