

Dear Board of Directors and Operations Team,

Happy Holidays!

It has been just over six months since Elisa Cotroneo retired and Elisabeth and Nirvan began to co-lead ISMETA with essential support from Dani and Dana. As the calendar year comes to a close, we want to express our gratitude for your service during this period of major transitions, some of which were planned and some of which were unexpected! As a group, we called on different qualities from the natural world – from the stability of rocks to the fluidity of water to the lightness of air to the resourcefulness of trees – to guide our service. With the support of these elements and contact with our cores, we navigated financial challenges and passed a reasonably conservative Phase 2 budget. We prepared a business plan for the Professional Development Center and invited our membership to submit proposals that will help them promote their work and generate income, for themselves and ISMETA. We published a Call for Proposals for the joint conference that we will facilitate with NDEO in July of 2024. We invited three potential Board candidates to consider the possibility of Board service which will start ideally in June of 2024. We held a Leadership Council meeting for Approved Training Programs and Affiliated Professional Organizations as well as a Somatic Cafe for members about martial arts and somatic practice. And we now have [18 Mentors who paid to be listed on the website](#). This is an impressive list of activities – and all of them culminated in the last four weeks! *Congratulations! And thank you!*

More detailed information about these and other accomplishments from December appears below. Enjoy reading the updates of all that this group has brought into form!

- Our joint conference with the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) is happening July 19 -21, 2024 in New York City. The deadline for proposals is February 29, 2024. Read the details [HERE!](#) The Somatic Arts and Education Committee is organizing the review of applications to teach workshops there. If you or anyone you know wants to be an adjudicator of proposals, please contact Kehinde Ishangi (k.ishangi@ismeta.org) and/or Rich Sims (r.sims@ismeta.org) by January 8, 2024.
- The Professional Development Center is ready for member workshops and courses! The [Call for Proposals](#) went out on December 12 and can be found at the bottom of the landing page for the PDC.
- All members (including you!) can submit proposals to teach workshops and courses. Please encourage people you know who might be interested to send us proposals.
 - If you know someone who is not a member but wants to teach, they can become a Friend of ISMETA for \$95. (A sliding scale fee is available for anyone who is experiencing financial challenges.)
 - In January, an invitation will go out to all ATPs to record an introductory video about the “Essential Elements” of their work to both publicize their training programs and to help define the profession of somatic movement education in the broader context of popular but vaguely defined “embodiment” and “somatic” practices.

- The Board Development Committee has been busy researching potential candidates to join our Board! Three people received emails this week, inviting them to consider interviewing in January. The names and biographical descriptions of possible candidates will be presented to the Board of Directors during the January 29th meeting. If any of them are a “good fit,” and they decide to continue in the process, they will attend our virtual Board meeting on April 24th at 2 pm Eastern time. Ideally, new members will begin their Board service on June 1.

- The last Leadership Council Meeting of this year occurred on December 11, 2023 and a follow-up letter went out yesterday describing the session. We shared a presentation summarizing our [Strategic Visioning & Implementation plan](#), which is now available as a slide show on the ISMETA website. In breakout room discussions about how the Leadership Council can participate in ISMETA’s growth over the coming years, we learned that there is a significant communication gap between ISMETA and ATPs and APOs. (Many of their suggestions were actions that ISMETA already takes!) As a result, we are going to:
 - Require 4 meetings a year (with the option to watch up to two recordings per year)
 - Create a monthly or quarterly newsletter for the ATPs and APOs

- The Finance Committee worked on the Phase 2 budget, which was approved unanimously by the Board of Directors.

- The Research and Publications Committee has started meeting again and will coordinate a couple of events about research in the coming months. Stay tuned!

- The Equity, Justice, and Accessibility Committee has selected the theme of “accessibility” for the bi-monthly Community Conversations in 2024. All are invited to attend! (Dates will be announced in upcoming newsletters.)

- Elisabeth continues to attend the monthly meetings of the Federation of Massage, Asian Bodywork and Somatic Practices (FedMBS) to stay informed about any challenges to somatic movement professionals’ right to practice in the United States.

- The Executive Committee will present slightly revised bylaws in the new year. We are waiting for updated committee and Executive Committee officer descriptions to include in that document. So, please complete your new committee descriptions during your next meetings!

- Rich, Elisabeth, and Nirvan will collaborate on writing an Annual Report for 2023 including the total number of new members for this year. Please stay tuned for details.

Thank you again for the ways in which you contributed to the stewardship of this organization and our profession!

May you rest deeply and enjoy potent pauses before we resume our good work in the new year! (Please note that the ISMETA office will be closed from December 23 – January 1.)

With appreciation,

Elisabeth Osgood-Campbell, Executive Director and Nirvan Ananda, Managing Director

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Transforming Ourselves and the World through Conscious Movement