

Dancers highlight Jamaica

The E. Gwynn Dancers brought Jamaican dance culture to Greensboro as part of the "17 Days of Dance" Festival.

With traditional costumes, singing and drumming accompanist, the E. Gwynn Dancers created an atmosphere that took the audience beyond Exhibit Hall and into the land of Jamaica. The dancers performed pieces typically done after wakes, funerals, and other customs they learned while studying abroad in Jamaica. "Each dance major and minor, no matter the difference, are given a chance to study abroad in Jamaica for a month," said Gwyn. The traveling experience gave students a chance to return to A&T and demonstrate the dances with first-hand experience on how they should be done properly. While demonstrating the dances, performers engulfed themselves in the ways of the Jamaican people. The crowd reacted positively after each piece. Their favorite seemed to be "Revival," choreographed by Kevin Moore. This piece depicted interaction between a priest and his disciples through joyous and somber occasions. Performances were filled with high-energy movements that entertained and engaged the audience. Throughout the night, audience members were given chances to join dancers on stage and learn the technique previously performed. Courtney Johnson, junior criminal justice major, said she enjoyed doing the dances with the performers. "I felt like I received a better understanding of the movements and the culture while I was on stage with them," Johnson said. Along with sharing dances from Jamaican culture, Gwynn also took time to highlight an artist named Darlene Gleen-McClinton, who also had a chance to travel to Jamaica with the dancers.

Gleen-McClinton showed two pieces she created after being inspired by the culture. One piece was done on plywood that resembled the Jamaican flag along with a variety of Jamaican customs. Gleen-McClinton said she chose to do this piece on wood because she was inspired by the Jamaican's idea of "not conquering and manipulating the environment, but instead they co-existed with it." The E. Gwynn Dancers of N.C. A&T brought excitement and intensity from the beginning of the performance to the end. Source: The A&T Register