

Dance Data Project® Data Byte

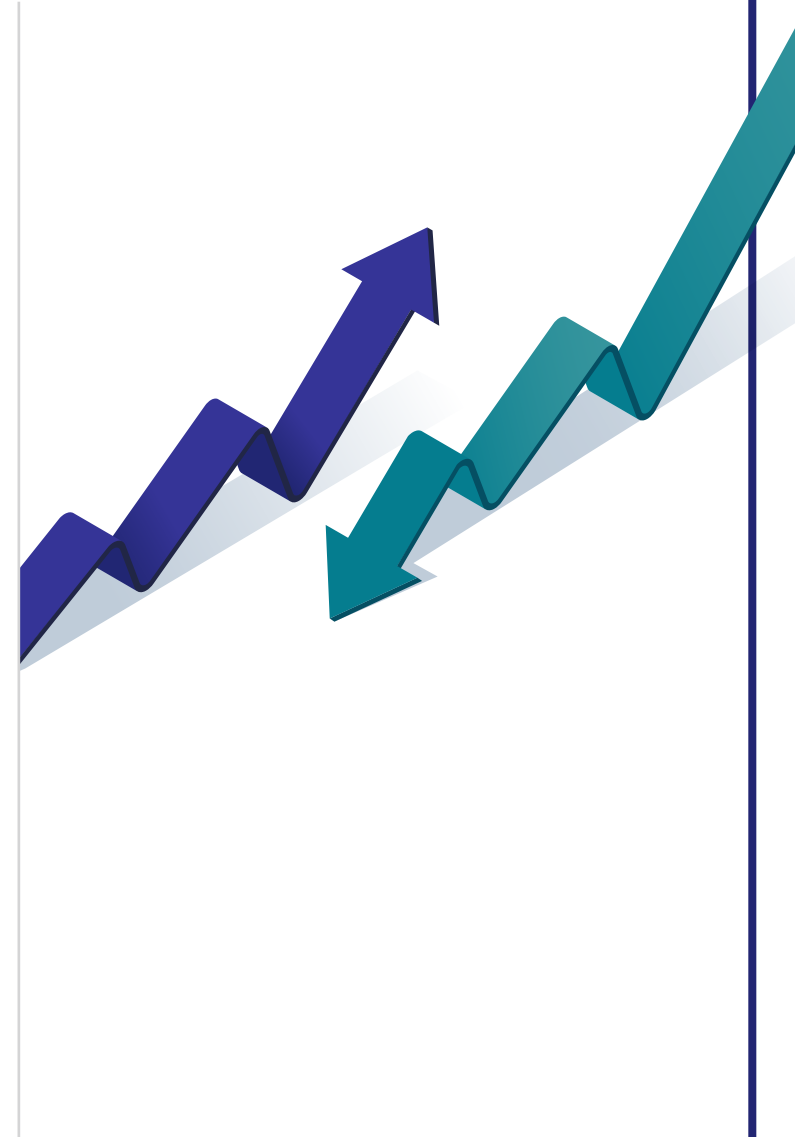
Artistic Director/Executive Director Compensation

This Data Byte examines artistic & executive director reportable compensation increases (or decreases) in relation to the overall budget of the Largest 50 U.S. ballet and classically inspired companies. The COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted the operations of many dance companies, and caused a wave of both cancellations and the furloughing of many dancers. This Data Byte takes an initial dive into the fiscal interactions between company budget and company leadership compensation from fiscal year 2016 to fiscal year 2020. Fiscal year 2021 was excluded because not enough data is currently available. DDP intends to further expand the economic lens by which to view the financial status of companies through pre-pandemic times, during the pandemic, and the current recovery period. In this Data Byte, Dance Data Project® analyzes the historical changes in company budgets, yearly changes in artistic/executive director reportable compensation, and ultimately, the ratio of director compensations to company budget.

Appropriate compensation of an organization's top management officials can be determined by a variety of methods including: compensation surveys, Form 990s of similar organizations, independent compensation consultants, and most commonly, approval by the board of directors or compensation committee (a subset of the board that is responsible for determining the top management officials' compensation packages). According to the IRS, compensation must be "reasonable and not excessive" ([IRS](#)). The highest compensated employees are considered "covered" employees and subject to an excise tax of 21% if their annual compensation exceeds \$1 million ([SHRM](#)). Excess compensation also includes excess parachute payments, which are "payments to a covered employee equal at least three times the employee's annual compensation (averaged

over five years) when the payment is contingent on the employee's separation from employment" ([Caplin & Drysdale](#)). In order to avoid this excise tax, organizations should determine "reasonable" compensation by having the compensation committee conduct a comparability review of salary and benefits data with non-profit employers that have similar missions and budget size ([National Council of Nonprofits](#)). When determining compensation, it is important that organizations refer to the IRS website as opposed to third-party services as the IRS contains more comprehensive and up-to-date information.

Dance Data Project® sourced the compensation information for this Data Byte directly from the IRS. Relevant compensation findings were determined using Part VII of Form 990. Schedule J provides additional detail on the compensation in Part VII, including how that compensation was determined. However, Schedule J was not consistently available for each company every year. DDP sourced Schedule J information for 37 companies. Of these companies, 25 reported at least one fiscal year where the administration and Board did not utilize 990 comparison data to determine appropriate compensation for key personnel. Similarly, 22 ballet companies within the Largest 50 by budget did not utilize survey data to determine compensation. It is DDP's intent that this mini report inform stakeholders of the decision making process and available resources for company staff and board leadership in setting compensation. We applaud those organizations who either use compensation comparison services, or if unavailable due to budget constraints, we invite companies to consult with DDP and hereby offer to provide data.



SECTION I:

Historical Changes in Company Budgets

Upon examining the FY 2016 - 2020 total expenses of the Largest 50 U.S. Ballet & Classically Based Companies, DDP determined that the companies' budgets on average **increased by 4-5% from 2017 to 2019 and decreased by 9% in 2020**. Notable deviations from this average include:

FY2017

- Los Angeles Ballet's budget decreased by 20%.
- Festival Ballet Providence's budget increased by 32%, moving FBP into the **Largest 50** category.
- Sacramento Ballet also reported a 33% increase in budget by expenditure.

FY2018

- Dallas Black Dance Theatre's budget decreased by 13%.
- Los Angeles Ballet reported an increase of 19%.
- BalletX's budget increased by 24%.
- Ballet Memphis's budget increased by 36%.

FY2019

- California Ballet reported a budget decrease of 31%, dropping them from the **Largest 50** category.
- BalletX reported a budget increase of 24%
- Nashville Ballet's budget increased by 28%.

FY2020

- American Ballet Theatre's budget decreased by 39%, lowering their ranking from third largest company US to the sixth largest overall.
- Sacramento Ballet also reported a decrease of 33%.
- Ballet San Antonio experienced a budget increase of 23%.

SECTION II:

AD/ED Compensation As Percentage of Budget by Fiscal Year

Analyzing compensation as a percentage of budget from FY16 to FY20, DDP finds the median artistic director's compensation comprises 2.1% of a company's total budget. The executive director's compensation typically composes 1.9% of the total budget. DDP found 5 outlier companies whose compensation percentages greatly surpassed the median. DDP defines the criteria for an outlier as a yearly average of 4.0% or more for the role's compensation against total expenses and at least two fiscal years at 4.0%. Thus, each company in this section has had either an artistic or executive director whose compensation percentage equaled or exceeded 4.0% for at least two fiscal years.

Largest 50 ED Medians:

2016 1.77%
2017 2.02%
2018 1.82%
2019 1.82%
2020 2.05%

Largest 50 AD Medians:

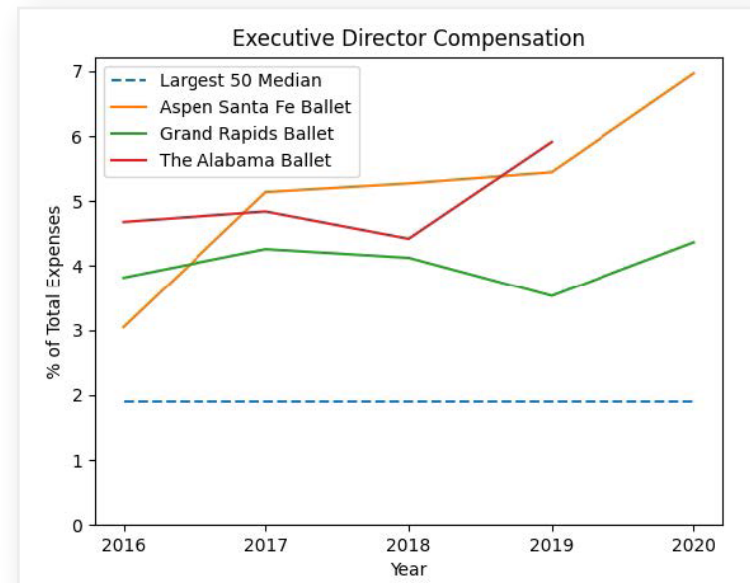
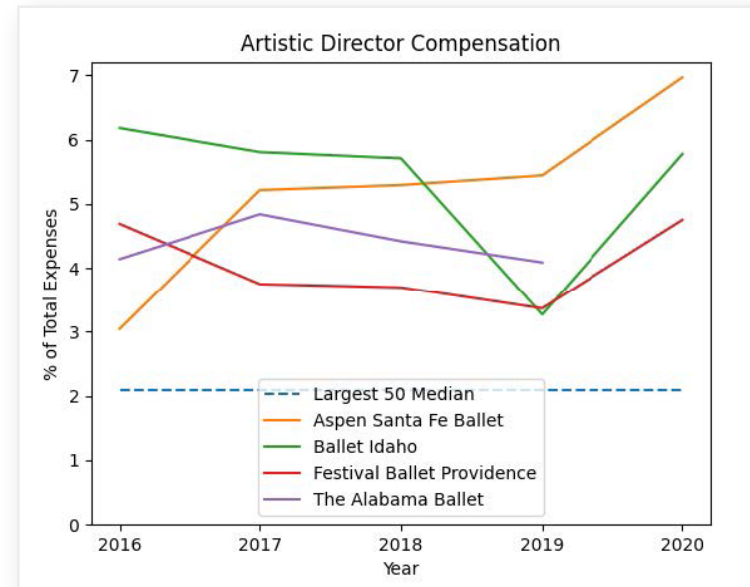
2016 2.27%
2017 2.16%
2018 1.88%
2019 1.98%
2020 2.27%

Artistic Director Outliers:

- Ballet Idaho: 5.9% average (all fiscal years except FY19 due to personnel change)
- Aspen Santa Fe: 5.1% average (all fiscal years except FY16 and FY20)
- The Alabama Ballet: 4.3% average (all fiscal years)
- Festival Ballet Providence: 4.0% average (all fiscal years)

Executive Director Outliers:

- Aspen Santa Fe: 5.1% average (all fiscal years except FY16 and FY20)
- The Alabama Ballet: 5.0% average (all fiscal years)
- Grand Rapids Ballet: 4.0% average (all fiscal years)



Largest AD Compensation Increases

- Miami City Ballet: 78% increase from FY18 (\$325,000) to FY19 (\$581,250)
- Aspen Santa Fe Ballet: 67.6% increase from FY16 (\$149,617) to FY17 (\$250,699)
- Alonzo King LINES Ballet: 55.3% increase from FY18 (\$62,000) to FY19 (\$96,269)
- Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre: 52.6% increase from FY19 (\$419,316) to FY20 (\$639,777)
- Alonzo King LINES Ballet: 39.3% increase from FY19 (\$96,269) to FY20 (\$134,115)
- Dance Theatre of Harlem: 36% increase from FY19 (\$85,995) to FY20 (\$116,920)
- BalletMet: 29.7% increase from FY17 (\$134,606) to FY18 (\$174,568)
- Ballet Hispánico: 23.2% increase from FY17 (\$193,189) to FY18 (\$238,058). *Since FY15 Eduardo Vilaro has served both as Artistic Director and CEO.*

Largest ED Compensation Decreases

- Nevada Ballet Theatre: 15.3% decrease from FY16 (\$186,039) to FY17 (\$157,613)
- American Ballet Theatre: 14.1% decrease from FY19 (\$466,515) to FY20 (\$400,775)
- *Miami City Ballet: 13.7% decrease from FY17 (\$210,645) to FY18 (\$181,864)
- *Nashville Ballet: 10.6% decrease from FY16 (\$149,867) to FY17 (\$133,917)

SECTION III: Increases/Decreases of AD/ED Compensation

Artistic Director Salary Change

The median artistic director salary increased by **3.4% in FY 2017, 2.8% in FY 2018, 3.0% in FY 2019, and 3.2% in FY 2020** when comparing changes from the fiscal year against the previous year.

Executive Director Salary Change

The median executive director salary increased by **3.3% in FY 2017, 2.6%, in FY 2018, 3.3% in FY 2019, and 1.5% in FY 2020** when comparing changes from the fiscal year against the previous year.

Largest AD Compensation Decreases

- *Cincinnati Ballet: 15.8% decrease from FY16 (\$218,692) to FY17 (\$184,231)
- Miami City Ballet: 15.7% decrease from FY19 (\$581,250) to FY20 (\$490,000)
- American Ballet Theatre: 14% decrease from FY19 (\$462,492) to FY20 (\$397,911)
- Grand Rapids Ballet: 13.2% decrease from FY17 (\$120,462) to FY18 (\$104,615)
- Ballet Arizona: 12.2% decrease from FY17 (\$246,649) to FY18 (\$216,676)
- BalletMet: 11.5% decrease from FY18 (\$174,568) to FY19 (\$154,568)
- Los Angeles Ballet: 11% decrease from FY17 (\$138,100) to FY18 (\$122,900)
- Nashville Ballet: 10.6% decrease from FY16 (\$149,867) to FY17 (\$133,917)

Largest ED Compensation Increases

- Aspen Santa Fe Ballet: 65.1% increase from FY16 (\$149,617) to FY17 (\$246,999)
- Houston Ballet: 25.7% increase from FY16 (\$222,769) to FY17 (\$280,000)
- *The Washington Ballet: 23.3% increase from FY16 (\$119,373) to FY17 (\$147,144)
- *Alonzo King LINES Ballet: 20.6% increase from FY16 (\$94,950) to FY17 (\$114,503)

**An asterisk indicates that personnel changes may indicate the rationale for sudden increase in compensation for a role at a company.*

Fiscal Year 2020 Notable Director Compensation Increase Despite Company Budget Reduction

Eleven companies with lower budgets in fiscal year 2020 had directors who received 6.0% or greater increases to their base compensation.

Company	Budget Change	AD Compensation	ED Compensation
Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre	-6.0%	Robert Battle +52.6%	Bennett Rink +7.2%
Alonzo King Lines Ballet	-19.3%	Alonzo King +39.3%	Robert Rosenwasser -2.9%
Dance Theatre of Harlem	-18.0%	Virginia Johnson +36.0%	Anna Glass -1.8%
Festival Ballet Providence	-19.2%	Mihailo Djuric +14.1%	Kathleen Combs N/A *new ED
Joffrey Ballet	-16.8%	Ashley Wheeler +14.5%	Greg Cameron +9.7%
Ballet Arizona	-6.6%	IB Andersen -0.5%	Samantha Turner +13.7%
Grand Rapids Ballet	-9.9%	James Sofranko N/A *new AD	Glenn Del Veccio +11.4%
BalletMet	-6.3%	Edwaard Liang +5.4%	Sue Porter +9.5%
Pacific Northwest Ballet	-6.8%	Peter Boal +3.4%	Ellen Walker +9.2%
Colorado Ballet	-1.9%	Gil Boggs +8.6%	N/A
Houston Ballet	-6.2%	Stanton Welch -1.3%	James Nelson +8.5%

Four companies with lower budgets in fiscal year 2020 than 2019 had directors who received 6.0% or greater decreases to their base compensation.

Company	Budget Change	AD Compensation	ED Compensation
Miami City Ballet	-1.4%	Lourdes Lopez -15.7%	Tania Castroverde Moskalenko N/A *new ED
American Ballet Theatre	-39.3%	Kevin McKenzie -14.0%	Kara Barnett -14.1%
Atlanta Ballet	-13.4%	Gennadi Nedgivin -7.4%	Tom West -2.8%
Oregon Ballet Theatre	-5.0%	Kevin Irving -4.4%	Michael Greer -6.7%

Note: Companies do not all share the same fiscal year, which may be different from the calendar year. The data contained within Form 990 submissions is reported by fiscal year and not by calendar year. Pacific Northwest Ballet and American Ballet Theatre are the only companies whose fiscal years match the calendar year. Atlanta Ballet's and Oregon Ballet Theatre's fiscal years change in the summer. Miami City Ballet's fiscal year ends in April. Because there are a variety of fiscal year timeframes, each company's expenses are reflective of a different period. Furthermore, for FY 2020, the varying fiscal timeframes, or geographic location (and resulting state mandates) mean that certain companies were more affected by pandemic closures.

SECTION IV:

Unusual Salary/Compensation Findings:

A. Largest bonuses went to AD + ED of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet.

DDP sourced total compensation from [Aspen Santa Fe's Schedule J filings](#), which includes non-taxable benefits. Non-taxable benefits are not typically included in the compensation listed in the company summaries provided by third-party services like Propublica and Charity Navigator.

Jean-Philippe Malaty (ED) and Tom Mossbrucker (AD) each received \$108,000 in bonus or incentive compensation in fiscal year 2020, which is 70.7% of each of their base compensation that year. In comparison, when a bonus or incentive was received by other artistic and executive directors, the average amount was 11.7% of the base compensation.

Malaty and Mossbrucker's total compensation grew on average 15% year-over-year between fiscal years 2015 and 2020:

- FY 2015
 - ◊ Company budget: \$4,437,709
 - ◊ AD: \$173,811
 - ◊ ED: \$173,811
- FY 2016
 - ◊ Company budget: \$4,913,095 (10.7% increase)
 - ◊ AD: \$192,847
 - ◊ ED: \$188,208
- FY 2017
 - ◊ Company budget: \$4,804,864 (2.2% decrease)
 - ◊ AD: \$278,889
 - ◊ ED: \$275,189
- FY 2018
 - ◊ Company budget: \$4,552,201 (5.3% decrease)
 - ◊ AD: \$256,579
 - ◊ ED: \$252,579
- FY 2019
 - ◊ Company budget: \$4,825,749 (6.0% increase)
 - ◊ AD: \$311,306
 - ◊ ED: \$308,306
- FY 2020¹
 - ◊ Company budget: \$3,742,484 (22.4% decrease)²
 - ◊ AD: \$347,996
 - ◊ ED: \$344,720

B. New York City Ballet former vs current AD/Associate AD Compensation

During the period of DDP's compensation analysis - FY2016 to 2020, Peter Martins served as ballet master in chief (equivalent to Artistic Director) of New York City Ballet from 1990 to his resignation January 1, 2018. In FY16, he earned \$850,000 in base compensation. In FY17, he earned \$900,000 in base compensation. Martins resigned January 1, 2018. However, he received \$986,000 in compensation for choreography through his production company, Peter Martins Production INC, that same fiscal year. Through FY19 and FY20, Martins continued to be paid through his production company, earning \$975,273 in FY19 and \$626,625 in FY20.

Peter Martins also served as the artistic director of the School of American Ballet (SAB) between FY16 and FY18, and earned the following base compensation: FY16 - \$124,063; FY17 - \$127,748 and FY18 - \$128,386. Martins departed from the School of American Ballet in January of FY18.

In comparison to Martin's FY20 compensation, Jonathan Stafford (current artistic director) earned \$368,461, and Wendy Whelan (current associate artistic director) earned \$295,857 in FY20. Jonathan Stafford earned \$125,000 in FY19 and \$104,596 in FY20 through SAB.

Footnote: FY21 data is currently unavailable.

¹ Since the original publication of this Data Byte (November 2022), the Executive Director at Aspen Santa Fe Ballet (ASFB), Jean-Phillipe Malaty, contacted DDP indicating that ASFB had incorrectly reported AD and ED compensation on their FY2020 filing and that an amendment had been filed with the IRS. ASFB provided DDP with two versions of the amended FY2020 return. In both versions, Schedule J of the amendment no longer includes compensation categorized as 'Bonus and incentive compensation.' An overview of the original FY2020 Schedule J filings and the two versions of amendments (as provided by ASFB) can be found [HERE](#). As of this update (June 2023), neither version of the amended FY2020 return has been released to the public by the IRS. DDP cannot at this time verify the amendments made.

² Since the original publication of the Data Byte (November 2022), the IRS has released to the public the original and amended FY2021 990 filings for ASFB. The original filing reports a total expenditure of \$2,000,070 (46.6% decrease). Artistic Director total compensation on the original filing is given as \$314,448 and Executive Director total compensation as \$308,212. The amended filing reports Artistic Director compensation as \$229,338 and Executive Director compensation as \$224,838. A breakdown of the FY2021 Schedule J filing can be found [HERE](#).