September 28th 2022

I am writing in support of African Diasporic Arts and Education Inc. application for the Duke Energy Diversity and Inclusion Grant. I first became acquainted with African Diasporic Arts Inc. core performing arts company Orisirisi African Folklore’s work during my tenure as Education Program Director for the South Carolina Arts Commission, 1995-1997. The educational programs offered by the husband-and-wife team Don and Tutu Harrell consisting of African music and storytelling was among the most popular programs among our extensive roster of artists in all disciplines. Since that time, I have observed Don and Tutu at work as artists-in-residence and in performances in schools and community throughout, South Carolina, Maryland, Vermont and at the Epcot Center at Disney World, where they served as an atmosphere act for approximately ten years

I am a career educator who has taught instrumental and vocal music pre-K- high school in three states, served as the music and fine arts curriculum specialist for Baltimore City Schools for ten years, and as arts education program director for several non-profit arts organizations. I have worked with many African and African American artists in education and performance contexts over the past thirty years. Orisirisi African Folklore’s work stands out among these artists because it has always been informed by research and scholarship, talent, and a love for their performance practice

So, I strongly recommend African Diasporic Arts and Education. Please contact me if further information is needed. I can be reached at the letterhead address, by e-mail at jwarzer@gmail.com or by phone at 410-598-2684.

Sincerely,

Jill Warzer

Jill Warzer