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## **DJD celebrates 35<sup>th</sup> birthday with Major & Signature Grant from Calgary Foundation**

CALGARY, AB... DJD got the best gift imaginable on its 35<sup>th</sup> birthday today—confirmation from Calgary Foundation of a \$1.2M grant to complete the \$28.5M capital campaign for the DJD Dance Centre, which opened its doors in April 2016. Calgary Foundation awarded DJD the grant from its Major & Signature Grants program, which supports large-scale charitable initiatives that are broad in scope and transform our community.

“We couldn’t be more thrilled with this news,” says DJD Executive Director Kathi Sundstrom. “We were proud as a smaller organization to accomplish what seemed like an impossible dream—building a new dance centre for Calgary. And our dream came true because of great community support, strong backing from all levels of government, and wonderful partners like the Kahanoff Foundation, Kahanoff Centre for Charitable Activities (KCCA), Suncor Energy Foundation, and Calgary Foundation. To receive this major grant from Calgary Foundation completes the campaign, capping off this truly remarkable project. What a perfect gift for our 35<sup>th</sup> birthday—it’s the icing on the cake!”

“From the beginning, Calgary Foundation recognized that the vision for the DJD Dance Centre naturally aligns with two of the Foundation’s vital priorities, community connections and the arts,” says Eva Friesen, President & CEO, Calgary Foundation. “We’re proud to support this amazing hub of artistic activity, congratulate DJD on their outstanding achievement in raising \$28.5 million, and join them in celebration of their 35th Anniversary.”

The total cost of the project was \$28.5M, which included \$19 for the building (construction, soft costs, furniture and fixtures), \$6M for an Operating Endowment and Operating Transition Fund (key to DJD’s future success), and \$3.5M in land value.

The DJD Dance Centre has quickly become a dance hub and is transforming our community. Thousands of people come to the Centre for many reasons—to see a show, to attend an event or meeting, or to take a dance class. The dance community has warmly embraced the new facility with 15 resident companies working out of the space. Studios are bustling from 9am to 9pm seven days a week and the theatre is in high demand. Partnerships with festivals include Fluid Fest, Wordfest and the High Performance Rodeo. The building’s central location and welcoming design provide great visibility and community access.

From its humble beginnings 35 years ago, DJD has grown into a vibrant company that is known for creating original new works with live music, performing in Calgary and touring across Canada, running Calgary’s largest recreational dance school, and now for having built an amazing legacy for our city.



### **Fast facts about the DJD Dance Centre**

We believe in dance for all and we want all people to feel welcome in our space. We recognize our place of great privilege in the dance community by having our own space, and we are committed to supporting others and fostering growth wherever possible. In our second full year of operations, our operating costs were only 5% higher than our operating costs plus rent in our last full year at our old facility on 4th Street, proving our expansion hypothesis—that this facility would enable us to expand in a financially sustainable way investing in artistic growth and community outreach.

Some new initiatives and successes include:

- Since opening, we have given free or subsidized rehearsal space to over 30 groups and 78 independent artists; supported 40 dance workshops or events, and 70 organizations used our theatre and/or Community Living Room for 241 performances or events with over 19,500 people attending
- Double the number of classes offered in our community dance school than in our former facility and more than 1,000 new participants in classes
- \$5 Class week for folks interested in sampling a class before signing up and drop-in cards for people who can't commit to a full session
- Youth Training Program (YTP), for dancers ages 6-14 years
- More education programs including a partnership with CBE's Discovering Choices Program; an expanded Educational Residency program with Elementary and High Schools; expanded workshop program with thousands of student participants, both at the DJD Dance Centre and at their schools
- Creative Residency Program for choreographers working on specific projects
- Artist-in-Residence program for artists with specific interest in working with the DJD company
- A Day at DJD for teachers and students to experience the dance centre, take a class, go on a tour, and see an open rehearsal including a Q&A with the Artistic Director and dancers
- The East Side Dance Festival for schools from our city's most culturally diverse communities for two days of workshops and performing on our stage
- Dance Community Concert, which is free to the community, featuring professional artists, emerging artists, and high school dance programs—everything from Forest Lawn High School Dance Program, U of C Dance Division, to O2 Dance Company and Ember Dance Company
- Participants in our Dancing Parkinson's YYC, a program for Parkinson's patients and their caregivers, have much better access in our new building
- DJD now has a permanent home for its professional Company. Since opening the Company has presented six shows of which five were premieres and one a remount to 12,000 audience members.
- DJD has been designated by Canada Council for the Arts as an Artistic Institution for Dance, one of only six in Canada and the only non-ballet company

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