**FBE Grant Project Summary for Greg Coles African and Latin Dance**

**BHS Diversity Day, March 6, 2019**

During Diversity Day on March 16, 2019, more than 200 BHS students participated in a Latin & African dance class with Greg Coles of Greg Coles Dance & Drum.

To the Caribbean and the Americas Africans brought rhythm and dance and made new stories from new situations.  All of Latin dance is directly derived from African dance mixed with European influence. Students learned authentic Latin dance from the streets (using original name and form) of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, the Caribbean and South America.

Coles is world class dance instructor who has taught thousands of all ages and backgrounds to dance.  He is formally trained in ballet, jazz, modern, African and Latin.  He is a former teen Alvin Ailey scholarship student who continued dance training through college.  He has offered African and Latin dance instruction at universities (Tufts, Salem State, Endicott and North Shore Community College), high schools, elementary schools, dance studios, religious spaces, outdoors and at exercise facilities.

More than 250 students participated in two separate workshops, and they thoroughly enjoyed the 75 minute interactive. According to feedback forms filled out by students, the program was particularly successful in giving students an opportunity to experience something they wouldn’t ordinarily experience in school. As one student wrote, “I thought this program…showed us a new perspective, something we don’t see every day.” Another student praised the program’s inclusivity: “it showed anyone, despite race, can do ethnic dance. It was inclusive and everyone loved [it].” Another said, “I wouldn’t have had the opportunity to learn about this topic if it wasn’t for this presentation. It’s important to try new things and I had a great time.”

This year, the Diversity Committee piloted a new format, in which a student early release day was devoted to diversity programming. A full program was posted on the BHS website, and students submitted their program selections through a Google form. All students were then assigned to two workshops, and at least one faculty member was assigned to each workshop. Feedback on the new format was overwhelmingly positive as the entire BHS community was able to participate.

**FBE Grant Project Summary for The Hunger Banquet**

**Diversity Day, March 6, 2019**

Three hundred students and several teachers participated in the BHS Diversity Day “Hunger Banquet” on March 6, 2019 in the cafeteria. The program was one of many organized by student clubs, in this case the Belmontian Club, with the help of their advisor Alice Melnikoff, and Food Services Director, Dustin O’Brien.

The Belmontian group described the Hunger Banquet as “A little theater, a little food, and a lot of information and caring.” In this program, students chose tickets out of a box at the door that randomly assigned them to an economic class status. They were then seated in different locations in the cafeteria and served a breakfast symbolically aligned with their class – from dry cheerios and water to hot bacon, eggs, & bagels with orange juice. The program illustrated for students in a very concrete way the vast number of people around the world living in poverty, and called attention to income disparity even within the Belmont community.

Student feedback on this program was overwhelmingly positive, with students noting that it brought awareness about a problem – even in Belmont -- that few talk about. As two students wrote, “I think that it opened my eyes to how many people are hungry and it made me aware that maybe even there are people at BHS who suffer” and “many in our community struggle with this issue and it’s good to be aware.” Another student shared that “it showed me how unfair the inequality in the world is. I did not know how big the wage gap was between the different classes.”

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