



Here and Now Yoga, Wellness & Arts Collective (Credit: Michelle Cavanagh)

Yoga, Wellness And Arts Collective Opens In Floral Park

👤 Janet Burns 📅 June 14, 2024

Floral Park residents and business owners have a new neighbor located in the heart of the village.

Here and Now Yoga, Wellness & Arts Collective, located at 22 Verbena Ave., opened its doors on June 1 and offers a wide range of classes and programming provided by roughly a dozen local

instructors. Activities include group and one-on-one yoga sessions of various types, tai chi, mat pilates, movement for kids, ballet for adults, and much more.

Co-founders and partners Michelle Cavanagh and Dina Denis-Paolucci, who also serve as class instructors, recently gave *Nassau Illustrated News* a quick interview at their fresh and airy arts and wellness space.



Co-founders and instructors Dina Denis-Paolucci (left) and Michelle Cavanagh

“It’s been exciting and very smooth thus far,” said Cavanagh. “So far, we have eleven teachers, including ourselves, teaching a wonderful array of different, diverse things, and kids’ workshops coming up in a few weeks.”

Denis-Paolucci added, “It’s also been really exciting being right here in the community, meeting people, seeing neighbors passing by, coming in, trying classes. The neighbors have been great and supportive, and it’s really nice to see people regularly.”

To encourage even more local residents to stop by and check out the new space, Here and Now is offering a “Summer Blowout” special this month of \$49 for two weeks of unlimited classes. Denis-Paolucci said that people can use the special to try any of the different classes they offer, seven days a week during mornings and evenings, and basically ‘test drive’ different styles of movement as well as different teachers.

Cavanagh said, “If a teacher’s just not somebody you align with, you might never go back. So, making that personal connection with people in the community is probably the most important thing for us right now.”

For her part, Cavanagh said, “My fitness and wellness [journey] harkens back to the mid-90s as a dancer, actor, personal fitness trainer, and martial arts instructor of children in Los Angeles, coming back home [to New York] and wanting to be less violent in my [work] ... I think becoming a mother was a big factor in that,” she laughed.

“I became a yoga instructor in 2010 and started having these ideas about opening a studio. I looked at a few places, and in June of 2023 I started thinking that I needed a business partner. And then I started thinking: Dina!”

“In January, one of my students actually sent me a picture of this place [when vacant], and here we are.”

“Creating movement is my thing,” said Denis-Paolucci, who’s also a trained dancer, artist, and educator, and an adjunct at Hofstra University’s dance department.

“Michelle was teaching a class, and I started coming and finding my space in this community after coming from NYC. And that evolved into me subbing for her and us working together, and we always aligned. Michelle’s an artist too, so it’s nice that we’re both creative in that way and appreciate each other’s talents.”

“As Michelle said earlier, our work is so personal. We work with people through movement, sound, breath, and ideas. Soon, we’re going to put a show on. So we’re already starting to see things blossom and grow in this space.”



The packed poster board at Here and Now in Floral Park (Credit: Janet Burns)