

Report for the Fuller Foundation

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Organization Name: Syzygy Dance Project

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Amount Received: \$500 in 2017

Use and Impact of Funds

Syzygy Dance Project expanded our free movement classes at various facilities around the San Francisco Bay Area in 2017. 350 people were served at 7 sites with 230 movement classes. Our mission is to bring dance to every body, especially underserved people grappling with serious life challenges (i.e., addiction, incarceration, aging, PTSD and other chronic health issues). Each week in our free outreach classes, we witness how movement can catalyze deep healing, connection, creative expression and joy—helping people open to new possibilities and make better life choices.

In 2017, Syzygy offered free movement classes at:

- VA Palo Alto Health Care System for Alzheimer's/dementia patients in assisted living, veterans with limited mobility, and veterans in addiction recovery programs
- San Francisco County Jail for incarcerated women
- Options Recovery Services in Berkeley for women in addiction recovery programs
- San Francisco General Hospital for diabetes patients, combining movement and nutrition
- San Francisco Jewish Home for seniors in assisted living

- Sausalito Village for active seniors

Participants report feeling less stress, greater physical, mental, and emotional well-being and an increased capacity to accept and express emotions after taking our classes. They also report an increased sense of positive self-esteem and greater connection to themselves, others and something greater (ie, spirit, god, higher power, etc). We've witnessed countless examples of healing, awakening, and greater embodiment as a result of the power of movement, dance and music.

A secondary focus of our work is training healthcare practitioners, counselors, recreation therapists and experienced dancers to bring movement into various outreach settings. Syzygy Dance Project offers an annual facilitator training to share our knowledge and enable others to offer this powerful work in the world. To date, we've trained 50 facilitators—some teach with us and others lead outreach classes in their hometowns (and at various facilities like homeless shelters, assisted living centers, with children, etc.) across the country.

Telling our story visually is another important part of our work and we are well positioned to document it. Some of the sites where we offer classes are locked-down and/or high security facilities. Video helps us show the impact of our outreach work. In 2016, we created an [overview video](#) and one on [our class for Diabetes patients](#), and in 2017, a video on [dancing with the elderly](#). In 2018, we will create a video about movement for people in recovery.

Two Special Events

In May 2017, Syzygy Dance Project organized a special community dance at the VA Hospital in Menlo Park, CA, for veterans in assisted living and in addiction recovery programs. This event brought together 30 veterans, their families and caregivers with 30 dancers from our community. We are planning to offer this event again in 2019.

In December 2017, Syzygy offered our first sound healing benefit event. Utilizing indigenous instruments, Tibetan singing bowls, and Native American flutes, participants relaxed as meditative sounds were played near their resting bodies. Sound healing meditation offers a deep experience of relaxation, peace and rejuvenation.

Public Classes

Our public workshops and weekly classes support our outreach work. In 2017, Syzygy Dance Project offered movement workshops at California Institute of Integral Studies and 1440 Multiversity. We provided movement sessions at several events around the Bay Area including the WorldWideWomen Girls' Festival, Geography of Hope conference, Women Money & Spirit conference, and for the Glide Church Wellness Program.

Future Plans

In addition to continuing our free classes around the Bay Area, Syzygy Dance Project would like to expand our outreach programming by adding one more healthcare facility for chronically ill patients. We are also developing specific protocols for teaching movement in jails, hospitals and recovery centers, and exploring participating in a research study about the therapeutic benefits of movement. In November 2018, we will offer our outreach facilitator training internationally (in Australia) for the first time.

As of September 2018, three of our current outreach partners have asked us to offer a second class at their facilities in 2019. The requests are from:

- 1) Options Recovery Services for women in recovery
- 2) SF County Jail for transgender inmates
- 3) VA Palo Alto Health Care System for in-patient psychiatric unit

Your continued support will help us provide these life-changing classes for underserved populations around the Bay Area.