

## REVERED OC ARTS-BASED YOUTH DEVELOPMENT NONPROFIT SIGNS FIRST NATIONAL PARTNER TO REPLICATE MODEL IN DC

**SANTA ANA, Calif. and WASHINGTON D.C. (November 17, 2015)** – **The Wooden Floor**, one of the nation's most cutting edge arts-for-youth organizations, will impact more youth by **licensing its model nationwide**. The organization's first licensed partner will be **CityDance**, a recognized leader of high-quality dance education for at-risk students in **Washington DC**. CityDance announced today that it garnered further national recognition through the highly-coveted 2015 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award presented by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, an award which The Wooden Floor received in 2003. Plans are underway to initiate phasing in of the licensed partnership immediately. This will allow youth from under-served communities in Washington D.C. to benefit from The Wooden Floor's unique approach to breaking the cycle of poverty through a long-term dance immersion process, combined with academic support, college and career readiness programs, and family services.

"We have been hearing from many supporters for years that every major city could use The Wooden Floor," says **Dawn S. Reese, The Wooden Floor's Executive Director and Co-CEO**. "We are excited to be taking that first step with CityDance, which shares our passion about how our approach to contemporary dance can change the lives of low-income youth. Through its DREAM program, CityDance provides after-school dance, mentoring and tutoring to students from DC's most underserved neighborhoods. We are thrilled that through this partnership we will enable CityDance DREAM to significantly deepen and broaden their services to students by adopting our proven model for helping families break free from the cycle of poverty through dance and access to higher education. This is what The Wooden Floor has provided to students in Orange County for over three decades," she continued.



### ABOUT THE LICENSED PARTNERSHIP

The concept of licensed partnership grew out of an ambitious strategic vision set in 2009 by The Wooden Floor's Board of Directors to grow local impact over the following 10 years. The organization, **which is still very actively engaged in plans to grow its local impact**, had also been approached to explore avenues to impact young people nationally. Through an intense planning and highly selective due diligence process, CityDance has shown to possess the strong leadership, proven outcomes, and financial sustainability to be a good fit for replicating The Wooden Floor's comprehensive model.

Unlike franchising or creating affiliates/chapters, The Wooden Floor will be providing each partner **with fee-based consulting, training and curriculum** on its model. The Wooden Floor's copyrighted Theory of Change and programmatic elements will be implemented in their entirety by CityDance, with the flexibility to adapt the curriculum, in order to meet the needs of the community it serves.

By utilizing The Wooden Floor's model, which is based on 32 years of successful outcomes and history, CityDance will be able to fast-track its plans for bringing significantly expanded support and services to its community. Being affiliated with a proven model, CityDance gains instant credibility for what they aim to accomplish, building excitement within their stakeholder communities. In addition, CityDance will be able to leverage the expertise of The Wooden Floor, a pioneer and leader in creative youth development.

### IMPACT ON WASHINGTON, DC

With The Wooden Floor's innovative and proven model, CityDance moves closer to achieving our vision of a thriving DC arts community, where every child, regardless of socio-economic status, has access to the benefits of a robust arts education and where world-class dance is available to all. With the announcement of the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award today, and the expansion of CityDance DREAM into its own facility in downtown DC, CityDance's partnership with The Wooden Floor has received resounding support

from influential stakeholders throughout the city and from many of our longtime funders," says **Alexandra Nowakowski, Executive Director of CityDance**.



"We know that students who join The Wooden Floor and stay with our organization all graduate high school on-time and immediately enroll in higher education, many being the first in their families to do so," said **Artistic Director and Co-CEO Melanie Ríos Glaser**. "We believe CityDance will provide the same hope and opportunity in the greater Washington, D.C. area that The Wooden Floor has created in Orange County. We look forward to collaborating with CityDance, as we begin to implement a phased roll-out of our programs, including their participation in our Longitudinal Outcome Study," she said.

Prudence is one of the hallmarks of The Wooden Floor's Board and Executive leadership, which has worked to fully understand the organizational readiness factors required to replicate its model, and at the same time, the ways in which to serve more students in Orange County. As always, the current students and the many future generations to be served through The Wooden Floor's campus in Santa Ana is central to the organization's goals

*CityDance's future site will share space with the African American Civil War Museum and Dance/USA in DC's U-Street Corridor. It will open in 2018.*

and actions. That focus on the community The Wooden Floor currently serves remains the same.

"Our love and care for our community and our youth is why we do what we do - and do it with the highest passion and excellence," says **Dawn S. Reese, Executive Director and Co-CEO**.

#### **ABOUT THE WOODEN FLOOR**

The Wooden Floor's model has received countless awards and recognition, including the 2012 Afterschool Innovator Award from the Afterschool Alliance and The Metlife Foundation, the 2009 Neighborhood Builders Award from Bank of America, and the 2003 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award. Since 1983, more than 80,000 young lives have been touched by the organization. At its Santa Ana campus, it annually gives under-served local youth the tools to live fuller, healthier lives through a unique approach grounded in dance. The Wooden Floor makes a long-term investment in each of these young people. They engage in intensive dance education supported by academics, college and career readiness programs, and family support services that change the way they make decisions, helping them to discover and pursue their full potential. Since 2005, 100 percent of The Wooden Floor's senior class members have graduated from high school on-time and enrolled in higher education. This is more than double the national average for their socioeconomic peers. Find out more online at [www.TheWoodenFloor.org](http://www.TheWoodenFloor.org)

#### **ABOUT CITYDANCE**

Founded in 1996, CityDance is a Washington, DC non-profit dance organization recognized as an arts and education leader. With its mission to transform lives and communities through dance, CityDance School & Conservatory trains young dancers for professional careers; CityDance OnStage produces and presents world-class dance at leading DC venues; and CityDance DREAM provides free after-school programs to hundreds of DC youth each week and free performances to thousands of students each year. In addition, CityDance DREAM provides mentoring and tutoring to students from DC's most underserved communities. DREAM's mission is to use dance as a pathway for youth to graduate high-school and discover and pursue their full potential. Established in 2005, the DREAM program serves youth in grades three to twelve at public schools and community sites across the nation's capital. DREAM is the recipient of the 2015 President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award and the 2010 DC Mayor's Arts Awards for Outstanding Contribution to Arts Education. In 2018, the DREAM program will anchor a new arts center in downtown D.C., The DREAM Center for Dance.

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