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### **Jean Appolon Expressions Receives Grant Award from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to Promote Social Equity for Young Haitians Through Dance Education**

BOSTON, MA – Jean Appolon Expressions (JAE) of Boston, MA and Port-au-Prince, Haiti will work with 50 young Haitian dancers during The 2014 Jean Appolon Summer Dance Institute to take place at the Hotel Oloffson in downtown Port-au-Prince from June 28 – July 25, 2014.

The project is funded by a \$25,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Michigan.

“The Institute provides high quality and comprehensive dance education to students who would not otherwise be able to access it,” said Jean Appolon, Artistic Director and Co-founder of Jean Appolon Expressions.

“This approach trains young dancers but it also creates social benefits for young people. If done the right way, dance can provide young people with the hope, healing, therapy, grounding and self-development that are so necessary in Haiti, especially after the 2010 earthquake. As a boy growing in Haiti, I also dealt with traumatic events, and dance saved my life. This project creates that opportunity for other young Haitians who relate to dance as a form of self-expression and a way of being.”

An open audition will be held at the Hotel on Saturday, June 28, 2014 at 10am. Both the audition and the Institute are open to students, age 12 and older, and there is no cost to participate. The 2014 Jean Appolon Summer Dance Institute is an intensive dance program that provides a comprehensive and high quality dance curriculum to participating students, Monday to Friday from 9am – 4pm, during the month of July.

The Institute is directed by Jean Appolon who is also the primary Faculty member and choreographer (see below for bio summary). As part of the Institute, students will learn and rehearse original choreography by Jean Appolon in preparation for a final performance to take place at the Oloffson on Friday, July 25<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

“I teach my students yoga, ballet, and modern, but there is a special emphasis on Haitian folkloric dance, which are the traditional dances of my people,” Appolon said. “By focusing on folkloric dance, we are preserving and reviving Haiti’s culture, which is key to our national identity and ability to move forward as a country.”

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### **About Jean Appolon Expressions**

Founded in 2011, the mission of Jean Appolon Expressions (JAE) is to preserve and advance Haitian folkloric dance as one of the world's precious cultural resources, and to make high quality dance education available to young Haitians without financial resources. In addition to a Haitian contemporary dance company and community programming based in Boston, MA, JAE has a major point of focus in Haiti where The Jean Appolon Summer Dance Institute happens each July. JAE aims to develop DANCE HAITI! as an intensive, daily after-school dance program, which includes wrap-around services in academic tutoring and health education, for young Haitians without financial resources. JAE is recognized by the IRS as a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. For more information, visit [www.jeanappolonexpressions.org](http://www.jeanappolonexpressions.org) or contact [JAExpressions@gmail.com](mailto:JAExpressions@gmail.com).

### **About Jean Appolon**

The Artistic Director and Co-founder of Jean Appolon Expressions, Jean Appolon is a successful choreographer and master teacher based in Boston and Port-au-Prince, Haiti. He received his earliest training and performance opportunities in Port-au-Prince with the Lynn Williams Rousier Dance School, the Viviane Gauthier Dance Company, and the Folkloric Ballet of Haiti. Appolon continued his dance education in the U.S. with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and the Joffrey American Ballet School, graduating with a BA in 2003 from a joint degree program at The New School. Appolon teaches regularly at Boston Ballet, The Dance Complex (Cambridge, MA), and the University of Massachusetts Boston, among other locations. Appolon has received significant media attention and recognition for his work, including his recent induction to the 1804 List of Haitian American Changemakers in the U.S. For more information, visit [www.jeanappolonexpressions.org](http://www.jeanappolonexpressions.org).

### **About the W.K. Kellogg Foundation**

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by the breakfast cereal pioneer is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work and life. The Kellogg Foundation works throughout the U.S. and internationally in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit [www.wkkf.org](http://www.wkkf.org).