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**CityDance announces fourth annual DREAM performance at the  
Washington Wizards NBA half-time on Saturday, April 4, 2009**

*Partnership with Washington Sports and Entertainment and the NBA Wizards continues with a  
performance by more than 70 elementary and middle school children from around DC this spring*

**Washington, DC**—More than 70 students from **CityDance Ensemble's DREAM** program will take center court to perform a dance routine during half-time of the **Washington Wizard's** basketball game on **Saturday, April 4, 2009**, at the **Verizon Center**. Returning for the fourth year by invitation from **Washington Sports & Entertainment**, students from several local elementary and middle schools will showcase the talent they have developed throughout the year-long DREAM program run by CityDance Ensemble's **Early Arts** outreach education division.

"There is nothing more exciting than the chance to get out on the court where Caron Butler, Antawn Jamison, and Dwayne Wade play basketball and show a sell-out crowd of 20,000 people what you can do," said CityDance Artistic Director **Paul Gordon Emerson**. "This is something our young artists work towards, and practice for, from the first day of class in the fall until a few minutes before they get out on the court. Many of them have never been to the Verizon Center, and when they come out of the tunnel their eyes just light up. It's a reminder of the value and impact of hard work and of where the arts can take you."

Now in its sixth year, the DREAM program (Dream, Research, Evaluate, Act, Motivate) is the cornerstone of the CityDance's lifelong history of commitment to, and involvement in, the lives of DC's young people, particularly those in under-served communities. The program transforms the lives of at-risk youth in the DC metropolitan area school through an after-school arts, literacy, and community building curriculum. The program reaches than 100 students in grades 3-8 through performances and classes designed to empower children to identify their dreams and gain the confidence and self-esteem to pursue them. Each program consists of a kick-off performance for the entire school by CityDance Ensemble, a 24-week after-school program that meets twice weekly and instructs students in various disciplines of dance and in the writing and verbalization of their dreams, and an end-of-year performance bringing together children from all the DREAM schools.

(more)

The DREAM students performing at the Washington Wizards game began rehearsals in the fall with local professional dancer and choreographer **Aysha Upchurch** who choreographs the half-time routine. The Washington Wizards half-time performance is both a motivator for the students and a clear example of how the arts can help take young people to extraordinary places and achievements.

“We’re delighted to have CityDance DREAM again be a part of our season,” comments **Judy Holland-Burton**, Senior Vice President of Washington Sports and Entertainment. “They bring an energy, enthusiasm, and talent to the court that our fans love and that we value deeply. This is the kind of program we are glad to support, and CityDance has always been a great partner. We’re looking forward to the performance.”

During the 2008-2009 school year, the DREAM program is operating in five Washington, DC elementary schools: Turner in Ward 8; C.W. Harris in Ward 7; J.O. Wilson in Ward 6; and Brightwood and Kingsbury Day School in Ward 4. The program also operates in two middle schools—Kelly Miller in Ward 7 and Shugart Middle School in Temple Hills, Maryland—and in the Trinidad Recreation Center in Ward 5.

The DREAM program is sponsored by the **DC Children & Youth Investment Trust Corporation** and **Comcast**, as well as the Mead Family Foundation, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, Agriculture Federal Credit Union, NIH Federal Credit Union, Meyer Foundation, Cafritz Foundation, Marpat Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts, and Washington Sports & Entertainment.

In addition, **Whole Foods Market** has partnered with CityDance as the exclusive snack provider for the DREAM program, donating more 6,000 snacks to students participating in the program.

#### **About CityDance Ensemble, Inc.**

CityDance Ensemble, Inc. is the parent organization to **CityDance Ensemble**, an award-winning contemporary repertory dance company; **Early Arts**, an arts outreach program for youth reaching thousands of students each year; **CityDance Education Centers**, facilities committed to excellence in dance training for youth and adults; and **FilmWORKS**, a creator and presenter of dance-on-camera. The mission of CityDance is to advance the appreciation for and participation in the art of dance through excellence in performance, education, film, and artistic innovation.

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