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**DANCING
CLASSROOMS**
PHILLY

New Board Members, New Officers, and sustained commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PHILADELPHIA (July 8, 2021)...This month, Musicopia and Dancing Classrooms Philly (DCP) welcome new Board Members and Officers to its shared Board of Directors, thank outgoing Board Chair Ebony Lee, and pledge sustained commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

Musicopia and DCP are two of the region's most impactful providers of music and dance education, serving thousands of students each year through in-school and after-school programming. Musicopia and DCP share the common goal of promoting confidence and self-esteem through the arts and are committed to working with under-served children and schools in the Philadelphia region.

"Part of what's made this experience so positive and impactful for me has been the quality of the staff and Board Members that we get to engage with on a regular basis," said outgoing Board Chair Ebony Lee. "It was not only a positive experience, but a productive one. I look forward to continuing to serve as a Board Member, and welcome David DiStefano as the new Board Chair."

The newly elected Directors that make up the Board member Class of 2021 include:

Arthur Chiu, VP Urethane Systems, Head of Americas, LANXESS Corporation

Aalyah Duncan, Publicist/Arts Advocate, Alist & Co., LLC

Richard M. Gordon IV, Principal, Paul Robeson High School for Human Services,
School District of Philadelphia

Rhonda Moore, Teaching Artist, Dancing Classrooms Philly

Tom Valvano, Partner, Grant Thornton LLP

The newly elected Officers include:

Chair: David DiStefano, Chief Revenue Officer, AIIR Consulting

Secretary: Lynne Millard, Leadership Coach, Office of Leadership Development,
School District of Philadelphia

Treasurer: Staci Wilhelm, Chief Accounting Officer, J.G. Wentworth

Catherine Charlton, Executive Director of Musicopia and Dancing Classrooms Philly, will continue as Board President. "I am grateful for the immense leadership of Ebony Lee as our Board Chair over the

past four years as she thoughtfully guided us through many transitions and reinventions, and I look forward to working with incoming Chair David DiStefano,” said Charlton. “I am also excited to welcome our new Board Class of 2021 that includes a diverse range of educators, artists, parents, and community and arts advocates, who each are brilliant in their respective career fields. They join at an exciting time as we formally integrate a DEI lens into our strategic goals. Our organizations’ missions are and always have been about equity and the accessibility of the arts to all children, and I am proud of our Board’s ongoing commitment to DEI and the formal creation of its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee led by Board Members Scott Fast and Dennis Creedon.”

Musicopia and DCP also extend a special thank you to DiverseForce, LLC and to Business on Board/Arts + Business Council for Greater Philadelphia, for matching them with Richard Gordon and Arthur Chiu, respectively. *DiverseForce on Boards* is a board governance and leadership development program for mid-to-senior level professionals of color. *Business on Board* is a leadership development program that trains business professionals in nonprofit board governance and matches them with arts and culture nonprofits to serve as board members.

“It is my honor to succeed Ebony Lee as Chair of Musicopia and Dancing Classrooms Philly, and on behalf of the Board and staff, I thank her for her years of service as she skillfully guided both organizations through unprecedented challenges including a global pandemic and the transition from our long-time Executive Director,” said David DiStefano. “I look forward to the opportunity to support Musicopia and DCP in pursuit of our strategic vision and especially in our commitment to DEI.”

A full Board Member list can be found at <https://www.musicopia.net/board> or <https://dancingclassroomshilly.org/board>.

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About Musicopia

Musicopia’s mission is to provide opportunities for children to experience, learn, perform, and appreciate music. Since its founding 1974, Musicopia has helped more than 350,000 children experience the benefits of first-hand exposure to the arts, and is a recognized leader in rebuilding and revitalizing school music programs. Musicopia reaches thousands of children each year in the Delaware Valley/Philadelphia area through in-school music education, an afterschool string orchestra program, an afterschool drumlines program, and its Gift of Music Instrument Donation Program. Musicopia places a priority on reaching students who are underserved and cut off from the region’s rich cultural life. Through its high-quality programs, Musicopia aims to give all children, regardless of circumstances, the opportunity to have their lives transformed by music.

About Dancing Classroom Philly

Dancing Classrooms Philly’s mission is to foster self-esteem, social awareness and joy in children by providing the opportunity to learn and perform social dance. Since its founding in 2007, DCP has reached more than 33,000 students through school residencies, a Saturday Academy program, and an Allstar group. DCP’s ballroom and social dance instruction helps to improve the climate of school communities across the Philadelphia region by building confidence in students, breaking down social barriers, and inspiring respect for all individuals. We envision transformative arts programs in all school communities that nurture creativity, build confidence, and promote a culture of mutual respect and well-being.