



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Jean Appolon Expressions Celebrates New Home in
Nubian Square with JAE Dance Center Ribbon Cutting**

Dance center celebrates and preserves culture while creating a place of belonging for all

Boston, MA — [January 27, 2026] — Today, Jean Appolon Expressions (JAE), Boston's leading Haitian-folkloric and contemporary dance organization, celebrated the unveiling of its new community space, the JAE Dance Center with a ribbon cutting. Located at 2153 Washington Street in Nubian Square Roxbury, the event marks a historic moment not only for JAE but for Boston's broader artistic community and the continued efforts to uplift and invest in community-based arts.

"We're honored to support Jean Appolon Expressions in creating a new space that will contribute to the health and vitality of Nubian Square, in the heart of Roxbury," said **Mayor Michelle Wu**. "Through the Cultural Investment Grant, the City has been able to support the growth and sustainability of arts and cultural organizations, including JAE, that reflect a vision for a more creative, equitable Boston. This ribbon cutting showcases what's possible when we come together for the arts with sustained, meaningful attention and investment."

Jean Appolon Expressions has been advancing and celebrating Haitian folkloric dance, conducting performances, hosting educational workshops and building community since 2006. The JAE Dance Center marks an important milestone as the organization's first permanent home; a place of creativity, education, and community connection that honors Haitian culture while nurturing the next generation of Boston artists. Set to be fully operational by Winter of 2026, the JAE Dance Center will offer community dance classes, youth programs, guest artist workshops, and rental opportunities for other local organizations and creatives.

"Having a physical home for JAE is more than a milestone, it's the continuation of our aim to share movement that holds the power to heal, connect, and transform community," said **Jean Appolon, Artistic Director and Co-Founder of JAE**. "In this space, generations will come together to share in Haitian culture, to celebrate resilience, and dance for hope. We invite everyone, dancers, families, and neighbors, to make this space your own."

"I'm incredibly excited to see the power of Black expression celebrated in JAE's new home – it's a major milestone for our Haitian community. At a time when our communities are being targeted, the JAE Dance Center reminds us just how vital cultural spaces are. Rooted in history and culture, this celebration in Nubian Square reflects the strength of our communities. I'm grateful to Jean Appolon and the entire JAE team for their dedication to uplifting Boston through art," said **Boston City Councilor Ruthzee Louijeune**.

JAE Dance Center, housed in a development by New Atlantic Development and space built out by Kaplan Construction, was developed as a dance studio and black box performance area. A 2,846 square foot space, the Center features a Marley dance floor, mirrors, and state-of-the-art

sound system.

“Jean Appolon Expressions is an organization defined by its purpose to connect communities through creation,” said **Brian Goldson, Co-Owner of New Atlantic Development**. “It has been a pleasure to work with JAE and see it become a part of a larger vision for Nubian Square that has brought affordable housing, artist workspaces, retail, and cultural vibrancy under one roof.”

The JAE Dance Center is intended to exist as a hub for cultural exchange and artistic collaboration, deepening connections with local and international dance communities. Already building connections with other folkloric and Caribbean dance organizations, Jean Appolon Expressions remains steadfast in its mission to connect people and create spaces rooted in the health and well-being of the community.

“Thanks to JAE, my passion for dance was reignited, and I learned the importance of community and collaboration,” said **Shobi Steen, former Teen Apprentice**. “JAE gave me a place to grow, to be supported. Whenever I have time to come back for a Saturday class, I’m always filled with excitement – to see familiar faces, to be welcomed back into this incredible community, and to be surrounded by such exuberant positivity.”

Key funders involved in the JAE Dance Center include the City of Boston Mayor’s Office of Arts & Culture, the Barr Foundation, D/R/E/A/M Collaborative, The Klarman Foundation, the Mass Cultural Council, New Atlantic Development, and the Yawkey Foundation.

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About Jean Appolon Expressions (JAE)

Jean Appolon Expressions (JAE) is a Boston-based dance organization that blends Haitian folkloric and contemporary styles. Founded by Jean Appolon, JAE creates a unique artistic vernacular that educates audiences about Haitian culture, traditions, history, and current issues. JAE’s dynamic repertoire is designed to preserve Haitian folkloric culture while continuously revitalizing the art form in a way that is vital, accessible, inspiring, healing, and educational. The company is composed of dancers from diverse backgrounds, each committed to using dance to share and celebrate Haitian culture.