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Dance Is for Every BODY: Providing Inclusivity and Community in Dance to Those With Parkinson's Disease

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Abstract

In 2010, University of South Florida Dance Professor Andrew Carroll was approached by The Florida Department of Health to develop a dance video intended to be utilized as a new vehicle to depict correct procedures of effectively cleaning a hospital room. This initial creative research project served as a starting point of using dance as a language to educate on medical and social issues. This project was administered to The FDOH and led to two additional commissions. The video additionally was used by hospital systems nationally who were eager to explore the idea of using the arts to lend interest to relevant medical educational cleaning initiatives. This springboard creative research project served as a spin off point to use this medium to create videos using dance and the arts to educate and create awareness for the social justice issues of bullying, dating violence, suicide awareness, human sex-trafficking, and cyberbullying. The videos were implemented to organizations worldwide who advocate on these issues and were lauded for their ability to capture and engage interest, as well as providing a conduit for discussions of the respective subject matters. The platform was expanded with a new series entitled Dance is for every BODY, which developed to address the benefits of dance to those with Parkinson's Disease, Down Syndrome and Older Adults respectively. Many of the organizations have requested future work in this medium, laying a foundation attesting to the strength of the arts to intersect with society for a greater good. The presentation will highlight the creative aspects of these projects and the outcomes which ensued.

Keywords: Dance, Parkinson's Disease, Dance Video