July 1, 2013

Dear New Student/Aspiring Artist:

We are pleased you will be attending the Dance Program Intensive held August 21 – 24, 2013 on the campus of Howard University, Ira Aldridge Theater and Lula V. Childers Hall, Fine Arts Building Dance Studio. This dance event serves as an opportunity for all to engage in short term intensive daily classes while being exposed at another level to the dance profession, including current dance major/minor students at Howard University, other prospective new entrant students into the dance program and professional/pre-professional artists.

Your Wednesday, August 21, 2013 attendance to the Dance Intensive will have you immediately receive a second written assignment, and we know by Saturday, August 24, 2013, you will be able to cognitively address:

1. Intense evaluation of your technical skills of physical capability;
2. Listening to and absorbing critical feedback from professionals in the field; and,
3. Recognition of the significance of engaging your cognitive-mental-thinking skills in not only the physical technical application but also written and oral dialogue communicative conversation.

Focus on any one of these areas during your involvement in the August 2013 Dance Intensive, will have you experience honest reality check/balance for where you “actually” are in readiness for this process.

As an evaluative component into the Dance Major Curriculum Courses of Study, you are to come mentally and physically prepared on Wednesday, August 21, 2013. This is part of the orientation process and stipulation for evaluating all students’ readiness for this academic year in the Dance Major. THIS FIRST WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT FOR THE DANCE INTENSIVE also gives you an opportunity to identify what you consider preparation for this life transition with being exposed to and experiencing this specific dance program curriculum-written and oral communication-as an integrative component in studio dance classes, theory dance classes, general studies classes, classes in other academic disciplines and the class in life development. We have highly acclaimed faculty, who engage in instruction and dialogue with our dance students for the purpose of cognitive and affective development and you must have a sense of what you need to do in preparation towards your own development.

THIS FIRST WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE THE FIRST DAY BY 9:30AM WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2013 is to address your 2013-2014 mental preparation for being considered ready for the Dance Major work process. This is not limited to a laundry list of classes you have taken or an antidote on “since the age of three years old, Dance has been my life…” but a developing paper demonstrating a level of written communication skills balanced with cognitive skills expected of an individual graduating from high school with thinking and analysis skills, and an applicable readiness for entering the university with a perspective of objectives, goals relating to both life and serious development in this tediously accountable major preparing individuals for the professional art of Dance.

- Professor Saunders Thompson
You are reflecting on, analyzing and writing a-typewritten-a logically developed paper addressing the following:

1. Your transition from high school dance settings into dance in the university setting;
2. The work you perceive and homework you have done regarding the requirements at university level;
3. Your mental preparation for considering Dance as a major/minor in an academic institution;
4. The physical requirements and challenges with being professionally evaluated external of “you are the shining star” in your comfortable home-state environment;
5. The fact that this will not just be about attending a summer dance program because “I love to dance” and expect no other measurable criteria;
6. Handling the impact of the social environment at Howard University—an HBCU being the PIONEERING/FIRST BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVED DANCE MAJOR at a historically black college/university—that comes with so many cultural variable and dynamics to “enjoy” and/or “get caught up in”;
7. Addressing your attitude of expectation in coming to the Dance Intensive;
8. What preparation did you do physically and mentally for attendance to the Dance Intensive during the months of April/May/June/July prior to arriving on Howard University campus Wednesday, August 21, 2013?

As you prepare this written assignment reflect on your actual academic application as well as your actual Dance Arts skills and application identifying your strengths and weaknesses physically and mentally in both areas and what have you done to make corrections in those areas towards enhancing your development. This is not to be a laundry list of what “I have done” but identifying, assessing, and analyzing with serious thought what “you have done, are doing, and prepare to do” for this serious next stage of development in your life choice. You are to also be able to, and be prepared to, speak on “it” from a heart of commitment with content that demonstrates you know Dance is an academic art of study. Yes, you are to address your passion for the art of Dance but that is not enough. This assignment is to have your reflections address succinctly what entering this intense academic structured major in the art of Dance means to you and your contextualized readiness for development.

Does your written and physical technical content address how you desire to “see” yourself with conscious awareness and clarity? Does it demonstrate your ability to communicate where you are, what your academic approach and results have been (not limited/restricted to GPA/ACT/SAT)? Does it evaluate you and your seriousness for Dance as an academic discipline that requires both cognitive and affective work-mental, written, physical, technical—all parts integrative into a whole art form that is a language-physically, mentally, communicatively in written and oral context?

...It is indeed an overwhelmingly exciting art form, discipline, and profession to address

PHYSICALLY-the science of the technique; MENTALLY-cognitive thinking/speaking/writing,

SPIRITUALLY-being connected to/aware of your heart-filled drive to propel you for what/how you do, what you are doing, as you are challenged with handling serious mental*physical demands of development in this DANCE MAJOR at the Mecca of Education-HOWARD UNIVERSITY...

The 2013 Dance Intensive of marathon affective and cognitive classes/sessions will be a guide for you to see, feel, hear, taste, and smell all that you must build on towards development and serious application. In time and maturation, you will appreciate our seriously intense focus to preserve Dance as an art form requiring a mind, body, spirit that wants to intellectually and physically develop with content, substance and clarity for entering the profession. You will gain an overwhelming amount of skills and evaluation. If you are willing to be honest with yourself and trusting of the guidance and standards provided through evaluations, the work demands, adjudications, accountability for every stage of the work, assessments of your initiative, your drive, your follow-through, you will be successful and reap the harvest of the success you are seeking...Professor Saunders Thompson...