

THE WOODEN FLOOR RECEIVES \$25,000 BANK OF AMERICA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANT

SANTA ANA, CALIF. (June 17, 2015) - **The Wooden Floor**, an arts-based youth development nonprofit, announced today that it received a \$25,000 Workforce Development grant from Bank of America. The grant supports the organization's successful Academic, College & Career Readiness Programs in which 100 percent of its graduating low-income youth immediately enroll in college, pursuing careers mostly in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Math.

"For nearly two decades, Bank of America has supported The Wooden Floor because of their track record working with youth from underserved communities to provide life and work skills as well as pathways to higher education," said Allen Staff, Orange County market president, Bank of America. "We make workforce development a grant funding priority to help prepare the next generation for the ever-changing workforce as a way to establish financial stability for themselves and their communities."



Sam Matthews, Class of 2021, studies in The Wooden Floor's Education Center.

Almost all students at The Wooden Floor fall under the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) poverty classification of "extremely low income." Through dance, they develop the ability to think differently about themselves and learn how to innovate, communicate, and collaborate—necessary 21st century skills for success in school, work, and life. Additionally, the organization's comprehensive 10-year model provides students grades 3-12 with academic services to help students succeed in school, raise test scores, become college-ready. The program also provides mentoring and family services for emotional support, college access and financial guidance.

"Bank of America's generous grant will be used to help build needed infrastructure to augment academic staff and resources in order to serve our growing student body, as a result of our high student retention rates," says Dawn S. Reese, Executive Director and Co-CEO of The Wooden Floor. "These program advancements are critical to implementing our strategic plan and will help us achieve our goal of transforming the lives of youth in low-income communities through dance and access to higher education," she said. "Bank of America has been a pivotal partner and funder of The Wooden Floor's mission and programs since 1997, investing more than \$430,000 in the organization to-date through its esteemed Neighborhood Builders Award in 2009."

Many of The Wooden Floor's alumni attend prominent universities such as **Boston College, DePaul University, University of San Francisco, and Chapman University**, in addition to **six of the 10 University of California** schools and **11 of the 23 California State University** schools. Most of the organization's 98 alumni currently in college earn merit-based college scholarships from The Wooden Floor totaling \$4,000 to \$10,000 over their college career. The organization's primarily Latino, first-generation college students continue to far outperform their peers nationwide. From 2005 to 2011, 51 percent of the organization's graduates received bachelor's degrees and master's degrees, compared to Pew Research studies showing 9 percent of Latinos ages 25-29 graduate with bachelor's degrees or higher.

About The Wooden Floor

Since 1983, The Wooden Floor has touched the lives of over 80,000 young people. From our Santa Ana campus, The Wooden Floor annually gives 375 under-served local youth the tools to live fuller, healthier lives through a unique approach grounded in dance. We make a long-term investment in each of these young people, as they engage in intensive dance education supported by academic and family services that change the way they make decisions, helping them to discover and pursue their full potential. We are proud that since 2005, 100 percent of our seniors have graduated from high school on time and gone on to pursue higher education—a rate about three times the national average for their socio-economic peers.

About Bank of America Community

Bank of America's commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a strategic part of doing business globally. Our CSR efforts guide how we operate in a socially, economically, financially and environmentally responsible way around the world, to deliver for shareholders, customers, clients and employees. Our goal is to help create economically vibrant regions and communities through lending, investing and giving. By partnering with our stakeholders, we create value that empowers individuals and communities to thrive

and contributes to the long-term success of our business. We have several core areas of focus for our CSR, including responsible business practices; environmental sustainability; strengthening local communities with a focus on housing, hunger and jobs; investing in global leadership development; and engaging through arts and culture. As part of these efforts, employee volunteers across the company contribute their time, passion and expertise to address issues in communities where they live and work. Learn more at www.bankofamerica.com/about and follow us on Twitter at [@BofA_Community](https://twitter.com/BofA_Community).