

# Local Instructor Gives African Dance Lesson in Olmsted Lobby

BY Steve Standridge  
Capital Times Staff Reporter

Did you know that drums have meaning? Everything has significance, from the way they are made to the rhythms they produce and the way they make the human body move. "There is always something behind everything we do," says dance instructor Rafiygua Muhammad.

Muhammad led Penn State Harrisburg students in a West African dance class on February 5 in the Olmsted lobby.

Dance and drum instruction are not the only types of learning that took place in Muhammad's workshop. "You are here to learn about my culture," said Muhammad.

Through the workshop, Penn State Harrisburg was given a hands-on lesson in West African culture. Students took off their shoes and moved to the rhythm of the throbbing drum beats.

This class was not for the out-of-shape, however. "You have to warm up first," said Kenisha Davis. "It was fun and exciting, but tiring," said Veronica Hailey. Everyone involved worked up a sweat while learning culture at the same time. Muhammad said that it is important to know about your culture. "Each and every one of you has a culture that you need to explore," she said.

Muhammad is the Artistic Director with Ngozi Inc., a Harrisburg-based African dance studio. Students in Ngozi classes learn various African dances as well as how to build their own drums.

For more information on Ngozi Inc. and other African culture opportunities, call (717) 234-7724 or (717) 232-8803.



photo by Steve Standridge

Local African dance instructor Rafiygua Muhammad gives a lesson to Kenisha Davis (left) and Veronica Hailey (right)

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