

Ron Montez to co-host *America's Ballroom Challenge*



Former Latin dance champion Ron Montez will be sharing his insider's perspective on the new season of PBS' two-hour series *America's Ballroom Challenge*.

Mr. Montez was the long-time co-host of public television's *Championship Ballroom Dancing*, which featured top competitive ballroom dancers from all over the country. He shared the stage and his expertise with legendary hosts Juliet Prowse, Rita Moreno and Sandy Duncan. He is thrilled to be returning to television in 2009, this time paired with host Jean Louisa Kelly. "I'm very excited to work with PBS and help to continue its tradition and commitment to presenting the finest competitive ballroom dancing on television," Mr. Montez says.

Ron Montez began dancing as a teenager at the suggestion of his sister, who was a dance instructor. He fell in love with the sport and soon began competing. Searching for ways to improve his craft, he entered Brigham Young University, where he studied and attended BYU's famous ballroom program. After leaving the program, he headed to the west coast, where he met his partner, Liz Curtis. They went on to capture many awards together. They won their first International Latin crown in 1979 – and defended it successfully every year through 1985.

Mr. Montez says he feels lucky to have had a competitive career that allowed him to compete and perform all over the world. "It has been an enriching and rewarding experience," he says.

Since retiring, Mr. Montez has remained an active and integral part of the ballroom community as a teacher, coach, choreographer and adjudicator in both American and International styles. Among his many projects:

- He was a choreographer on Fox's *So You Think You Can Dance*.
- As an examiner, he evaluates both professional and amateur dancers for certification.
- He organizes a dance workshop in San Diego, which exposes dancers of all levels to world class coaches.
- And, with his wife, Karla, he runs an annual dance competition in Chicago.

The Montez family lives in Arizona.