



Dear Step Afrika,

In recognition of Step Afrika's exceptional artistry, performance, and uniqueness as a creative voice as well as the company's commitment to breaking new ground, exploring new processes, and using existing knowledge and traditions to reintroduce the world to the art form of stepping, the Board of Directors of The International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD) has chosen Step Afrika to receive the **Jeraldyne Blunden Local Innovators Awards**.

Our selection for this award has been determined by your special service not only to the Dance field but also the performing arts sector, as well as your ability to make a difference in the lives of every person your work has touched. Your professional presence and commitment to Black dance are deeply appreciated. Our engagement of special honorees – persons and organizations respected for their professional accomplishments and acknowledged for their service – is the best practice we can use to call further attention to your contributions and its impact on the larger performing arts community. For us, you represent excellence and the highest standards of ethical conduct, integrity, civic and social responsibility.

We invite you to accept your award and celebrate with us during the IABD Awards Celebration Gala, *Asante Sana*, held in your honor on **Saturday, February 7, 2026**, at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta in Atlanta, GA. You will receive two (2) complimentary tickets to the performance of our Founding Companies and Invited Guests Artists on Saturday, February 7, 2026. Conference and festival registration, travel and lodging arrangements for one (1) will be confirmed with your acceptance.

The 36<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference and Festival of Blacks in Dance, hosted in partnership with Atlanta Dance Connection, Axam Dance Theatre Experience, Ballethnic Dance Company, Dance Canvas, and Juel D. Lane, takes place in Atlanta, GA, February 4-8, 2026. On behalf of the board of directors, staff, and membership of IABD and our Atlanta partners, please accept our gratitude for the leadership, creativity, and generosity you have shown to the Black dance community.

Please RSVP by Wednesday, November 17, 2025, via email reply or phone, (301) 755-0831.

We hope this gathering reinvigorates your quest to support dance around the world and look forward to seeing you in February 2026.

In service,



Omar Ingram, Executive Director