

Friday, July 23, 2021

The International Association of Blacks in Dance Announces 2021 INFLUENCERS Cohort

Company: International Association of Blacks in Dance
Venue: International Association of Blacks in Dance
Location: Silver Spring, MD

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The International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD) announces the INFLUENCERS Cohort for the 2021 COHI | MOVE program: IABD Supports Five Dance Companies across the U.S. through multi-year funding totaling more than \$750,000 in Awards. The five companies that comprise the cohort will each receive a total of \$150,000 over the next three years: Collage Dance Collective, Memphis, TN; Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, Chicago, IL; Emerge 125, New York, NY; KanKouran West African Dance Company, Washington, DC; and StepAfrika!, Washington, DC.

"IABD is pleased to support these dance companies through our partnership with Nonprofit Finance Fund," said Denise Saunders Thompson, president and CEO of IABD. "These times remain challenging as dance organizations approach over a year and half of being shut down. The next three to four years are critical, as this cohort will continue the capacity building and capital deployment methodologies used to strengthen Black Dance companies, with the goal of creating more adaptable organizations that carry on vibrant artistic programming. We are extremely excited to work with this next cohort and remain committed to their organizational and financial health."

The organizations were selected based on several key considerations for participation:

- commitment to collaborative participation and engagement with IABD, NFF, program consultants, and cohort companies,
- the depth of community relationships,
- demand for local based programming greater than the organization's ability to provide,
- engagement and demonstrated support of local artists and the local arts community,
- demonstrated loss for the community if this organization no longer existed.

The Comprehensive Organizational Health Initiative (COHI) | Managing Organizational Vitality and Endurance (MOVE) is a multi-phase and collaborative program in partnership with the Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) designed to improve the structural and financial health of dance companies. The program has a strong emphasis on peer learning and evaluation that delivers methodology and resources to strengthen the financial and organizational health of the IABD Membership. NFF provides the analytic basis, requisite data, training, and planning for a comprehensive initiative that addresses the financial capacity and capitalization needs for long-term stability of these critical dance organizations. In partnership with NFF, IABD will offer access to financial coaching so that companies may receive strategic feedback and guidance as they seek to apply the learnings to their organizations. IABD will also underwrite access to discrete consulting engagements over the course of the four-year period.

Gifts from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Ford Foundation support the Comprehensive Organizational Health Initiative | Managing Organizational Vitality and Endurance (COHI | MOVE) program.

About The International Association of Blacks in Dance

For 30 years, The International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD) has preserved and promoted dance by people of African ancestry or origin and has assisted and increased opportunities for artists in advocacy, audience development, education, funding, networking, performance, philosophical dialogue, and touring. IABD serves a diverse, national and international membership of agents and managers,

dance companies and studios, educators and educational institutions, individual artists, researchers, and supporters of the Dance field.

About Collage Dance Collective: Collage Dance Collective works to inspire the growth of ballet by showcasing a repertoire of relevant choreography and world-class dancers representative of our community. Founded in New York City in 2006, Collage Dance Collective received rave reviews for its 2007 national debut at the Lyric Opera House in Kansas City, Missouri. The company relocated to Memphis in 2007 to take part in the city's exciting artistic renaissance and to fulfill its mission of extending the reach of outstanding classical ballet training. Since its move, the professional company has presented nine full-length seasons in Memphis, plus national and international touring. collagedance.org/

About Deeply Rooted Dance Theater: Deeply Rooted Dance Theater reimagines and diversifies the aesthetics of contemporary dance by uniting modern, classical, American, and African-American traditions in dance and storytelling. Through its uncompromising pursuit of excellence, Deeply Rooted demonstrates the transformative power of art and beauty through dance education, performance, and cultural enrichment in Chicago and on the world stage. Deeply Rooted is rooted in traditions of American and African-American dance, storytelling, and universal themes that spark a visceral experience and ignite an emotional response in diverse audiences worldwide. Deeply Rooted collaborates with nationally renowned choreographers, across the spectrum of modern, ballet, and African dance, to reflect contemporary voices. deeplyrooteddancetheater.org/

About Emerge 125: Founded in 1981, EMERGE125 (formerly Elisa Monte Dance), bridges cultural barriers through the universal language of dance. The company's work emphasizes three main objectives: CREATE with and for a corps of professional dancers; EDUCATE individuals in the art of movement and in appreciation of live dance performance; and COLLABORATE with distinguished artists across other disciplines to bring dance to new audiences and new platforms. In 2021, the company debuted a new name: EMERGE125 (E125), a shift that signals a new era for the organization. "125" celebrates our Harlem neighborhood, historically centered around 125th Street, and our commitment to build, lead, and center our local community in our work. "Emerge" conjures the dynamic, athletic energy that pervades our performance work, and embodies our dedication to continued re-envisioning: never emerged but instead always in the process of present tense, active evolution. emerge125.org/

About KanKouran West African Dance Company: KanKouran's mission is to preserve and promote traditional West African culture by providing quality entertainment and educational programs to local and national audiences in an effort to facilitate cross-cultural enrichment. KanKouran's immediate future is devoted to the establishment of an African Cultural Center. This Center will serve as a model to educate the community in order to foster a greater understanding of and appreciation for pan-African and cross-cultural artistic cooperative endeavors. Patrons and visitors alike will have the opportunity to learn about African culture and other cultures throughout the African Diaspora through the study of dance, music, drum making, language, drama, history, culinary and textile arts, and other aspects of culture. kankouran.org/

About StepAfrika!: Step Afrika! blends percussive dance styles practiced by historically African American fraternities and sororities; traditional African dances; and an array of contemporary dance and art forms into a cohesive, compelling artistic experience. Performances are much more than dance shows; they integrate songs, storytelling, humor and audience participation. The blend of technique, agility, and pure energy makes each performance unique and leaves the audience with their hearts pounding. Step Afrika! promotes stepping as an educational tool for young people, focusing on teamwork, academic achievement and cross-cultural understanding. www.stepafrika.org/

About The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation: Founded in 1969, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation believes that the arts and humanities are where we express our complex humanity, and we believe that everyone deserves the beauty, transcendence, and freedom to be found there. Through our grants, we seek to build just communities enriched by meaning and empowered by critical thinking, where ideas and imagination can thrive. Additional information is available at mellon.org.

About Nonprofit Finance Fund: Founded in 1980, the Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) is a nonprofit lender, consultant, and advocate for putting money to work in better ways for social good. NFF believes that improving the flow of money to community-centered organizations led by and serving people of color that have historically been denied it, begins by correcting the legacy of systemic underfunding restricting money and resources to organizations. We envision a society where money and knowledge come together to support just and vibrant communities and proudly help mission-driven organizations achieve their communities' aspirations through tailored capital, strategic advice, and accessible insights. For more information on NFF visit www.nff.org.

International Association of Blacks in Dance
8730 Georgia Avenue Suite 606 Silver Spr
Silver Spring, MD, 20910
6467654773
<https://www.iabdassociation.org/>

Schedule
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