

Friday, July 15, 2015
Biography for Dr. Leonard Mardis
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Dr. Leonard Mardis, a native of Grenada, Mississippi, is the owner of Leonard's Academy of Dance & Centre for the arts (LAD). He is also the Director of United Nations of Dance Musical Performance Troupe (UND), a professional entertainment company with over 100 members representing 23 countries. Celebrating 9 years with LAD and 23 years with UND, Dr. Mardis has performed, taught and choreographed for several plays, galas, competitions, recitals, and entertainment events in North America, South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Dr. Mardis is a retired Warrant Officer of the United States Army with 21 years of active service. His vision of bridging the world through dance continues on a local and global scale. Locally, he has been instrumental in giving the children of the community an avenue to hone their artistic skills thru dancing, acting, and singing while showcasing their talents throughout Tampa and the surrounding communities. November Fest, State Fair, Strawberry Festival, and Tampa Bay Storms half time performances are only a few of the calendar events for the children of LAD.

Leonard's Academy of Dance is the recipient of the Small Business of the Year Award for 2011. LAD is the first and only dance studio in Brandon to have received this award. In addition, Dr. Mardis is also a member of Sigma Beta Delta Honor Society and the current president of Phi Beta International Honor Society.

Globally, Dr. Mardis has focused on increasing bilateral relations with the United States and other countries through dance. In 2005, Dr. Mardis taught and performed in Baghdad; 2006, taught in Malaysia; 2007, performed and taught classes in Africa; 2008, performed in France; 2009 performed in Germany; 2010 organized and conducted a 12 day workshop in Moscow, Russia at the request of the American Embassy and Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Moscow; 2011, taught in Macau, China; 2013 visited Serbia, and conducted a dance workshop for at risk children in Brazil.

February & March 2015 Dr. Mardis conducted a 2nd workshop, a 18 day workshop and performance tour in 4 Russian cities including Novy Urengoy, Siberia, Moscow, Petrozavodsk, and Lipetsk, Russia. The tour labeled "Cultural Fusion" consisted of five American dance choreographers that conducted hip hop, jazz, African, and tap dance workshops as well as three American vocalist working with beginners, intermediate, college students and industry professionals. Dr. Mardis utilized this event to conduct his doctoral research on his dissertation topic "Using Emotional Intelligence as a tool to Manage, Measure, and Lead Global Dance Companies.

June 2015, Dr. Mardis received his Doctorate of Business Administration with a concentration in International Business from Argosy University. He continues to dream big for the students and families he serves. He believes the strengths of the LAD and UND are cultural diversity, global expansion, and community involvement. These past events have been the building blocks of his dissertation focus. Ultimately, this research will be used to facilitate programs that will allow dancers from other nations to understand, accept, and ultimately embrace the cultural differences possessed by each. In addition, programs will be created that will give children in areas with limited opportunities a gateway to share their experiences with others from around the world by becoming world travelers and ambassadors to those visiting our country.