



November 11th, 2011

I am honored to be able to write a letter on the behalf of Charles Ahovissi and his artist-in-residence program. We had him travel to our community in the 1990s and were so pleased with his offering that we have had him return four times. I am the President of the High Plains Arts Council and our entire council feels that the quality of his program is superb. He brings elements from a vastly different music and dance world to our rural Nebraska setting as well as geography, culture, tolerance and math. We have invited other performers and our council frequently returns to Mr. Ahovissi because of the quality his program offers.

I also happen to be the elementary art teacher in the Sidney Public Schools and he is the choice of all the staff members. The staff feels that he offers such a broad curriculum, keeps the children entertained for the entire week and that the children walk away with knowledge about Africa. He puts on a fantastic program for the parents/community at the end of his artist-in-residence week and the teachers are pleased with that product.

My own children got to participate in his program and I was impressed with their knowledge. I also thought the dance and drumming program that the children shared with the community was festive and well choreographed. My boys aren't dancers, and yet they looked good!

I would recommend him for the Governors Arts Award without hesitation. Our rural community does not have much cultural diversity and the program he brings to us is perfect. We learn about Africa, we learn about music and dance, we learn about tolerance, we learn about another culture and we have fun. Isn't that what a quality educator is... one that teaches in such a manner that the children retain the knowledge AND have a blast?

Sincerely,

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