

STEP AFRiKA!

ANNUAL REPORT
2017/2018



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Dear Step Afrika! Family,

2017/2018 was a season of amazing firsts for Step Afrika! I am so proud of our artists, staff, Board and supporters for their dedication in making the season such a great success for our audiences and students, and I am delighted to share this season review with you. Some of my personal highlights were...

Step Afrika! mounted our first full-length feature production Off-Broadway. Sold-out performances of *The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence* ran for three weeks at the New Victory Theatre in New York. These Off-Broadway performances and the subsequent national tour of *The Migration* is the culmination of five years of artistic development. It was a dream come true to share *The Migration* with New York audiences and the Company earned rave reviews!

After an incredible 10-year partnership with Washington Performing Arts, Step Afrika! assumed full artistic and administrative control of our Summer Steps camp in August 2017. Our first independently managed camp was a great success with 131 students completing a rigorous week of stepping. Summer Steps has grown so much over the years. I always remain in awe of the hard work and creativity these young people demonstrate throughout the week-long camp.



In August 2017, Step Afrika! launched our first Step Fest, a festival of free performances by local step teams and African dance companies. Part of our summer Step Xplosion tour, Step Fest activated one of DC's most least known natural resources – Kingman and Heritage Islands in Ward 7. The program connected DC agencies, community groups and artists with an audience of more than 400 people. This new program is a wonderful opportunity to engage DC residents – especially those from the surrounding neighborhood – in learning about this beautiful community asset.

We are excited to carry this momentum forward as we celebrate our 25th Anniversary Season. I look forward to sharing these and many more great moments with you throughout the upcoming 2018/2019 season.

Best wishes,



C. Brian Williams, Founder and Executive Director



NATIONAL TOUR

Step Afrika! performed for more than 30,000 students at 55 U.S. Colleges, Universities and Performing Arts Centers during its 2017/2018 tour. Each performance promoted stepping, the arts and a commitment to higher education.

COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTERS

Appalachian State University, Boone, NC
Mann Center for the Performing Arts, PA
Villanova University, Radnor, PA
St. Thomas University, Miami, FL
Phillips County Community College, Helena, AK
Iowa Wesleyan University, Mt. Pleasant, IA
Cottey College Center for the Arts, Nevada, MO
NW Missouri State University, Maryville, MO
James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA
Hudson Valley Community College, Troy, NY
Miami University, Middletown, OH
Indiana Technical University, Fort Wayne, IN
University of North Carolina, Greensboro, NC
Raue Center for the Arts, Crystal Lake, IL
Gateway Community College, New Haven, CT

College of Mt. St. Vincent, Bronx, NY
Cerritos Center, Cerritos, CA
Penn State University, Abington, PA
Penn State University, Reading, PA
Iona College, New Rochelle, NY
Juniata College, Huntington, PA
Edinboro University, Edinboro, PA
Clarke University, Dubuque, IA
Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, IL
Doane University, Crete, NE
Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, IA
Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, MI
University of Michigan, Flint, MI
DePaul University, Chicago, IL

THE MIGRATION TOUR

Step Afrika!'s national tour of the critically-acclaimed work, *The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence*, continued with performances at: The Soraya Center for the Performing Arts in Los Angeles, CA, Delaware Art Museum in Wilmington, DE; and Arts Emerson in Boston, MA.

COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTERS

Lourdes University, Sylvania, OH
 Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi, TX
 St. Agnes Academy, Houston, TX
 Lamar University, Beaumont, TX
 Trinity University, San Antonio, TX
 Gannon University, Erie, PA
 Schreiner University, Kerrville, TX
 Columbus State University, Columbus, GA
 Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA
 Berry College, Mt. Berry, GA
 Victoria Theatre, Dayton, OH
 Towson University, Towson, MD
 Marietta College, Marietta, GA
 Alaska Junior College, Anchorage, AK

Lafayette College, Easton, PA
 Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, PA
 Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ
 SUNY, Oneonta, NY
 Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA
 Miller Outdoor Theatre, Houston, TX
 University of Massachusetts, Lowell, MA
 Wheaton College, Wheaton, MD
 American International College, Springfield, MA
 Colby-Sawyer College, New London, NH
 Husson University, Bangor, ME
 Brooklyn Performing Arts Center, Brooklyn, NY
 Mayor's State of the District Address, DC



INTERNATIONAL TOUR

Step Afrika! serves as DC's official cultural ambassador, representing the United States and introducing the tradition of stepping to international audiences at performances, festivals and cultural exchange programs around the world.

Last season, Step Afrika! visited Chile in October 2017; Jordan in January 2018; and Ghana and Benin in May 2018.

Step Afrika!'s artists engaged approximately 20,000 children and adults with performances, workshops and master classes.



STEPPING INTO SCHOOLS

Stepping into Schools provides arts education programs to students at all stages of their academic careers.

FIELD TRIP PERFORMANCES

Stepping with Step Afrika!

On September 25, 2018, Step Afrika! held a free field trip performance at the National Museum of African-American History and Culture for 570 elementary school students (grades 1-2) from 12 DC Public and Public Charter Schools to experience stepping and related dance traditions.

The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence

On June 5-6, 2018, Step Afrika! hosted two free matinees at Hartke Theatre for 1,231 students (grades 6-8) from 15 DC Public and Public Charter Schools. During 16 pre-performance workshops, the students learned about the Great Migration and created choreography based on Jacob Lawrence's The Migration Series.

- 24,086 students attended a Stepping with Step Afrika! school performance and workshop
- 337 students completed a Step Up to College residency
- 190 pre-K students participated in Step Afrika! Reads
- 415 students participated in a Step Shop Creativity Workshop or master class
- 41% Boys / 59% Girls
- 48% African American / 19% White / 23% Latinx / 8% Asian American / 2% Other



SUMMER STEPS with STEP AFRIKA!

Summer Steps was held from August 7 to 11, 2017 at Thomson Elementary School. 2017 marked the first year Step Afrika! independently managed Summer Steps. Generously supported by DowntownDC BID, the intensive one-week camp culminated with a public performance hosted by the National Building Museum.

- 130 Students
- 61 DC, 44 MD, 12 VA, 14 Other States
- 23 Full Scholarships
- 50 Elementary, 59 Middle, 22 High School
- 58 Boys, 72 Girls



KNIGHT ARTS CHALLENGE - DETROIT

The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence Knight Arts Challenge Detroit

Step Afrika! was honored to receive its first national grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation's Knight Arts Challenge. With this generous funding, Step Afrika! held a one-week residency of *The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence* at the Detroit Institute of Arts in October 2017.

Step Afrika! worked with the following Detroit partners:

- CASS Tech High School
- Crescendo Detroit
- Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit
- Detroit Historical Society
- Detroit Institute of Arts

The Company led workshops at 5 Detroit community programs across the city, presented 2 free student matinees for Detroit public school students and staged a sold-out public performance for 1,100 Detroit residents.



NEW VICTORY THEATRE – OFF BROADWAY

In November 2017, Step Afrika! staged *The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence* at the New Victory Theatre in New York's Broadway Theatre District. *The Migration* marked the Company's first visit Off-Broadway. The three-week engagement received a preview in *The New York Times Sunday Arts* Section, leading to sold-out performances and an audience of more than 10,000. *The Migration* was also well-received by critics with *Theatre Mania* describing it as an "exciting and brilliantly choreographed" show that "illustrates for adults as well as kids (7 and up) the power that music, dance, art, and imagination have in finding strength to triumph over oppression."



STEP AFRIKA!'S MAGICAL MUSICAL HOLIDAY STEP SHOW

Step Afrika!'s Magical Musical Holiday Step Show returned to the Atlas Performing Arts Center for its sixth year in December 2017. The dynamic artists of Step Afrika! and their friends Polo, Pinky, Popper and DJ Frosty the Snowman enchanted 3,738 audience members with an energetic and festive performance.

Audience members – young and old alike – decorated their own musical instruments to use during the performance. They also joined the artists on stage for the popular *Frosty Shuffle* and for tree decorating during the show's conclusion, *Home for the Holidays*.

Step Afrika!'s Magical Musical Holiday Step Show: Audience Response

- "It was the perfect balance of splendid step dancing and holiday fun."
- "All three generations loved it. We attended twice. The kids loved the instrument making, the 40-year-olds loved the music, the seniors loved the energy and we all completely loved the performances."
- "The cast was very high energy and took the time to engage with the audience during and after the performance. My 7-year-old son had his "favorites" and talked about the show for days after. Great job! It will be a new holiday tradition for us."
- "Performers were amazing. Very engaging in every respect. Loved it! We saw *The Migration* last year and decided to come to this show because we loved that show so much."



STEP XPLOSION SUMMER 2017

The 5th Annual Step Xplosion tour visited venues in all 8 DC Wards and featured the inaugural Step Fest at Kingman Island in partnership with the DC Office of Planning Creative Placemaking Initiative. 1,363 DC residents enjoyed a Step Afrika! performance or creative workshop in their neighborhood.

Step Xplosion Venues

Ward 1 – Mt. Pleasant Library

Ward 2 – PEPCO Edison Place Gallery

Ward 3 – CityDance POP!

Ward 4 – Raymond Recreation Center Ward 5

Ward 5 – Lamond-Riggs Library

Ward 6 – Blind Whino

Ward 7 – Kingman and Heritage Islands

Ward 8 – THEARC

"I always leave a Step Afrika! show feeling energized and proud to be a DC resident."



SPECIAL EVENTS 2018

VIP GALA

Step Afrika! VIP Gala

June 7, 2018

Gala Chairs: Patricia and Lloyd Howell

Step Afrika!'s 7th Annual VIP Gala raised \$255,180 to help young students across the Washington, DC metropolitan area develop their creative skills and learn Step Afrika!'s core values of teamwork, commitment and discipline through Stepping into Schools performances, workshops and residencies.

Step Afrika!'s Board were joined by DC Councilmember Vincent Gray; Director of the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs, Lamont Akins; Eric Shaw, Director, DC Office of Planning; Clinton Lacey, Director, DC Youth and Rehabilitative Services; Detroit CFO John Hill and more than 250 Friends of Step Afrika! to celebrate an incredibly successful year for the Company in inimitable style.



SPECIAL EVENTS

23RD BIRTHDAY PARTY

December 4, 2017

Honorary Chairs: Councilmember Charles Allen, Councilmember Yvette Alexander, Councilmember Anita Bonds, Councilmember David Grosso, Councilmember LaRuby May, Councilmember Kenyon McDuffie, Councilmember Brandon Todd, and Councilmember Robert White

Presenting Chair: Marc K. Battle

Chairs: C. Brian Williams, Lamont Akins, Brady Birdsong, Kiel Chesley, Bobette Gillette and Beth Henson

Host Committee: Makeda Abraham, Robert Bacon, Kimberly Bassett, Dyonicia Brown, Cheryl Anne Boyce, Ian Callender, Courtney

Edmonds, Althea Evans, Dezmond Evans, Donnel Jones, Josette Kelley, DeMarco McMillian, Traci Miller, Latrena Owens, Karen Parker, Troy Patterson, Anesia Sandifer, Curtis Shearin, Andrew Vinson, Angela Wiggins, Frank Williams, Eliot Williamson

Step Afrika!'s 23rd Birthday Party, generously hosted by PEPCO Edison Place Gallery, raised \$29,439 to support the Company's performances and arts education programs. Guests enjoyed music and dancing with Step Afrika!'s artists, dry ice shots, catering by Corcoran Caterers and Silent Auction featuring DC theatre tickets, hotel stays, wine, chocolates and art work.



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

STEP AFRiKA!
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
JULY 31, 2018

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 497,776
Investments	469,745
Accounts expenses	17,891
Prepaid expenses	31,448
Total current assets	<u>1,016,860</u>

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Furniture and equipment	66,645
Less accumulated depreciation	(52,458)
Total property and equipment	<u>14,187</u>

OTHER ASSETS

Other assets	11,708
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TOTAL ASSETS

\$1,042,755

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$ 10,101
Accrued liabilities	24,834
Deferred revenue	212,183
Total current liabilities	<u>247,118</u>

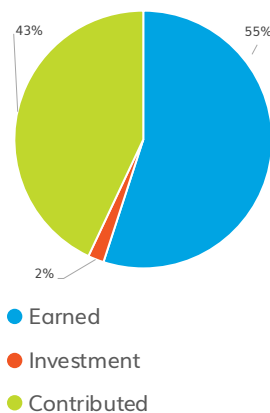
NET ASSETS

Total Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>795,637</u>
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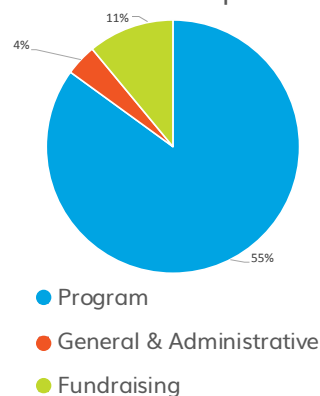
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

\$1,042,755

2017/2018 Revenue



2017/2018 Expenses



THANK YOU!

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Step Afrika!'s artists, audiences and students, thank you so much for your friendship during our 2017/2018 season. With your generous support, Step Afrika! achieved a milestone – the staging of our very first Off-Broadway production. *The Migration* continued its national tour, stopping in New York, Boston, Los Angeles, Wilmington and Detroit. As the tour concludes, we are looking forward to another milestone season.

In 2018/2019, Step Afrika! will celebrate our 25th Anniversary. Throughout the season, the Company will present retrospective performances for DC audiences, tour nationally and internationally, and continue our commitment to our city's young people at schools throughout the DC region. Our talented artists will also create a new production, which will world-premiere in 2020, that we expect will both entertain and resonate with audiences as deeply as *The Migration*.

Step Afrika! is dedicated to pushing artistic boundaries while educating audiences about the tradition of stepping, its history and importance to African American culture. As we commemorate our 25th year, we invite you to join us for one of Step Afrika!'s performances, programs or events next season. Once again, thank you!!

Best wishes,



Marc K. Battle
Chair, Board of Directors



BOARD, STAFF AND ARTISTS

Board of Directors

Marc K. Battle, Chair
Brady Birdsong, Vice Chair
Angela Wiggins, Secretary
Ran Borgersen, Treasurer
Neil Albert
Ann Belkov
Kimberly Bassett
Dyonicia Brown
Beverly Burke
Jacqueline N. Francis
John Hill

Staff

C. Brian Williams, Founder and Executive Director
Lamar Lovelace, Deputy Executive Director
Joanne Coutts, Grants and Finance Director
Alorie Clark, Arts Education Manager
Niomi Collard, Production Manager
John Alexander, Production Manager
(*The Migration*)
Patricia Kelsick-Fasusi, Bookkeeper
Eliot Williamson, Development Consultant

Artists

Mfoniso Akpan, Artistic Director, State University of New York
Emanuel Chacon, University of Delaware
Deatrice Clark, Howard University
Matthew Evans, Elizabeth City State University
Kiera Harley, Towson University
Conrad Kelly, Florida A&M University
Vincent Montgomery, Florida A&M University
Joe Murchison, University of Central Oklahoma
Ronnique Murray, Virginia Commonwealth University

Teaching Artists

Maurice Moore, Howard University
Jacquize Stewart, Howard University
Micah Collier, Howard University

Contact Information

Step Afrika!
1333 H Street NE
Washington, DC 20002
202.399.7993 ext. 112
www.stepafrika.org

