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Dallas Black Dance Theatre Launches Emergency Arts Initiative for Wildfire-Affected K-12 Los Angeles Students

The virtual student program is available at no cost to LA County schools; Continues DBDT's multi-year relationship with the California arts community.

DALLAS (February 28, 2025) - **Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT)** announces an emergency expansion of their virtual K-12 arts programming to **Los Angeles County public schools**, providing immediate arts education access to students displaced by recent wildfires. This rapid-response initiative builds upon DBDT's existing relationship with Los Angeles public schools following a successful in-person series of performances in 2023, which reached 16,000 fifth grade students in the LA County region.

The emergency expansion will make DBDT's acclaimed **Black History Month virtual student performances** available at no cost to all LA County public schools, with particular emphasis on supporting districts where students and families have been displaced from their regular school buildings. Regional distribution support is being provided through collaborations with local arts organizations, including the **LA County Department of Arts and Culture** and the **Los Angeles Philharmonic's Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA)**.

"Los Angeles holds a special place in our hearts following our performances at the Music Center of Los Angeles with 16,000 students in March 2023," said **Zenetta S. Drew, Executive Director of Dallas Black Dance Theatre**. "When we learned about the impact of the wildfires on these school communities, we knew we had to act. This initiative reflects our belief that arts education provides crucial stability and inspiration for students facing unprecedented challenges."

This emergency response program will deliver DBDT's professional dance performances and educational content directly to schools, whether operating from temporary facilities or through remote learning platforms. The initiative demonstrates how digital innovation can ensure arts education continuity during crisis situations.



“We deeply appreciate Dallas Black Dance Theatre extending this virtual dance program to our Los Angeles County school districts, students, and educators impacted by the recent wildfire disasters,” said **Kristin Sakoda, Director of the LA County Department of Arts and Culture**. “As a former dancer myself, having been with Urban Bush Women and other dance companies, as well as musical theater, I recognize the value of dance education and authentic culturally relevant arts learning for all youth. We were pleased to share this opportunity with our networks.”

The program will be immediately accessible to all LA County public schools through a streamlined digital platform. DBDT will provide direct support to school administrators and teachers to ensure smooth implementation across all learning environments.

For immediate access to these programs, LA County schools can contact Dallas Black Dance Theatre at ticketsales@dbdt.com or visit dbdt.com.

ABOUT DALLAS BLACK DANCE THEATRE

Founded in 1976 by **Ann Williams**, **Dallas Black Dance Theatre’s** mission is to create and produce contemporary modern dance at the highest level of artistic excellence through performances and educational programs that bridge cultures and reach diverse communities. As the largest and oldest professional dance company in Dallas, DBDT is the **fourth-largest Black dance company in the nation**, ranks in the **top 10 largest contemporary modern dance companies in the U.S.** and is included among **the nation’s 50 largest ballet companies by Dance Data Project**. Located in the thriving downtown Dallas Arts District, DBDT has performed worldwide for over **5 million arts patrons and 3 million students in 33 states and 16 countries** on five continents. The performances include two Olympics (1996 & 2012), the nation’s most prestigious venues (**Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, Broadway, Jacob’s Pillow and Joyce Theatre**), and for such luminaries as **Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II** and **South African President Nelson Mandela**. Since the pandemic began in 2020, DBDT performances have also been viewed virtually in 43 countries. The Company has been recognized by the **National Endowment for the Arts** as an American Masterpiece Touring Artist (2008) and received the **Texas Medal of the Arts Award** for Arts Education (2017).

For more details about **Dallas Black Dance Theatre**, visit www.dbdt.com.