



# Introduction to Para Dance Sport

Presented by Cheryl Angelelli and Tamerlan Gadirov/Dance Mobility

# History of Para Dance

- Wheelchair ballroom dancing started in 1968 in Sweden, originally for recreation and rehabilitation.
- The first competition was held in 1975.
- In 1998, it became governed by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), although it is currently not a medal sport.
- Nearly 40 participating countries
- Para Dance Sport has applied twice to be added as a new Paralympic Games sport.



# Athlete Eligibility

- Athletes must use a manual or power wheelchair, and have a physical disability that affects mobility.
- To increase participation in the sport there has been discussion around including athletes who are visually impaired or have an amputation.
- Junior and adult participants can compete in Combi (with an able-bodied, standing partner), Duo dance (two wheelchair users together), or Singles (on their own).
- Athletes are classified as either Class 1 or Class 2.



# Competition Dances

**Standard:** dances include waltz, tango, Viennese waltz, slow foxtrot and quickstep.

**Latin American** dances include the samba, cha-cha-cha, rumba, paso doble and jive.

**Freestyle/Showdance** can include the standard dances, Latin dances or any style for presentation (folk, hip hop, ballet, contemporary, street dance, salsa, Argentinean tango, belly dance, etc.).



# Benefits of Para Dance

A study conducted by the American Dance Wheels and the Palo Alto Veterans Hospital, showed significant physical and psychological benefits of wheelchair dancing.

Participants showed significant gains in:

- strength
- coordination
- range of motion
- improved wheelchair skills
- confidence and self-image
- Some participants even reported weight loss.



# Dance Mobility



- Dance Mobility was founded in Michigan in 2015 as a free wheelchair ballroom dance program, supported by a grant from the RIM Foundation.
- The size and scope of the program has evolved to include youth and other disabilities.
- The free monthly group lessons are held in partnership with Fred Astaire Dance Studios-Michigan
- Starting in 2019, Dance Mobility was launched in other states including Wisconsin, Indiana, Arizona, Illinois, Maryland and Texas.
- These satellite programs are launched at local Fred Astaire Dance studios where instructors have been trained by Cheryl and Tamerlan.
- In the last 7 years we have taught hundreds of individuals with disabilities learn to dance either for recreation, a special event, or competition.



# Competitions

- Mostly abroad and listed on IPC Para Dance Sport website
- World Championships are held every other year
- Michigan to host its second non-IPC sanctioned competition on July 15, 2023
- August 10-11, 2024, USA to host first IPC sanctioned Para Dance Sport competition in Dearborn/Detroit, MI





# 2023 Dutch Para Dance Netherlands

# Opportunities

Interested in starting a Dance Mobility program in partnership with your local dance studio?

We can help:

- Instructor Training
- Client Training
- Fundraising Support
- Media Coverage
- 1-2 Day Program Launch Packages
- Post program launch virtual support.



# Follow/Contact



**Instagram**

@wheeldancerUSA



**Facebook**

Facebook.com/cherylangelellifanpage

**Email:**

waterproof2000@hotmail.com