

Greetings

Step Afrika!

DC's Cultural Ambassador

August 2009

A PROCLAMATION BY THE MAYOR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WHEREAS, Step Afrika! was founded in 1994 as a cross-cultural exchange program with the Soweto Dance Theatre of Johannesburg, South Africa; and

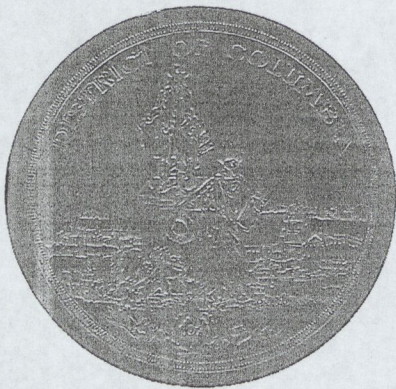
WHEREAS, Step Afrika!, based in Washington, DC, is the first professional company dedicated to stepping, an art form born at African American fraternities and based in African traditions; and

WHEREAS, Step Afrika! helps to break down cultural barriers among strangers by providing opportunities for people of different cultures to learn, dance, and celebrate together; and

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia is proud to be home to this accomplished and talented company:

NOW, THEREFORE, I THE MAYOR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, do hereby name **STEP AFRIKA!** as a "CULTURAL AMBASSADOR FOR WASHINGTON, DC."

Adrian M. Fenty
Mayor, District of Columbia





Council of the District of Columbia

Resolution

COUNCILMEMBER GROSSO

COUNCILMEMBER WELLS

COUNCILMEMBER BONDS

COUNCILMEMBER ALEXANDER

COUNCILMEMBER CHEH

COUNCILMEMBER ORANGE

COUNCILMEMBER BOWSER
COUNCILMEMBER GRAHAM

COUNCILMEMBER CATANIA
COUNCILMEMBER McDUFFIE

COUNCILMEMBER EVANS
CHAIRMAN MENDELSON

STEP AFRIKA! 20th ANNIVERSARY RECOGNITION RESOLUTION OF 2014

WHEREAS, STEP AFRIKA! WAS FOUNDED IN DECEMBER 1994 BY C. BRIAN WILLIAMS AS A CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM WITH THE SOWETO DANCE THEATRE IN JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA;

WHEREAS, STEP AFRIKA! EXPANDED TO BECOME THE FIRST NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL TOURING COMPANY IN THE WORLD DEDICATED TO THE TRADITION OF STEPPING AND ITS UNIQUE CONNECTION TO AMERICAN HISTORY;

WHEREAS, OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS, STEP AFRIKA! HAS GROWN TO BECOME ONE OF THE TOP 10 AFRICAN-AMERICAN DANCE COMPANIES IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE LARGEST AFRICAN-AMERICAN ARTS ORGANIZATION IN WASHINGTON, DC;

WHEREAS, STEP AFRIKA! PROMOTES AN APPRECIATION FOR STEPPING AND THE DANCE TRADITION'S USE AS EDUCATIONAL, MOTIVATIONAL AND HEALTHY TOOL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND ALL OVER THE UNITED STATES;

WHEREAS, STEP AFRIKA! RUNS FIVE ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAMS EMPHASIZING THE TIES BETWEEN STEPPING, TEAMWORK, DISCIPLINE, AND COMMITMENT;

WHEREAS, THE WORK OF STEP AFRIKA! HAS BEEN HONORED WITH AWARDS SUCH AS THE MAYOR'S ARTS AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO EDUCATION IN 2003, IN RECOGNITION OF THE COMPANY'S EXPANDING ROLE IN ARTS EDUCATION, BRIDGING STEPPING TO MORE THAN 20,000 YOUNG STUDENTS EACH YEAR, AND THE MAYOR'S ARTS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN AN ARTISTIC DISCIPLINE IN 2013; AND

WHEREAS, STEP AFRIKA! COMPLETES AN ANNUAL 50-CITY TOUR OF COLLEGES AND THEATERS FROM MAINE TO MISSISSIPPI REACHING TENS OF THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS EACH YEAR AND HAS ALSO PERFORMED ON MANY STAGES IN SOUTH AMERICA, EUROPE, ASIA, AFRICA, AND THE CARIBBEAN;

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, THAT THIS RESOLUTION MAY BE CITED AS THE "STEP AFRIKA! 20th ANNIVERSARY RECOGNITION RESOLUTION OF 2014".

SEC. 2. THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ACKNOWLEDGES AND HONORS STEP AFRIKA! FOR ITS OUTSTANDING 20 YEAR CONTRIBUTION TO THE VITALITY OF ARTS, CULTURE, AND ARTS EDUCATION IN THE DISTRICT, AND DECLARES DECEMBER 4, 2014 AS "STEP AFRIKA! DAY" IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

This resolution shall take effect immediately.

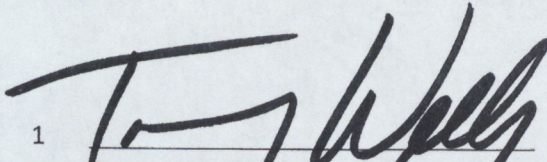
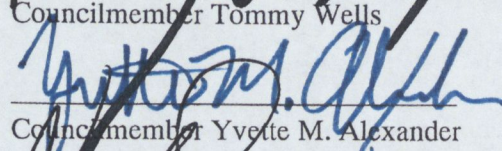
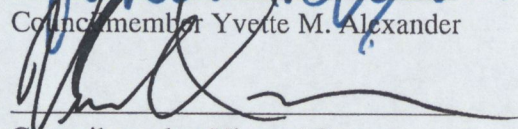
CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

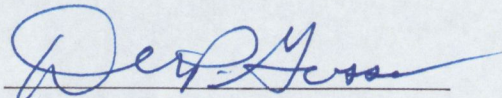
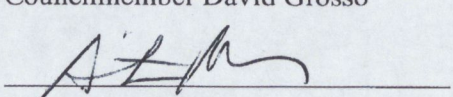
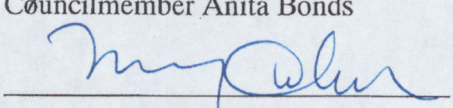
I hereby Certify that this Resolution is true and adopted as stated herein.

Resolution Number:

Date:

SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL

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2 Councilmember Tommy Wells
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4 Councilmember Yvette M. Alexander
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6 Councilmember Vincent Orange
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Councilmember David Grosso

Councilmember Anita Bonds

Councilmember Mary M. Cheh

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A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To recognize Step Afrika!'s twenty year history of excellence in performance and arts education.

WHEREAS, Step Afrika! was founded in December 1994 by C. Brian Williams as a cultural exchange program with the Soweto Dance Theatre in Johannesburg, South Africa;

WHEREAS, Step Afrika! expanded to become the first national and international professional touring company in the world dedicated to the tradition of stepping and its unique connection to American history;

WHEREAS, over the past 20 years, Step Afrika! has grown to become one of the top 10 African-American Dance Companies in the United States and the largest African-American arts organization in Washington, DC;

WHEREAS, Step Afrika! promotes an appreciation for stepping and the dance tradition's use as educational, motivational and healthy tool for young people in the District of Columbia and all over the United States;

WHEREAS, Step Afrika! runs five arts education programs emphasizing the ties between stepping, teamwork, discipline, and commitment;

WHEREAS, the work of Step Afrika! has been honored with awards such as the Mayor's Arts Award for Outstanding Contribution to Education in 2005, in recognition of the Company's

1 expanding role in arts education, bringing stepping to more than 20,000 young students each
2 year, and the Mayor's Arts Award for Excellence in an Artistic Discipline in 2013; and

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4 WHEREAS, Step Afrika! completes an annual 50-city tour of colleges and theaters from
5 Maine to Mississippi reaching tens of thousands of Americans each year and has also performed
6 on many stages in South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean.

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8 RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
9 resolution may be cited as the "Step Afrika! 20th Anniversary Recognition Resolution of 2014."

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11 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia acknowledges and honors Step Afrika!
12 for its outstanding 20 year contribution to the vitality of arts, culture, and arts education in the
13 District, and declares December 4, 2014 as "Step Afrika! Day" in the District of Columbia.

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15 Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in
16 the District of Columbia Register.



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

House of Representatives

REMARKS OF HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2014

Ms. Norton. Mr. Speaker,

I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating Step Afrika! on its 20th anniversary, which will be celebrated on December 4, 2014.

Founded two decades ago, Step Afrika! was originally created as a cultural exchange program with the Soweto Dance Theatre of Johannesburg, South Africa, and has grown to become an internationally recognized dance company.

Stepping is a uniquely American art form that originated on the campuses of Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Step Afrika! is the first professional company dedicated to the art of stepping. Step Afrika! promotes an appreciation for stepping through performances and arts education programs in the District of Columbia, across the rest of the United States and around the world.

Step Afrika! specializes in the use of stepping as an educational tool for young students. Step Afrika! brings stepping and its associated values of teamwork, commitment and discipline to students in classrooms, non-traditional dance venues and performing arts venues. Step Afrika! introduced stepping to the Kennedy Center's Teaching Artist program in 1998, and served as the first step group for the Washington Performing Arts' Concerts in Schools program. In 2005, Step Afrika! earned its first D.C. Mayor's Arts Award for Outstanding Contribution to Education, in acknowledgement for its expanding role in arts education. Step Afrika brings stepping to more than 20,000 students each year.

Step Afrika! is also globally renowned. The organization serves as an official Cultural Ambassador for the U.S. State Department. It has represented the United States and countries around the world including South Sudan. Step Afrika! has also provided moral, welfare, and recreation programs for service members overseas in Bahrain and Djibouti.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Step Afrika!, its Founder and Executive Director, C. Brian Williams, and the Chair of Step Afrika!'s Board of Directors, Jacqueline N. Francis, M.D. on 20 years of service to the District of Columbia and the rest of the United States.