



March 20, 2020

Dear ScotDance USA Members,

During these unprecedented times, SDUSA needs to focus on the health and safety of our dancers, their families and the entire dance community. As we look forward to the Highland dancing events happening in the next several months, including our USIR Championship in Denver, Colorado, and the qualifying events this spring, the SDUSA Board of Directors (BOD) found it necessary to make some changes to these events due to travel restrictions and directives from the CDC and the US government.

The SDUSA BOD met last week and this week via Zoom to discuss the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on these events. Due to travel restrictions and other directives that have recently been issued, we have made the difficult decision to cancel all six of the Regional Championships for 2020.

As the COVID-19 crisis evolves, and as we continue to receive more directives, updates and recommendations from the government and from the CDC, the decision whether or not to proceed with the ScotDance USA Championships and USIR 2020 is in the forefront of our minds.

While we are all committed to supporting this event and Highland dance in the US, we are also considering the physical, emotional and financial health of our dance community as we decide on a course of action.

If we can safely proceed with the ScotDance USA Championships, SDUSA has received permission from the RSOBHD to change the 2020 USIR to a closed USA National Championship. The USA National Championship will be open to all Premier dancers who meet the same criteria required to compete in a Regional Selection Championship. There will not be any qualification process. The USIR will be on the same date (July 25<sup>th</sup>) and same location (Denver, CO). This change is only for 2020. The entry form for the USIR event will be available May 1<sup>st</sup> on the 2020 USIR website.

The SDUSA BOD recommends that Regional Championship Organizers should refund the entry fees that have already been paid. However, individual regions may choose to allow entry fees that have been paid to be donated to the Regional Championship Organizers. We need to be mindful that the Organizing Committees for each of our Regional Championships are working hard to manage budgets and maintain financial solvency.

The SDUSA BOD has been in frequent communication with the 2020 USIR Planning Committee. The Committee Co-Chairs have been involved in the BOD's discussion on this topic and the

decision process. The Committee is currently working to modify its plans to incorporate these new changes if able. Both the Committee and the SDUSA BOD are fully aware of the impact – physical, emotional and financial – that these current health conditions are causing. We promise to work together in our USIR event planning to minimize these impacts to our dancers and dance families.

Please know that the SDUSA BOD did not make the decision to cancel the Regional Selection Championships lightly. We are being mindful of the information that is available and the directives for health and safety that have been made. We are in full support of the RSOBHD's recommendation to cancel or postpone events for the health and safety of our community.

These are very difficult and emotional times we are facing. While we have been asked to distance or isolate ourselves from family members and friends, we shouldn't neglect reaching out to others both within and outside our dance community. We should continue to communicate and connect with our families and friends, and that can easily be done in our electronic world. This seemingly minor action means a great deal in minimizing feelings of isolation and stress.

Our dance community is a global community. We want to be supportive and caring of one another. We are all in this together.

Fred DeMarse  
President, ScotDance USA