

BEACON ON T

Sweltering 'Havana Nights Dance Party' causes heat wave in Harlem

By Audrey J. Bernard
Society Editor

Harlem residents were having a heat wave when hundreds of festively dressed guests attended the Cuban-themed **Havana Nights Dance Party Benefit** on Thursday, May 12, 2016 at New York City's premier community arts institution, the **Harlem School of the Arts (HSA)**, revered for its dedication to arts education in four disciplines -- music, dance, theatre, and visual arts -- all within the award-winning 37,000 square foot facility located at The Herb Alpert Center, 645 Saint Nicholas Avenue, Harlem, New York. The School's reputation for artistic rigor and excellence attracts constituents of diverse socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds from all five New York City boroughs, Westchester County, Connecticut and New Jersey. HSA's alumni and faculty are counted among the most talented leaders in the arts.

As guests neared the velvety red carpet they were greeted by pulsating sounds of Afro-Cuban beats mixed by **DJ China**. As guests danced their ways into the vibrantly decorated building -- where they were met by HSA's President **Eric G. Pryor** -- they were transported from the storied Harlem Village to red-hot Havana, Cuba and began to party all night long with peers, faculty and the community while sipping on a mojito and rolling a cigar in the courtyard. Guests also enjoyed live Cuban performances and relished in a large scale celebration of culture, with savory catered food by **Sweet Hospitality Group**, specialty drinks and electrifying entertainment! Proceeds will benefit HSA; and a *Havanalicious* time was had by all!

The beautifully produced evening was sponsored by **The Williams Capital Group** and **Sweet Hospitality Group**. Luminaries on the benefit committee included **A. Scott Bolden, Marcie Cleary, Inez Daniels, Harlem Blue, Daree Lewis,**



Ambiance



HSA dance students perform



Eric G. Pryor, HSA Board Member Julie Rose (Photo by Terrence Jennings)



Julio Peterson, Eric G. Pryor (Photo by Terrence Jennings)



HSA Board Member Janice Savin Williams, Keisha Sutton James (Photo by Terrence Jennings)



Debbie Brenan, The Williams Capital Group (Photo by Terrence Jennings)



HSA Board Member Julie Rose, Rick Westler (Photo by Terrence Jennings)



Erika Martin, Julio Peterson, Michelle Fizer Peterson, Bryce Petty, Alexander Smalls, Chavon T. Sutton,



Sweet Hospitality Group, Christopher J. Williams and Janice Savin Williams. Entertainment was provided by



The Fat Afro Latin Jazz Cats, Oyo Oru Dance Ensemble, DJ China, Has Music and Dance Studios. For more

information on Harlem School of the Arts courses, programs, and events, visit www.HSAnyc.org. (Photos by Steven Schnur)

