

March 2022 – Issue No. 3



ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Empowering Members To Empower Us All

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Celebrating Women's
History Month and
International Women's Day

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A Focus on Women's History Month

March is Women's History Month in the United States, the UK, and Australia (it's celebrated in October in Canada), one month set aside since 1987 to bring attention to the achievements and struggles of women throughout history. March 8th is International Women's Day, a day to celebrate women and focus attention on the fight for equality and dignity for all women throughout the world. Part of achieving equality is gaining and using power—to do that, we have to find our own power, something empowerment self-defense professionals help women (and people of all genders) do every day. The Association celebrates all people who work in the worldwide struggle for women's empowerment, equality, and safety. We celebrate the countless women from our mothers to our great-grandmothers to the women throughout history who have made progress for all women against all odds.

Read Our Newest Blog Post

This month's [blog](#) takes a little stroll through the history of women's self-defense and, as an extra bonus, highlights some powerful warriors who happened to be women.



THE ASSOCIATION OF ESD PROFESSIONALS

Hello to all of our members and to our newest members, welcome to the Association of ESD Professionals! View the latest and greatest in ESD and check out what's happening in the Association in our third volume of the Association Newsletter.

Have you become a member yet? We have individual memberships and, BRAND NEW, an option for organizations to join. When becoming a member, you receive access to online events, How-Tos for your ESD practice and business ventures, an ESD career center, access to liability insurance, and networking with a growing membership. These are just a few of the reasons why joining our Membership is an excellent investment for your ESD business. Please share this newsletter and visit our social media and [website](#). Dues information, along with discounts and international pricing for qualifying applicants, can be found [here](#). And if you have any questions or ideas you'd like to share, our Suggestion Box is on our home page.

HAPPENINGS IN ESD

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“We Are Worth Defending” Project

IMPACT Safety Ohio unveiled a pilot study called “We Are Worth Defending.” The study, sponsored by the Association, is examining barriers to black women getting involved in empowerment self-defense with the hope of learning how to break down those barriers. IMPACT Safety Ohio Director Julie Harmon is sharing project data with other ESD organizations to bring attention to the challenges facing black women with respect to physical and emotional safety. Harmon hopes that the study will generate community interest and ownership.

Veteran Self-Defense Instructor Says Empowerment Self-Defense Is a Great Tool In The Fight Against Gender-Based Violence

Breaking Belize News | By Benjamin Flowers | February 6, 2022

Longtime ESD practitioner S. Renee Wentz was interviewed about ESD for Breaking Belize News. Wentz told journalist Benjamin Flowers, “A large part of the empowerment aspect is sitting and talking with people and letting them know that this [acts of violence] is wrong. That no one deserves to be treated that way and letting them know that they have the ability to defend themselves.” Wentz also pointed out that ESD clients receive a confidence boost when they train in ESD, confidence they carry with them beyond self-defense.

Someone You Should Know: Founder of Self-Defense Program with a Passion for Teaching Women to Protect Themselves

Dakota News Now | By Alexandra Todd | February 10, 2022

"[I]n order to defend yourself effectively, you must first and foremost believe that you are worth defending," says Sydney Meza, founder of the Empowerment Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Sydney, who was raised by a mother who worked with domestic violence survivors, created her program after learning how the incidence of domestic violence during the pandemic nearly doubled. Her mission is to empower women and give them the tools they need to protect themselves both physically and mentally.

Pagosa Charter School Partners with Arts Initiative, Forge Martial Arts

Pagosa Daily Post | By Emily Murphy | March 3, 2022

In Pagosa Springs, Colorado, Forge Martial Arts is passionate about empowering women and young girls to stand up and find their power through community and self-defense. Their new program will offer women's self-defense and empowerment classes at space provided by Pagosa Charter School. According to MorgAnne Foster, Forge Martial Arts also hopes to strengthen their relationship with Rise Above Violence, a nonprofit that assists victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, "to give freely to women that need independence, power, and confidence in their lives again."

Elizabeth Smart Brings Self-Defense to Colorado Springs Women

Fox 21 | By Paige Weeks | March 4, 2022

The Elizabeth Smart Foundation and Malouf Foundation™ are teaming up to bring empowerment self-defense to women and girls in Colorado Springs through the Smart Defense system. "Smart Defense is where education, empowerment and physical self-defense come together," according to Miyo Strong. "There has been a gap in traditional self-defense programs, and we're proud to be the bridge of change. We emphasize the education surrounding sexual violence prevention, not just the martial arts techniques used for defense and escape."

ASSOCIATION FEATURES

Organization Membership

You asked. We answered. [Organization Membership](#) is here! Name 3 people to represent your organization – they will receive regular membership benefits plus several additional benefits, including discounts on the credentialing exam and event fees. Plus, your organization will get a discount on conference booth fees. If you're thinking, "What about everyone else at my organization?" we've got you covered! Organization employees and contractors will be eligible for discounts, as well, starting with 20% off Membership. They will get some bonus discounts, too. With Organization Membership, the organization locks in today's pricing for several years and will have the opportunity to be featured in the Association Newsletter, as well as our magazine and podcast, coming this summer and fall.

Office Hours with Tom Rose

The Association is excited to announce that Tom Rose will be hosting a monthly event called Office Hours with Tom Rose. At this virtual event, Tom and guests will be answering pressing questions about running an ESD practice. Whether you are just starting out or have been practicing for years, Office Hours is a great opportunity to find out more about how to structure your new practice or grow your existing practice, how to choose or expand your clientele, how to decide whether to start a nonprofit or for-profit practice, and so much more. Office Hours is currently open to members and nonmembers alike but [join the Association](#) soon before that changes.

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New How-Tos

Just in time for tax season, the Association will be making available a new How-To about everyone's favorite subject...taxes! We will also be posting a new motivational How-To as part of our Muse series about how being brave in business can mean not letting a fear of failure keep you from making moves. You'll find these at <https://www.esdprofessionals.org/business-how-to> in the coming days. And if you have a suggestion for a new How-To, please drop us a line via the Suggestion Box on our [home page](#).

Association Career Center

Our Career Center is open for business! The Association Career Center is for members and non-members alike, but members receive a 50% discount on employer job posts. Employers posting jobs can also broaden their searches with packages that will tap into additional job search engines, including those focused on diverse pools of candidates.

Trouble Finding Liability Insurance? We Can HELP!

If you or someone you know is looking for liability insurance and doesn't want the headache of searching high and low, the Association can save its members time and energy looking for the right coverage. We are offering access to insurance through a quick and easy online application process! This benefit is reserved for Members only. Haven't joined the Association yet? [Register NOW](#).

Measurements Commission Report

In case you haven't seen it yet, the Association has released a report from the Measurements Commission. The Measurements Commission Report takes a look at methods for measuring the effectiveness of empowerment self-defense. [Check it out!](#)

COMING SOON...

ESD Directory

One of the benefits we will be offering our members, the ESD community, and the general public is a comprehensive ESD Directory. While this directory will be handy for networking, its primary purpose will be twofold: 1) making it easier for members of the public to find ESD courses and 2) growing clientele for ESD practitioners. Whether you are running an ESD nonprofit, a for-profit ESD business, providing free ESD classes, or working in other areas of ESD, we hope that this will be a great resource for instructors, trainers, course participants, advocates, journalists, researchers, organization staff, writers, and everyone involved in ESD. Drive traffic to your website and social media and know that, no matter where you are located in the world, people will be able to find you and you will be able to find colleagues.

Credentialing Program

Currently, the Association's credentialing expert Sheila Watson is conducting a survey to get feedback on ESD core competencies, an expansion of the work completed by the Credentialing Advisory Council and additional international ESD experts. If you would like to provide feedback, you can find the survey [here](#). Next step ... final touches on the exam and then testing the exam (ESD experts from the greater ESD community will do the honors). Once the test has been tested, the i's dotted and t's crossed, the exam handbook completed, we will start making announcements about applications and a date for the first exam. If you haven't already, sign up for the [Association Newsletter](#), and please follow the Association's social media so you don't miss any announcements.

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ESD Master Calendar of Events

Who has time to troll the internet for ESD events? Look out for our master calendar of events for the ESD community. We will include a broad range of events—some will be about empowerment self-defense, some may include trainings, and some will be of interest to ESD practitioners because of overlapping issues from the greater nonviolence, women's rights, and diversity & equity fields. Whether you are a researcher, instructor, trainer, advocate, writer, or staff member of an ESD organization, you should be able to find something of interest. And if you know of events relevant to ESD that are not on the list, please SHARE with us! Send us your favorite events here: [Event Submission](#)

Grants and Other Funding Opportunities

Are you having funding issues? Does your community need your valuable services, but you need additional funds to make it happen? The Association will be compiling funding opportunities for ESD Professionals. Look out for those soon – the Resources & News section of our website will host this feature.

Upcoming Events:

Consulting Director for Program Development, Sheila Watson, hosts a monthly themed mixer on behalf of the Association, known as Connect. In previous months we've shared cookies and introduced our pets! Each month we rotate the time of the event to accommodate people from all time zones. April's event theme is to be announced, so keep an eye out on social media for more details!



Association Team Highlight

Congratulations to Sheila Watson on placing first and second in a Writing Challenge. When Sheila is not creating the credentialing program and training future ESD instructors, she is writing fiction. Last month, Sheila entered a writing challenge that asked participants to write a new short story every weekend for five weekends. The stories were judged by other professional short-story writers. One of Sheila's stories came in first one week, two came in second two other weeks, and all five of her stories placed second overall. And just this week, one of her stories sold. Congrats, Sheila!

Recap

On February 23, 2022, the Association's Samantha Waterman co-hosted a PAVE Prevention event with Luis Jimenez, COO for PAVE. Called Framing ESD, the hosts asked participants to weigh in on how best to describe ESD to a person who is unfamiliar with it. Participants had great ideas and asked interesting questions – all around, an interesting conversation!