



December 2022—Issue No. 11

# Association Newsletter

Empowering Members To Empower Us All

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## Building Strong Foundations **A YEAR IN REVIEW**

Can you believe that it is already December? We hardly can! We welcome this opportunity to take a deep breath, prepare for holidays with loved ones, and reflect on all that has been accomplished, and all that remains to be done in the new year.

A year is a a blink of the eye in the history of the Empowerment Self-Defense movement, and still so much can happen in so little time. Here at the Association of ESD Professionals, 2022 has been a time of laying sturdy foundations for the work we plan to do in the years ahead.

As we look back over the past 12 months, we feel proud of the resources we have begun to create for ESD professionals, the members we have brought on board, the Credentialing Program we have developed and piloted, and the relationships we have built and continue to build. Even more importantly, we celebrate the many accomplishments of ESD professionals around the world, which it has been our honor to witness and share.

In these pages, we are happy to present to you the first ever cohort of ESD professionals to receive their AESDP (Association of ESD Professionals) Credential, other Association announcements, a heads-up on a very special new year membership discount, and more ESD news from around the world. Read on to reflect and celebrate with us!

Please contact us at [hello@esdprofessionals.org](mailto:hello@esdprofessionals.org) if you would like to share a celebration about your ESD work, learn more about the Association Credentialing Program, become a member, or explore other opportunities for collaboration. We always love to hear from you!

# A NOTE FROM SHEILA

On behalf of the Association of ESD Professionals, I am excited to announce the 2022 (and first-ever) credentialed ESD Professionals.

The credential is granted to those who have written and passed a comprehensive examination, which requires that they demonstrate their knowledge of empowerment self-defense (ESD) principles, philosophy, and practice.

I am confident that this credential will elevate the ESD profession and bring us all new opportunities. Government agencies, commercial organizations, sponsors, partners, and educational institutions will work with credentialed ESD professionals knowing that these professionals have met a high standard established by an independent international body following a rigorous credentialing process.

I would like to thank the volunteers on the two advisory councils who worked with me to develop the credentialing program and the exam. It was thoroughly enjoyable to have so many lively and passionate conversations with experts in this profession, and the occasional good-natured disagreement where we challenged each other on the details. I continue to feel such admiration for the intensity of engagement and commitment we all seem to have in common. I hope to continue to engage with all of you, and with many others, as we continue to develop these programs.

It is my sincere hope and intention that the credentialing program will be a unifying force for ESD professionals from all over the world. The credentialing program demonstrates a common thread that runs between us and brings us together.

We all speak the same language of empowerment and we all share the same vision of a violence-free future.

—Sheila Watson, Program Development and Credentialing

# CELEBRATING THE FIRST CREDENTIALLED ESD PROFESSIONALS

## Adanma Nwokoma

"I am honored to be the first person from Africa with the ESDP title. Being credentialed as an empowerment self-defense practitioner means a lot to me, because it demonstrates that my knowledge of ESD is the same as anyone else who has trained anywhere else in the world."

Connect with Adanma on [Instagram](#).



## Amelia Dorn

Learn more about Amelia's work with Impact Personal Safety of Colorado [here](#).



## Antonella Spatola

"I am very proud to have taken the ESD credentialing exam and now be recognised as an ESD Professional as part of the Association of ESD Professionals. Finally, we have a body that can provide a space for our development and professionalism as we provide services around the world. I encourage all ESD instructors to seriously consider taking the exam and showcasing ESD professionals as a group of knowledgeable expert individuals who deliver professional services."

Discover Antonella's work at her [website](#).



# CELEBRATING THE FIRST CREDENTIALLED ESD PROFESSIONALS

## Erjola Shaka

## Kim Rivers

Learn more about Kim and her incredible ESD work on [Instagram](#) and her [website](#).



## Lisa Gaeta

"I've been waiting for decades for an association with a certification process that fits our industry. I took the exam myself to have an idea of the level of difficulty, and to hopefully get certified in the process. The exam is not easy, but I believe those who are teaching ESD or IMPACT classes, or training to do so, will be able to pass. Over the years, I have had many people ask if there was a certification or accreditation for IMPACT and now I can say "yes". This will be a great tool for us as we add to our teams and grow our businesses."

# CELEBRATING THE FIRST CREDENTIALLED ESD PROFESSIONALS

## Stephanie Cyr

"As the interest in personal safety and wellness expands into all areas of our lives, The Association of ESD Professionals and its comprehensive credentialing exam provide a level of professionalism which can facilitate the hiring of self defense instructors in a variety of industries."

Get to know Stephanie's work on her [website](#) and [Instagram!](#)



## Nicole Snell

"It was a wonderful opportunity to take this inaugural exam and be among the first officially credentialed empowerment based self-defense professionals in our transformative industry. Our work is instrumental in creating a world free from violence."

Check out Nicole's empowering work on her [website](#) and the Girls Fight Back [Instagram!](#)

# CELEBRATING THE FIRST CREDENTIALLED ESD PROFESSIONALS



## Tasha Ina Church

Discover Tasha's work on the ElleLiveAction [website](#) and follow her on [Instagram](#).

## Toby Israel

Follow Toby's work with Mujeres Fuertes on her [website](#) and [Instagram](#).



## Yehudit Sidikman

Learn more about Yehudit [here](#), and visit the [MyPwr website](#) for more information about the MyPwr app!

# ASSOCIATION NEWS

## New Year Sale

Miss our membership flash sale last month? Don't worry, we will be offering another chance to save with our New Year Sale in January.

Visit [www.esdprofessionals.org/membership](http://www.esdprofessionals.org/membership) after New Year's to lock in your discount. Reach out to Modupe, our Membership & Operations Manager, if you need any support with the signup process: [poku@esdprofessionals.org](mailto:poku@esdprofessionals.org)



## Latest Blog

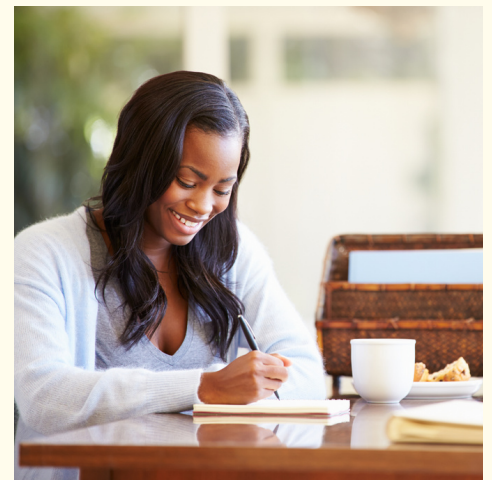
[Read our latest blog](#) and learn all about Nuna Gleason, ESD professional and founder of Wounded Healers International.

There are few things as profound as hearing first-hand somebody's story of healing and empowerment. Nuna's story does not disappoint. Get your weekly dose of inspiration [here](#).

## Seeking Authors & Contributors

Our resources are created by and for ESD Professionals. While our team loves to craft blogs and How To guides for you, we get really excited when experts, writing enthusiasts, and innovators from the ESD community add their voices to the mix.

Contact Toby, our Consulting Communications Manager, at [toby@esdprofessionals.org](mailto:toby@esdprofessionals.org) if you would like to contribute.



# ESD WORLDWIDE

The year may be winding down, but ESD professionals tirelessly continue their violence prevention work, no matter the season! This month, we are happy to share a few ESD-events and celebrations around the world. Think something or someone should be included in next month's newsletter? Reach out at [hello@esdprofessionals.org](mailto:hello@esdprofessionals.org).



## VPEC 2022

**Online, December 10-11, 2022**

Don't miss VPEC this weekend! The Violence Prevention Education Conference is an opportunity to create the cultural shift we greatly need. Join dozens of renowned experts in the fields of education, psychology, social work, and Empowerment Self Defense as we explore initiatives designed to interrupt and stop violence before it starts.

VPEC 2022 is a virtual experience. To register, click [here](#).



## Celebrating Tracie Arlington

**200,000 Girl Scouts in ESD**

Wow! Tracie Arlington has taught over 200,000 Girl Scouts since 2004 (and 5,000 this year), sharing with us that it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of her life. She is loving every moment of her ESD work, and we are proud to cheer her on!

If you would like to know more about the curriculum that meets their badge requirements, feel free to email Tracie at [Tracie@playitsafedefense.com](mailto:Tracie@playitsafedefense.com) or check out her [website](#).



# ESD WORLDWIDE

## Costa Rica Teacher Training

**Welcoming 10 new ESD instructors to the community!**

Toby Israel, ESD professional and founder of [Mujeres Fuertes](#), is thrilled to share that there are now 10 new ESD instructors in Costa Rica following the successful completion of her first teacher training last month, supported by ESD professional Amy Schmidt.

The project is growing closer to its vision every day: a thriving community of empowered and empowering humans transforming cultures of violence in Costa Rica and beyond.



## Encuentro **ESD MX 22**



**Práctica Física**



## ESD LAC Regional Gathering

**Weaving networks of support!**

Marking the one-year anniversary of their Level 1 ESD Instructor Training in Oaxaca, Mexico, new and old instructors from around Latin America came together last week in Mexico City to train, connect, and level up in this regional gathering.

The ESD LAC network is growing at lightning speed! Follow their journey on Instagram [here](#).