

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

23-12

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

February 5, 2019

To commemorate the 20th Annual Washington, D.C. Gala Benefit, and honor the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for its incredible legacy.

WHEREAS, the Washington, D.C. Gala Benefit kicks off Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's annual engagement at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts;

WHEREAS, proceeds from the Washington, D.C. Gala Benefit support Ailey's Washington, D.C. programs, including the creation of new works, arts-in-education activities, and scholarships to talented young dance students in the Washington, D.C. area to attend The Ailey School in New York;

WHEREAS, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, recognized by a U.S. congressional resolution as a vital American "Cultural Ambassador to the World," grew from a now-fabled March 30, 1958 performance in New York that changed forever the perception of American dance;

WHEREAS, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater was founded by Alvin Ailey, posthumous recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom – the nation's highest civilian honor -- guided by Judith Jamison from 1989 to 2011, and the company is now led by Robert Battle, whom Judith Jamison chose to succeed her on July 1, 2011.

WHEREAS, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has performed for an estimated 25 million people in 71 countries on 6 continents – as well as millions more through television broadcasts, film screenings, and online platforms - promoting the uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience and the preservation and enrichment of the American modern dance tradition;

WHEREAS, in addition to being the Principal Dance Company of New York City Center, where its performances have become a year-end tradition, the Ailey company performs annually at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the John F. Kennedy Center for the

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Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago, the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County in Miami, The Fox Theatre in Atlanta, Zellerbach Hall in Berkeley, California, and at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark (where it is the Principal Resident Affiliate), and appears frequently in other major theaters throughout the United States and the world during extensive yearly tours;

WHEREAS, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater embodies 6 decades of achievement, celebrating the human spirit with performances that unite and inspire all, and continues to move forward under the leadership of Robert Battle;

WHEREAS, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater marks its annual Washington, D.C. engagement from February 5-10, 2019 with 7 dynamic performances at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts;

WHEREAS, the 2019 20th Annual Opening Night Gala Benefit Co-Chairs include Lyndon K. Boozer, Sela Thompson Collins, DeDe Lea, Ruth and Arne Sorenson, and Yelberton R. Watkins, and Gala Vice Chairs are Joyce Brayboy, Larry Duncan III, Kim Sheftall Humphries, Anthony A. Lewis, Tanya Leah Lombard, Vanessa Reed, Nicole Venable, and Katharine Weymouth; and

WHEREAS, the Washington, D.C. Gala Benefit will take place on February 5, 2019 at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “20th Annual Washington, D.C. Opening Night Gala Benefit Recognition Resolution of 2019”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia celebrates the Annual Washington, D.C. Gala Benefit on the occasion of its 20th anniversary and honors the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for its incredible legacy.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.