

FINAL REPORT:
Midwest Mandeng – Urbana Festivals 2015
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The 2015 African Drum and Dance Festival, Midwest Mandeng, was of great success – due in large part to the City of Urbana Public Arts Grant awarded to the festival. The foundational support enabled us to advance our goals even further this past year –bringing in more expert teachers, increasing the number of days of the festival, reaching over 150 people through various programmatic events, getting media coverage before and during the festival, and establishing the festival as one of the major African drum and dance events in the country.

Held from Sept 24-27th, the festival was launched with two workshops aimed at community members with little to no experience in African drumming or dance. The University of Illinois advertised these workshops through their *e-week* listing that is distributed to all university students, staff, and faculty, and as a result we had a strong attendance. The following three days included 16 workshops taught by 8 world-class, artists and instructors based across the U.S. All of these master teachers have toured and taught internationally, and we were pleased to expand the number of artists leading the event. On Friday afternoon, families and children were treated to a performance and discussion with all the artists at the Urbana Free Library. The event was so popular that Lewis Auditorium was over-flowing its capacity. Another event for the community was held Saturday evening at Pizza M, where again artists performed and attendees were encouraged to dance, as well. This event also drew in a large crowd (estimated 85 people) that filled the venue to standing room-only.

Festival attendees came from throughout the Midwest – including a strong showing from Missouri, Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Minnesota. We are also heartened that the African marketplace that accompanies the festival grew in 2015, as we had 7 vendors this year – all of whom were minority-owned businesses – and who reported very favorably on the event. The festival audience was very diverse – representing a richness in terms of the multi-cultural and racial backgrounds of the attendees, a wide range of ages, and senior citizens and children are granted free admission, thanks to the Urbana Public Arts Program and City of Urbana’s grant. We also offered low-income attendees the opportunity to save money on their registration by volunteering to assist with the programmatic support. We are very committed to such diversity, and we make every effort to be inclusive.

The festival was held again at the Urbana Landmark Hotel, a locale that we appreciate due to the availability of accommodations, accessibility, nearby restaurant and shopping options, and character of the facility. By locating here, we feel that we support the local economy, as well – as many of the locally owned businesses benefitted from the numbers of people attending and shopping. Local media coverage of the festival also improved this year. *The News-Gazette* covered the festival, and as mentioned above we had the promotional support of the University’s *e-week*. We also maintained and updated our presence on social media and through media that we produced, including our website (cuwaddc.weebly.com/midwest-mandeng), Facebook, YouTube, t-shirts, postcards, and programs.

Midwest Mandeng was supported by an array of constituencies. Several university units provided co-sponsoring support. Among the supporters were the University of Illinois’ School of Music, Department of Dance, Krannert Art Museum, Center for African Studies, and Center for World Music. Local businesses also supported the workshop, buying advertising space online and in the printed program; they included New Prairie Construction, Smile Politely, H₂O Salon, Sitara, and The Red Herring. We raised

money online through a fundraising campaign and had generous support from our local team, who offered housing to most of our artists.

As with our inaugural year, this year’s festival taught us a few important lessons. Namely, that the festival’s expansion came with some costs – in terms of time and finances. Spreading the festival over more days gave audience the opportunity to really delve into the art forms, whereas as organizers - we had to cover more costs than originally estimated and had to spend more time transporting artists. We also invested in paid-staff to help us manage the event, particularly staffing the doors. By paying our staff they were more motivated to provide great customer service to our attendees and we were also able to keep our registration desk staffed even when volunteers were in short supply. While this has a positive impact on the smoothness of running the operation, and on the experience of the attendees, this did add to our expenses.

An updated budget follows, and receipts are attached.

A: Personnel (Project Related)	Amount Requested from City	Matching Funds	In-Kind Donations	Total	Expenditure Notes (if applicable)
Artistic		\$7260		\$7260	Honoraria for 8 artists
Administration			\$5000	\$5000	Volunteered time to organization of event and during the event.
Other		\$350		\$350	Registration table staffing
Total Personnel Expenditures		\$7610	\$5000	\$12,610	
B: Implementation (Cost of Project)					
Supplies/Materials/Postage			\$65	\$65	Office supplies
Promotion/Printing	\$ 672.95	\$138		\$810.95	Postcards, posters, programs, t-shirts
Artistic Services			\$350	\$350	Design work for publicity
Other Professional Services		\$140.38		\$140.38	Event Insurance
Space/Equipment Rental	\$2090		\$100	\$2190	Rental of Landmark Hotel and Channing-Murray
Travel/Transportation/Hotel	\$2237.05	\$945.60	\$900	\$4082.65	Air travel, shuttles, and driving costs for 7 artists to Urbana; hotel for 2 artists; homestays for 5 artists (18 nights)
Other		\$826		\$826	Arranged meals and state-rate per diem for artists
Total Implementation Expenditures	\$5000	\$2049.98	\$1415	\$8464.98	
Total Expenditures (A+B)	\$5000	\$9659.98	\$6415	\$21,074.98	