

Ferris State University
Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant Application

I. Identification

Name of Primary Applicant Michael Wade
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II. Event Title (25 words or less)

**2011 Black History Month featured presentation STEP AFRIKA!
February 22, 2011 at 7pm Williams Auditorium**

III. Specific core value, strategic initiative, or goal related to diversity that the event will address. (See the University Strategic Plan and the Diversity Plan)

1. **Collaboration** - Through the presentation, those in attendance will see the group concept behind African dance and stepping, as well as the historical significance needed for collaboration with African dance and stepping
2. **Diversity** - The speakers will spotlight a diversity of ideas, beliefs & cultures as it relates to dance and stepping
3. **Excellence** - through the presentation, we hope to bring to our campus a nationally known and knowledgeable group that will represent bring eye-opening entertainment to Ferris State University
4. **Learning** - we hope to foster an environment of collective learning through entertainment, and creating the atmosphere of active and engaging learning of cultures
5. **Opportunity** – The aim of the committee is to create an environment where individuals are encouraged to participate in a cultural presentation

IV. Abstract (150-200 word, use additional paper if necessary). If the application is approved the abstract will be posted on the Diversity and Inclusion Office website.

"STEP AFRIKA!" February 22, 2011 at 7pm Williams Auditorium

-Step Afrika! is the only professional dance company in the world dedicated to the tradition of stepping. Founded in December 1994, the company is critically acclaimed for its efforts to promote an understanding of and appreciation for stepping and the tradition's use as an educational tool for young people worldwide.

V. Event Narrative (up to 4 pages single-spaced)

- a. The conceptual framework that explains how the event will augment Ferris's long-term commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- b. The goals and intended outcome(s) of the event.
- c. A statement on how the event relates to the curriculum or a specific discipline, if appropriate.
- d. A timeline.
- e. Description of the target audience, including the estimated number of participants.

- f. The expected impact that the event will have on Ferris.
- g. A specific plan to assess the impact of the event on the University.

VI. Budget

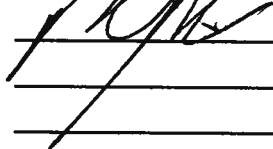
- a. Anticipated expenses (itemize and briefly explain).
- b. Funds anticipated from other sources (please list).
- c. Total amount requested from Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant.

VII. Final Report

A final report is required and it will appear on the Diversity Office's website. That report is due no later than three months after the funded activity. The final report should address:

- a: A self-evaluation
- b: Results of the event assessment
- c: Attendance figures
- d: Final budget

Applicants' Signatures:



Submission Date: 11/12/10

Submit applications to Patty Terryn, Diversity and Inclusion Office, CSS 312. Review of applications will begin upon receipt and continue contingent on available funds.

Event Narrative

Below is the Narrative of the StepAfrika! show with a description of each dance scene:

TRIBUTE

This work pays tribute to not only the art form of stepping but to the African American step show. The step show is a unique event, presented by organizations across rural and urban America. This piece touches on so many elements one may see at a step show from the use of props, popular music, ripples, and floor work to creative formations and tricks.

ISICATHULO

The gumboot dance is a tradition created by South African workers who labored in the oppressive mining industry of then apartheid South Africa. Isolated from their families for long periods and in need of entertainment, the miners began to create rhythms with their boots to pass the time. The dance has become one of the most popular in South Africa.

NDLAMO

Since 1994, American delegates to the Step Afrika! International Cultural Festival have been fascinated by the powerful dance of the Zulu people. This work imagines how South Africans today might perform Ndlamo (pronounced "inclamoo") after an evening in Soweto.

WADE

This piece celebrates the merging of the South African gumboot dance, collegiate stepping, and tap with the African American spiritual.

NXT/STEP

This work highlights the growing use of technology in arts while merging stepping for the first time with live, electronic music. For Step Afrika!, the process has allowed the company to move into new, creative territory and make an important statement about how traditional art forms also benefit from modern innovation.

Shhhhh!

Step Afrika's classic work dedicated to members of the African American Greek letter organizations (also known as the "Divine Nine")

KE NAKO

Inspired by the contemporary stepping style of Jason Nious, the company finished this piece in December, 2004, while in Johannesburg. "Ke Nako" means "It's Time" in Sesotho, one of the eleven official languages of South Africa.

THE DEACON'S DANCE

Originally choreographed as a Ndlamo (traditional Zulu dance) solo, the movements were adapted to represent a Deacon as he prepares for church Sunday morning.

CAN YOU DANCE (2000)

Created in response to a young girl's innocent questioning immediately after a Step Afrika in school performance & workshop, this piece utilizes many genres of dance special to Step Afrika! performers.

PLEDGE SCENE

The pledge process has traditionally served as the foundation of Black Greek life since the 1900s. Pledge Scene highlights this community ritual and its varied artistic creation from fraternity "greetings", pledge songs/poems, to traditional stepping styles.

NEED FOR PROJECT

Our committee feels that Step Afrika! will be a great educational opportunity for all at Ferris State University. Step Afrika! is a professional dance company dedicated to the spreading the knowledge of the tradition of stepping. The interactive presentation is used as educational tool for young people worldwide to learn and experience stepping and dance. In addition the campus community through this presentation will learn of the foundation of stepping, its evolution in society and its usage in Black Greek life. Overall it is a new and innovative way to educate the campus relative to cultural awareness.

GOAL(S) OF PROJECT

1. For participants to learn about African dance and stepping and its historical significance as well as overall increase cultural awareness on campus.

Assessment of Goals:

Individuals present at "Step Afrika!" will be able to fill out a survey online as well as in person at the event. Immediately after the presentation, individuals who are present at the show will be encouraged to fill out a survey outlining the following questions:

Please check ALL THAT APPLY on your current status:

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate Student
- Alumni
- Faculty/staff
- Community Member

Rate the Presentation that you attended:

Circle 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5
(1=least → 5=best)

Presentation was educational	1	2	3	4	5
Speakers had a thorough knowledge of African dance and stepping	1	2	3	4	5
I learned more about African dance and stepping	1	2	3	4	5
I learned about the significance of African dance and stepping	1	2	3	4	5
I would attend a presentation like this again in the future	1	2	3	4	5

How would you rate the Overall Presentation:

(1=least → 5=best)

1 2 3 4 5

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions about the Presentation?
(Use back of paper as well) _____

Please check ALL THAT APPLY on how you heard about this event:

- Email
- Pluggers/Posters
- Mail
- Facebook/Twitter
- Word of Mouth
- Other (please list) _____

Also, we will work with Theater and Humanity department faculty & staff members to encourage follow-up essays and written responses on the presentation.

The Target Audience:

The target audience for the Step Africa is FSU students, faculty and staff as well as members of the Big Rapids community. The estimated number of participants at events includes 300+, as the event will take place in the Williams Auditorium which seats close to 1600+. In addition we are applying for this event to become a 5-Star Event which will be appealing to the 220 Registered Student Organizations on campus.

Timeline:

The timeline for the 2011 Guest Speaker includes the following:

- **December 1st** apply for event to be a 5-Star Event; seek co-sponsorship from Entertainment Unlimited and other VP offices
- **January 10th – February 22, 2010** Advertise event
- **February 22, 2010** Presentation @ 7pm Williams Auditorium

Event Budget:

Budget Overview			
	Requested Grant Funds	Funding from other sources	TOTAL BUDGET
STIPEND			
HONORARIA	\$5,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$6,500.00
TRAVEL		0	0
FOOD		\$160.00	\$160.00
RENTALS		\$356.00	\$356.00
PRINTING & DUPLICATING		112.50	\$112.50
PROMOTION		192.50	192.50
SUPPLIES & POSTAGE			\$0
RESOURCE MATERIALS			\$0
ASSESSMENT TOOLS		\$5.00	\$5.00
OTHER		0	0
TOTAL	\$5,000.00	\$2,326.00	\$7,326.00

Honoraria - is requested amount by presenters; amount includes airfare

Rental – One night 4 Double-bed rooms Hotel for presenters

Promotion - Torch Ad for Event

Food – Meals for 8 presenters (\$20 per person)

Printing – Posters & Pluggers for event (#155 posters, #300 pluggers)

STEP AFRIKA!

THE ROOTS OF STEP AFRIKA!

Founded in 1994 by current Executive Director C. Brian Williams, Step Afrika! began as a Cross-cultural exchange program with the Soweto Dance Theatre of Johannesburg, South Africa. As a young graduate of Howard University in 1991, Brian traveled to Southern Africa through the late Rev. Leon Sullivan's International Foundation for Education and SelfHelp (IFESH). For nine months Brian taught small business skills to students at the Lesotho Opportunities Industrialization Center (LOIC).

While in Africa, Brian came across the South African gumboot dance — an art form created by South African mineworkers which greatly resembles the stepping he had learned at Howard University. He later met three members of the Soweto Dance Theatre: Founder Mbuyiselwa "Jackie" Semela, Managing Director Thembinkosi Hlatshwayo, and Lead Dancer Moeketsi Koena. Together, they created the Step Afrika! International Cultural Festival the first known attempt to link the people who practice stepping in America with those who perform the Gumboot dance in Africa. The first Festival was held in December, 1994, just six months after the election of Nelson Mandela as President of a free and Democratic Republic of South Africa. Participants in subsequent Festivals have witnessed the tremendous growth of South Africa as it transitions to a racially tolerant multicultural society.

In 1996, Brian launched Step Afrika!'s first program in the USA. Designed to ensure that American youth unable to travel to the Festival also benefited from the international exchange, the company offered workshops that highlighted the connections between stepping and the gumboot dance. The first workshop in South Carolina led to the creation of a performance group to take stepping to children around the United States. That same year, Step Afrika! UK was founded by Khadijatou SilcottFrasier, focusing on cultural traditions from England and the Caribbean.

In 1997, Step Afrika! performed its first full theatrical production showcasing the history of stepping and its connections to art forms around the world. After earning overwhelmingly positive reviews from the Washington Post and other publications, Step Afrika! began touring. The company has grown to become one of Washington, DC's most widely recognized arts organizations, and continues to receive superlative reviews and audience responses for its shows around the country, and the world. January, 2000 saw the first production of Step Afrika! at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, as a part of the Imagination Celebration Series. (All shows were sold out.) Performed in partnership with the Soweto Dance Theater, that production received great acclaim, including feature spots on CNN and BET. In 2000 the company increased to four full time teaching/touring members.

STEP AFRiKA!

STEP AFRiKA! IN THE PRESS

That week was one of the most highly attended at the Children's Theatre this season. (Step Afrika's) level of commitment, professionalism and dedication is commendable.

-National Park Service, Wolf Trap Farm Park For the Performing Arts Reston, VA

Step Afrika!'s company of nine demonstrated just what wondrously loud effects the human body can make.

-CvilleWeekly, Charlottesville, VA

Step Afrika captivated 989 students from both school districts and the sold out performances were attended by more young people than any other activity.

-Betty L. Mahoney, Executive Director, Virgin Island Council on the Arts

Step Afrika's Performance at our arts education preconference was spell bounding.

-Jennifer W. Chowning, Arts Education Coordinator, Americans for the Arts Washington, DC

Performing with no musical accompanying besides their own stomping feet...the members of Step Afrika! gave the evening a commanding, dynamic jolt that was unmatched by anything else on the program.

-SarahKaufman, The Washington Post

