

NEDT

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026



New England Dance Theater

*"Committed to creating greater access, awareness and appreciation
of the performing arts through dance."*



OUR MISSION

To create greater access, awareness and appreciation of the Performing Arts through dance by supporting high quality productions, community outreach and dancer enrichment opportunities.



MESSAGE FROM Chair of the Board



Dear Friends of New England Dance Theater,

On behalf of the Board of NEDT, I am pleased to share with you our Annual Report for the past year highlighting our activities and our impact. Our mission is to create greater access, awareness and appreciation of dance. We focus our efforts in three key areas: high quality productions, community outreach and dancer enrichment. We rely on the generous support of our dedicated volunteers, financial donors and grant funders and are so grateful for these endless contributions.

This year we supported New England Academy of Dance as they celebrated their 40th anniversary of *The Nutcracker*. NEDT proudly continued our partnership with the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra for this production while also debuting new costumes, scenery and props for this special occasion. Our community outreach also grew as we partnered with more non-profit organizations providing a larger number of tickets than ever for our five performances. We also reached additional community members by bringing *Nutcracker* excerpts directly to them through senior centers and the New Canaan Library. It was a spectacular 40th anniversary celebration!

Beyond *The Nutcracker*, NEDT provided programming for NEAD dancers and the broader community throughout the year reaching a larger number of audience members than ever. This expansion was supported by increased fundraising allowing us to invest against all three pillars of our mission. Our annual Tea Party is not only a successful fundraiser but also a great community outreach event.

In the following pages, you will find the details of our accomplishments for the year. Our success was entirely possible because of our dedicated supporters. We are so grateful for your belief in our mission and your support of all our initiatives.

Many, many thanks

Jennifer Kutz
NEDT Board Chair

NEDT BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025-2026

Jennifer Kurtz, Board Chair

Frances Ortiz, Artistic Director

Ginna Ortiz, Artistic Director

Ted Thomas, Artistic Director

Anne Briggs, Audience Development

Cris Carofano, Merchandising & Fundraising

Elizabeth DeMuth, Enrichment

Jen Gallagher, Secretary & Special Projects

Kimberly Harper, Treasurer

Mary Beth Livengood, Grants & Sponsorships

Zibby Perkins, Communications & Community Outreach

Sara Schubert, Volunteer Collaboration



Not pictured: Mary Beth Livengood and Sara Schubert

A special thank you to Cris Carofano, Jen Gallagher, Mary Beth Livengood and Zibby Perkins for their invaluable service to the board. We are so grateful for your dedication to serving our mission! While they move on, we are pleased to welcome new members Colleen Prostor and Amy Donnelly.

HIGH QUALITY PRODUCTIONS



HIGHLIGHTS

NEDT supported NEAD's 40th Anniversary production of the *Nutcracker* in December 2025 and the June 2026 productions of *Giselle* and *Enchanted Forest*. NEDT underwrites these productions to keep ticket prices affordable for our ballet school and the broader community.

- Partnered with the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra for live accompaniment of four full-length *Nutcracker* performances
- Partnered with New Canaan High School auditorium as our venue for December's *Nutcracker* and June's *Giselle* and *Enchanted Forest*
- Purchased new scenery and props including the story vignette, sled and clock for the *Nutcracker*
- Debuted new costumes for Hot Chocolate, Angel Leaders, Ivy, Dew Drop and more in the *Nutcracker*
- Curated and purchased new costumes for *Giselle*
- Purchased new scenery and props for *Giselle*
- Purchased new marley flooring for off-site productions

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

HIGHLIGHTS

We believe that everyone, regardless of age, ability or financial status, should have access to see and enjoy live dance. Outreach highlights for the year include:

- Provided over 300 complimentary tickets to the *Nutcracker* in partnership with other local organizations that serve senior citizens, adults with disabilities and children from under-resourced programs
- Provided free access to video recording of our *Nutcracker* which was accessed by 7 organizations reaching almost 250 people
- Returned to several senior centers and the New Canaan Library to share the magic of the *Nutcracker* by performing excerpts with their residents and the local community
- Hosted our third outdoor performance on the New Canaan Library Green utilizing our outdoor stage reaching an audience of over 250 patrons
- Sponsored the outdoor stage for the Fairfield Summer Dance Festival 2025 offering performance opportunities to NEAD alumni and other guest dancers
- In July and August 2025, sponsored our first dance classes as part of the Horizons CT State Norwalk summer program where we taught dance weekly to 2nd, 5th and 6th graders and hosted a Meet a Ballerina session for PK, K and 1st graders
- Taught adaptive dance classes in-person, in-studio for local nonprofit, STAR, serving 10-15 adults with disabilities each week
- Supported adaptive dance certification training at Boston Ballet School for NEAD staff



DANCER ENRICHMENT



HIGHLIGHTS

NEDT provides numerous enrichment opportunities for NEAD dancers each year, knowing that exposing dancers to a diversity of influences helps encourage both personal and artistic growth. This past year, we were able to provide:

- Dancer Development workshops reaching over 150 dancers in Ballet 1 and above on topics ranging from bun making to stage makeup to dynamic warm-up
- Master class for company dancers with Elisabeth Beyer, ABT Corps de Ballet member
- Master class for company and enrichment dancers by Will Roberson, Assistant Dance Captain for Broadway's *Hell's Kitchen*
- Funding to subsidize a portion of the Company field trip to NYC to see *Buena Vista Social Club* and Enrichment field trip to Parsons Dance
- Doris Driver Scholarship awarded financial gifts to five dancers to support their continued study of dance over the summer months
- Additional financial support for seven dancers to support their continued study of dance at NEAD over the summer months

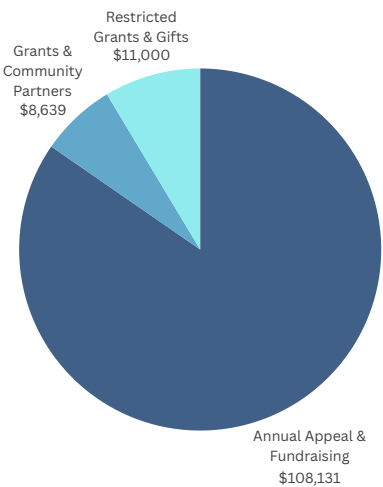
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2025-2026

(as of 07/31/2026)

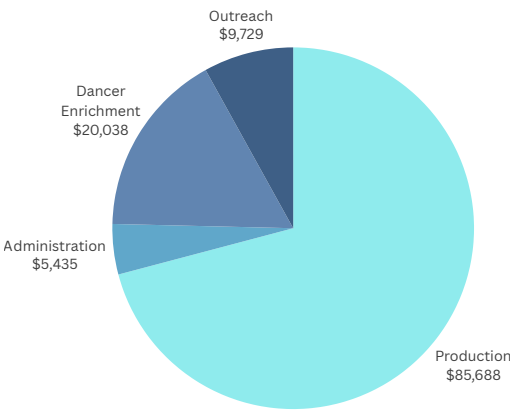
REVENUE

TOTAL: \$127,770



EXPENSES

TOTAL: \$120,889



FUNDRAISING HIGHLIGHTS & VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

NEDT had a very successful year of fundraising highlighted by our largest ever Sugar Plum Tea Party in December 2025. We hosted 4 parties which sold out within minutes. Guests were treated to delicious food, engaging crafts and amazing performances by our talented dancers all within a beautifully transformed NCHS cafeteria!

NEDT also raised important funds through sales at our *Nutcracker* and spring performances - flowers, concessions and the Nutcracker boutique.

We are grateful for all our volunteers who put in hundreds of hours to make all this happen. In particular, we are so appreciative of the leadership of our committee chairs.

BACKSTAGE CATERING

Kimberly Harper
Jennifer Kurtz

BACKSTAGE CHAPERONES

Rebecca Feinberg
Maia Sapanski

CONCESSIONS

Amy Dunkin Donnelly
Kelly McKeown

DECORATIONS

Hanna Farr
Jen Gallagher
Jaime Smith
Jenny Zwick

FLOWERS

Natalie McPartland
Mackie Spadaccini
Whitney Ruth (spring)

HAIR & MAKE-UP

Cara Kelly
Ashley Rutiligano

NUTCRACKER BOUTIQUE

Suzanne Heckt
Zed Hoffhine

ORCHESTRA HOSPITALITY

Alexandra Spellman

USHERS

Mike Spellman

SUGAR PLUM TEA PARTY

Deb Armijo
Anne Briggs
Roxana Burciago
Cris Carofano
Laura Carr
Elizabeth DeMuth
Emily Hanlon
Laura Jenkins
Jennifer Kurtz
Libby Naumes
Deb Paterson
Zibby Perkins
Colleen Prostor
Cynthia Saffi
Nathalie Schubert
Ashley Simon
Anne Skibitcky

Thank You

ANNUAL GIVING

2025-2026

Thank you for the generosity of the many donors who support NEDT, which allows it to sustain and grow its mission to create greater access, awareness and appreciation of the performing arts through dance.

CLARA AND SUGAR PLUM - \$5,000 AND ABOVE

Courtney and David Welling
The Hanlon Family

SNOW QUEEN - \$2,500-4,999

David and Elizabeth Branch
Jennifer and Martin Kurtz
Spencer and Sara Schubert
The Zwick Family

DEW DROP FAIRY - \$1,000-2,499

John and Anne Briggs
Cristina and Nick Carofano
The Cottrell Family
The DeMuth Family
The Fielder Family
Tim and Jen Gallagher
Charles and Kimberly Harper
Lauren and Jeff Jackson
Brian and Laura Jenkins

The Lannamann Family
The Lardizabal Family
The Livengood Family
The Meza Family
John and Erin Morley
Kiana and Brian O'Reilly
Jen Kearney and Doug Parker
Ashley and Scott Simon, Jr.
The Small Family

NIGHT FAIRY - \$500-999

Jonathan and Stephanie Forde
The Hoffhine Family
Kelly and Paul McKeown
Rand Niederhoffer and Adam Lapidus
The Skibitcky Family
The Spadaccini Family
The Tabbaa Family

FLOWER FAIRY - \$250-499

The Alfaro Family
The Burciago Family
Louis Cespedes
The Cossaro Family
The Donnelly Family
The Crowe / Heins Family

The Kelly Family
Douglas Sarnoff
Megan and Joseph Schinella
Megan and Kevin Sheehan
The Steele Family
The Stevenson Family

PARTY SCENE - \$100-249

Deb and Joel Armijo
Newland and Gayle Baldwin
The Daly Family
The Friedman Family
The Gallagher Family
Andrea and Mark Halvorsen

Emily and John Hyland
Michelle Korn
Margaret Mahoney
Cory and Zibby Perkins
The Symons Family
Cathy and Richard Townsend

GINGER COOKIE - \$50-99

The Castellano Family
Jennifer and Ian Dorrington
The Grzymski Family
Agnieszka Kacperczyk
Melissa Merrill
Sandra Miklave
Lauren and Matt Nussbaum
The Prostor Family
The Snowden Family

CORPORATE MATCHING GIFTS

NBCUniversal
Piper Sandler
Samlyn Capital
Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation
Wells Fargo

GRANT SUPPORT & UNDERWRITING

NEDT deeply benefits from generous grant support from the Connecticut Office of the Arts which is part of the state's Department of Economic and Community Development. We also are proud of our local alliance with the New Canaan Community Foundation.

In honor of the 40th Anniversary of The Nutcracker, we also had some special season sponsors this year. We are so grateful for the support of Karl Chevrolet, New Canaan Harmony Lodge Masons, Club Sandwich of New Canaan, Francos Wine Merchants and Walter Stewart's Market.



Department of Economic and
Community Development

Office Of The Arts



Harmony Lodge #67



New Canaan Masons

FRANCOS



FOLLOW US!



Photo credited to Sarah Starling of Ellyett Photography.



ON INSTAGRAM



ON FACEBOOK

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