



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DALLAS ORGANIZATIONS ANNOUNCE LOCAL PROJECT PLIÉ INITIATIVE WITH AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE

(September 2, 2015) *Dallas, TX* – **Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT)** and **Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas (BGCD)** announced details of their partnership with **American Ballet Theatre (ABT)** as part of ABT's Project Plié Master Class Series.

ABT Curriculum Certified Teachers from Dallas Black Dance Theatre's Academy taught a one-hour ballet master class at the East Dallas location of BGCD as part of ABT's **Project Plié Master Class Series**. Founded in 2013, Project Plié aims to increase diversity in the art form of classical ballet. In 2014, ABT joined forces with Boys and Girls Clubs of America to introduce children to ballet to identify talented students for training with local ABT Curriculum Certified Teachers nationwide.

"In the second year of the Project Plié Master Class Series, we are delighted that Dallas Black Dance Theatre will bring the mission of Project Plié to Dallas," said **Monica Stephenson, Project Plié Coordinator** at ABT. "We are confident that the exemplary training offered at their Academy will support the development of future professional dancers."

Two of DBDT's acclaimed dance instructors were certified in ABT's Curriculum in July. DBDT's **Academy Director, Omoniyi Obioha**, and **Ballet Instructor, Katricia Eaglin**, traveled to New York City this summer to learn the curriculum during a teacher training intensive at ABT's studios. Ms. Obioha will lead two free weekly classes at the Oak Cliff and East Dallas locations of the BGCD following the September master class. In addition, DBDT will offer 10 scholarships to students at BGCD to enroll in its Academy for advanced dance training. Teachers will also utilize the ABT curriculum in ballet classes at DBDT's Academy.

"This initiative is a key pillar in DBDT's strategic plan to expand our dance training and education programs," said **Zenetta S. Drew, Executive Director** of DBDT. "This partnership will strengthen the artistic capacity of the next generation of dancers."

The partnership has been over a year in the making when **DBDT's founder, Ann M. Williams**, first began exploring the opportunity. "A dear friend, **Nita-Carol Miskovitch**, brought the program to my attention last year and advocated for us to be a partner," said Ms. Williams. "She immediately saw the benefit of pairing this world-class ballet training with the success we already see in our Academy." Ms. Miskovitch is the widow of the late famous Serbian/French ballet dancer, Milorad Miskovitch.

(more)

DBDT and BGCD began planning the activities in the fall of 2014. "The Boys & Girls Clubs has long recognized the value of enrichment activities through the arts, but we have not had a structured ballet program," said **Charles English, President & CEO** of BGCD. "Misty Copeland, the first African American principal ballerina at ABT, is a product of and was first introduced to ballet at a Boys & Girls Club. We hope to find the next Misty Copeland right here in Dallas."

Parents and students interested in attending ballet classes at BGCD can call (214) 821-2950 x 714. Parents and students interested in training in ballet classes at DBDT can call the Academy offices at (214) 871-2387.

Press Contact: Courtney Whiteside
Dallas Black Dance Theatre
(214) 871-2376 x 413
c.whiteside@dbdt.com

Ballet master class photos and other high-resolution stills available by request.

* * *

About Dallas Black Dance Theatre

Founded in 1976 by Ann Williams, the mission of Dallas Black Dance Theatre is to create and produce contemporary modern dance at its highest level of artistic excellence through performances and educational programs that bridge cultures and reach diverse communities. With an ever-expanding national and global audience, the company employs a diverse, multi-ethnic troupe of dancers performing for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

Located in the downtown Dallas Arts District, Dallas Black Dance Theatre is a nationally recognized professional modern dance company that engages the cross-cultural community through contemporary modern dance presented from the African-American experience. Over the course of its history, DBDT has performed worldwide for 3.5 million arts patrons and 2.5 million students, grades K-12, and annually serves more than 100,000 people, including more than 20,000 youth.

*Dallas Black Dance Theatre's professional company, **DBDT**, consists of 12 full-time professional dancers performing a mixed repertory of modern, jazz, African and spiritual works by nationally and internationally renowned choreographers. DBDT's second company, **DBDT II**, consists of 8 volunteer artists from around the nation to support DBDT's growing local and regional educational outreach.*

***Dallas Black Dance Academy**, the official school of Dallas Black Dance Theatre, celebrates 42 years of providing dance instruction to the community. Over 475 students participate weekly in 50 dance classes of ballet, jazz, tap, modern, and African. Classes are located at DBDT studios, as well as in local schools and community centers.*

#