



OUR COMMITMENT TO SELF AND SOCIETY

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MAY NEWSLETTER

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DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSIVENESS IN POLICE/COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Our Commitment to Self and Society, a project of the Fort Collins Area Interfaith Council, is presenting a public discussion around Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness in Police/Community relations in the nation generally, and in Fort Collins specifically. This event is being presented in hybrid formats, in person and via Zoom.

DATE: May 22, 2022

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

PLACE: **In person at:** Fort Collins Police Services
2221 S Timberline Rd, Fort Collins, CO 80525

Zoom link: <https://fcgov.zoom.us/j/95010900514>

Pass Code: ywy0#wE= (must manually type in the code and 0 is a zero)

An overview of problems that have existed in Police/Community relations nationally will be presented by Prof. Ray Black, Ph.D., of the Ethnic Studies Department at CSU.

Fort Collins Police Chief Jeff Swoboda will talk about significant changes that have taken place, and are planned for, Police/Community relations in Fort Collins.

All are invited, either in person or virtually, to take part in this conversation!

OUR COMMITMENT HONORS
OUR FIRST SMALL BUSINESS STAKEHOLDER:
IMPULSE DANCE AND FITNESS LLC

Our Commitment to Self and Society has honored *Impulse Dance and Fitness LLC* of Fort Collins as our first Small Business Stakeholder!

A Stakeholder is a small or large business, non-profit organization or government entity that not only commits to increasing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in both its internal (employment) and external (customer service) models, but has actually followed through with its commitments, and is making a difference in our community.

Impulse Dance and Fitness is being awarded a sticker, modeled on the logo at the top of this newsletter, which can be placed on its front door or window. *Our Commitment* encourages our supporters to patronize businesses that proudly display such a sticker, to encourage more businesses to make, and to follow through on, commitments to DEI!

Nadia Duncan, owner of *Impulse Dance and Fitness*, explains her commitments, and how she and her employees have followed through on them:

Impulse was founded in 2018 as the first dance studio in Northern Colorado to be exclusively for adults. I envisioned a space where anyone over 18+ could come as they are and experience the freedom and joy of dance.

I grew up in a studio that was very competitive and there was pressure to look and be your best at all times. Then, when you turn 18+ they kick you out or you go on to be a professional dancer. I knew there had to be adults living in the inbetween that just wanted to dance for fun.

Impulse's mission was to give dance back to our community as a form of happiness with the belief that movement is one of the best ways to facilitate positive self-expression, cultivate community growth, and inspire confidence in adults. We would provide accessible adult dance and fitness classes that support these values and create happy healthy lifestyles.

We accomplished this by hiring instructors who focused on the fun of dance rather than being perfect. We celebrated each other with accomplishments based on time spent dancing rather than skills perfected. We posted signage in the studio that focused on community and well being. This is the culture that we created.

In 2020 during the wake of the pandemic we created a video of different studios and artists around Fort Collins highlighting our perseverance as a community called *foco moves* rejecting competition. Later that year during the Black Lives Matter movement we made a conscious commitment to celebrate diversity in our community. We put out an interview with one of our staff members who is now the supervisor of our front desk team discussing what it was like growing up black in the dance world and their journey after high school coming out and finding a queer community in Fort Collins.

After this interview we started offering ballet shoes from Blendz that is a 100% women owned offering ballet slippers in a variety of skin tones. Our staff wore shirts with a variety of different dancers pictured ranging in size, age and ethnicity and we posted more signage in our classes promoting equality and human rights.

Now, with the help of our Artistic Director Amy Smith we have our values clearly stated in our member agreement forms to respect and encourage each

other, prioritize joy rather than competition, pursue equal opportunities to thrive, see value in everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, gender sexuality, ability or age, avoid assumptions and use inclusive language, seek progress and not perfection. We also have signage outside that support these values and an inclusive pride flag. Our intake forms also now include pronouns and preferred names.

Now in 2022 we are about to release our Spring Dance Film Fest with the theme, Unapologetically Us: an unapologetic celebration of accepting ourselves and taking pride in our individual magic, our growth, and our humanity. This event takes place at the Lyric on May 26th @7:30pm. Tickets are available on eventbrite. We hope to celebrate the love of dance with our community in a dance party and a film celebrating the Impulse community doing what we love.

At this time our commitment moving forward is to maintain the wonderful culture and community we have created through staff training. We would love to start incorporating guest speakers whose expertise are in equality and diversity so we can continue to progress as an inclusive dance studio.

Congratulations to Nadia and her staff on being awarded a sticker as our first *Our Commitment* Small Business Stakeholder!

If you own, or work at, a small business, or know of one as a customer, that you would like to nominate for a Small Business Stakeholder award, please be in touch! Our email is at the top of this Newsletter.