



The Performing Arts Center, Purchase College

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For Immediate Release

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**The Performing Arts Center, Purchase College
2023-2024 Season Opens on September 23 with Step Afrika!**

Purchase, New York – September 11, 2023: The 2023-2024 Season at The Performing Arts Center, Purchase College will begin on Saturday, September 23 with a family-friendly performance by one of the top ten African-American dance companies in the United States, **Step Afrika!**

Founded in 1994 by C. Brian Williams, Step Afrika! is the first professional company dedicated to the tradition of stepping. Step Afrika! blend this percussive dance style practiced by historically African-American fraternities and sororities with traditional West and Southern African dances and an array of contemporary dance and art forms into a cohesive, compelling artistic experience.

Step Afrika! performances are much more than dance shows; they integrate songs, storytelling, humor, and audience participation. The blend of technique, agility, and pure energy makes each performance unique and leaves the audience with their hearts pounding.

Step Afrika! promotes stepping as an educational tool for young people, focusing on teamwork, academic achievement and cross-cultural understanding. The Company reaches tens of thousands of Americans each year through a 50-city tour of colleges and theatres.

They have earned Mayor's Arts Awards for Outstanding Contribution to Arts Education (2005); Innovation in the Arts (2008); and Excellence in an Artistic Discipline (2012). On June 13 of this year Step Afrika! joined President Biden and First Lady Jill Biden as part of the Juneteenth Celebration on the South Lawn of The White House.

Under Mr. Williams' leadership, stepping has evolved into one of America's cultural exports. Step Afrika! performs globally as Washington, DC's one and only Cultural Ambassador, touring more than 50 countries across the globe.

"At The Purchase PAC, we believe in 'experiencing something real' — unplugging, gathering, being a part of a creative community," says Ian Driver, Interim General Manager of The Purchase PAC. "And it doesn't get more real than Step Afrika! This ensemble of dancers will stomp, clap, sing, and storytell in perfect rhythm, opening our season with an intense level of energy and excitement that we intend to carry through the next seven months. Step Afrika! is sure to enthrall and entertain; they also understand, as we do, the unique ability of the performing arts to motivate,

inspire creativity, spark connections, and promote cultural understanding, making this performance a perfectly fitting start to a new season.”

The Step Afrika! performance at The Purchase PAC will begin at 7pm on Saturday, September 23. Regular price tickets range from \$30 - \$65. Discounts are available for seniors, veterans, students, children, and Purchase College faculty, staff, and alumni. Tickets are available online at <https://www.artscenter.org/events/step-afrika/>

More information about Step Afrika! is available on their website: <https://www.stepafrika.org/>

Press photos:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1r5taYtbP0rzMipDMXIKyscWNhg4VVRJ1?usp=sharing>

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ABOUT THE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, PURCHASE COLLEGE

TICKETS: <https://www.artscenter.org/events/>

ADDRESS: 735 Anderson Hill Road, Purchase, NY 10577

WEBSITE: www.ArtsCenter.org

THE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, PURCHASE COLLEGE (The PAC), a four-theatre complex located on the campus of Purchase College, SUNY, is the major professional, non-profit arts presenter in the Southeastern New York–Southwestern Connecticut region.

The PAC has long been a hub for highly skilled artists, civic and academic leaders, community activists, and volunteers who recognize the power of investing in the performing arts to spark creativity and connection.

Through Education & Engagement programs, The PAC creates opportunities for over 20,000 local K -12 students and multi-generational learners to participate in the artistic process.

The PAC has a collaborative relationship with the campus population, hosting performances for the Conservatories of Music, Dance, and Theatre Arts. Purchase College students can take advantage of master classes, on-site training, internships, job opportunities, and ticket discounts. An active facility rental business focuses on providing space and support to high-quality musical recordings and technical rehearsals.

The PAC acknowledges with great appreciation our major funders and sponsors: PepsiCo, Inc., The Vivian and Seymour Milstein Endowed Fund, Lucille Werlinich, ArtsWestchester, The Jandon Foundation, and the Bee Steinhilf Memorial Arts-in-Education Fund.

Purchase College, 735 Anderson Hill Road, Purchase, NY, is located 28 miles northeast of New York City at the Connecticut border. The College, part of the State University of New York (SUNY), is an institution of public higher education encompassing the liberal arts and sciences, professional training in the performing and visual arts, continuing education, the Neuberger Museum of Art, and The Performing Arts Center.

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