



by Trouble Funk on his *Willenium* CD. There are also local record and production companies, including PA Palace, releasing cassette tapes of the ever-popular go-go groups Only 1 Purpose (O1P), Rare Essence, Chuck Brown, and Junkyard. A book documenting go-go will be published by *Billboard* next year.

*Iley Brown II is a native Washingtonian and has been a fan of go-go music since its inception. He has worked extensively in the music industry in New York, Los Angeles, and overseas.*

## “Stepping” Out

by C. Brian Williams

Stepping is a uniquely American, percussive dance genre that grew out of the song and dance rituals performed by historically African-American fraternities and sororities. As discussed by scholar Jaqui A. Malone in her book *Steppin’ on the Blues*, stepping is “one of the most exciting dance forms to evolve in the twentieth century.” The tradition’s “...precise, sharp and complex rhythmical body movements combined with singing, chanting, and verbal play require creativity, wit, and a great deal of physical skill and coordination.” Stepping is, without question, a rising art form with growing popularity among hundreds of thousands of Americans, young and old.

Washington, D.C., more so than any other city in the country, can claim “bragging rights” to this traditional dance form. As home to Howard University, the birthplace of several African-American fraternities and sororities, the city has witnessed the beginnings of the tradition, dating back to 1907, all the way through the first

competitive “step show” at Howard University in 1976. Today stepping can be found on many local campuses, and performances are shared frequently with District residents.

But stepping is no longer just for fraternities and sororities. As stepping has received wider exposure in D.C. and the country, schoolchildren, K–12, are performing the dance with tremendous enthusiasm. Step teams can be found in numerous District high, middle, and elementary schools with teachers using the dance form as a way to foster teamwork, discipline, and community.

D.C.-based churches have also picked up the

form with Gospel step teams found in practically every quadrant of the city.

Stepping is definitely an important part of our city’s daily cultural life.

*C. Brian Williams is Director of Step Afrika! USA, and co-founder of the Step Afrika! International Arts & Cultural Festival.*

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## The Vietnamese Wedding in Washington, D.C.

by Thanh-Thuy Nguyen

Vietnamese Americans are the fastest-growing ethnic group in Washington, D.C. While some Vietnamese, the “boat people,” came after the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, most of the District’s Vietnamese community arrived 15 to 20 years after the fall of Saigon. They are a diverse group, mainly ex-military, government officials, and family members who, having associated with the United States during