

Dance Alliance Grant - 2016

Dances of India - Grant Report by Sudharsana Srinivasan

It was an honor receiving a grant from Dance Alliance. The grant was applied to help fund the artists who were involved in the project - teaching the workshops and participating in the performances.

The project was a unique, never done before in the Capital Region, union of three very different, yet very similar dance styles of India - Bharatanatyam from the South, Odissi from the East, and Kathak from the North.

I got an opportunity to work with a very talented and graceful dancer from Boston, Urmi Samadar in bringing this colorful and vibrant dance project to the Capital Region. Urmi is a Kathak and Odissi dance teacher and performer.

For the Bharatanatyam section, I got to involve and work with another local Capital Region dancer, Mathangi Srinivasan.

The two dancers, worked together with me to bring this dance project alive with some very creative choreography and ideas for presentation of each of the three art forms.

We were very enthusiastic about reaching out as many community members as we could and hence planned two sessions of the workshops and performance.

The first series was conducted at the Albany Barn, Oct and Nov of 2016. At this session we had great response from the community at large.

The second series of workshops conducted at the Brown School had more participants from the Indian community than any other.

The funds was used towards artist remuneration. I worked very closely with two other dancers of the region (and Boston) to bring together this unique opportunity to learn and perform three different art forms. The participants greatly benefited from these workshops, in that, they not only learned a dance in each style but got to learn about these art forms, their history, their origin, their journey through these years to the current format that it is presented in and so much more. These were fun interactive sessions where the participants were able to ask questions, clarify doubts and learn three art forms in all their beauty and glory in just 3 one hour sessions.

I had reached out to several old age homes to try and bring the community members from these homes to the performances. But some of these homes, could not bring their members as they do not have licensed drivers over the weekends. So, instead these homes wanted to work with me to bring the art form to them. This is yet another wonderful opportunity that has come about through this project.

This was the amazing benefit of receiving the grant from Dance Alliance.

I had reached out to several public schools as well to have their children involved, in particular the Albany schools when we were conducting the workshops at Albany Barn.

I thank the committee once again for your kind consideration for the grant.

Warm Regards,
Sudharsana