



NANCIE WOODS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
CAROLINE FRANKIL WARREN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PRESS RELEASE

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BalletNova Awarded Outstanding School Award From Youth America Grand Prix

Dancers Place 1st and 2nd in Semi-Finals of International Competition

Falls Church, VA: BalletNova Center for Dance was pleased to receive the award for “Outstanding School” at the 2014 Youth America Grand Prix in Pittsburgh, PA.

[The Youth America Grand Prix \(YAGP\)](#) is the world’s largest student ballet scholarship competition that awards over \$250,000 annually in scholarships to leading dance schools worldwide. This prestigious competition is held annually around the world and in New York City, and is open to dance students of all nationalities 9-19 years old. YAGP was featured in the recent film, [“First Position.”](#)

Three BalletNova Center for Dance (BNCD) dancers won awards and placed in the top 12:

Chelen Middlebrook, 14 years old (Springfield, VA): 1st Place in Junior Division Contemporary; 2nd Place in Junior Division Classical

Joe Ogren, 17 years old (Arlington, VA); 2nd Place in Senior Men’s Classical; 2nd Place in Senior Men’s Contemporary. Joe will be going to the Finals in New York in April 2014.

Additionally, **Amara Forsley**, 16 years old (Fairfax, VA) placed in the Top 12 in both Senior Women’s Classical and Senior Women’s Contemporary.

Each of the dancers performed 2 solos in the competition, one classical and one contemporary. Artistic Director Nancie Woods and faculty member Carmen Perez staged solo variations from the classical repertory, including the Lilac Fairy variation and Aurora’s Variation from Sleeping Beauty; Esmeralda; and Medora variation from Le Corsaire. Local choreographers created contemporary solos just for the competitors - BalletNova faculty member Constance Walsh choreographed “Tango One” for Amara Forsley and “The Race” for Joe Ogren; Shu-Chen Cuff, director of GinDance and BalletNova faculty, set “Once” on Nicola Kubzdela; Elizabeth Lucrezio, BalletNova faculty member created “No Strings attached ” for Chelen Middlebrook. . Nancie Woods created "Back to Front" for Madeline Gradle.

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Board of Directors. Naomi Pizarro, President; Brian Gradle, Craig Stephanson, Immediate Past Presidents; Karen Lewis, Vice President; Mohit Chopra, Treasurer; Shannon MacGregor, Secretary; Kathryn Fredgren, Co-Founder; Directors: Ann-Marie Bolton; Heather Cotter; Jennifer Walcott; Carole Ann Clarke, Faculty Liaison

This is the second year that BalletNova has participated in the YAGP. This opportunity for our outstanding preprofessional students has enriched the training program offered at BalletNova through the intensive preparation and one on one coaching that is required to compete in this international arena.

Now in its 15th Season, YAGP has awarded over \$2 million in scholarships and more than 25,000 dancers worldwide have participated in YAGP's international competitions. Over 300 YAGP alumni are now dancing with major companies around the world, including American Ballet Theatre, New York City Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet and San Francisco Ballet. YAGP was recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with a membership in UNESCO's prestigious Conseil International de la Danse (CID).

BalletNova Center for Dance, founded in 1981, is dedicated to educating and mentoring dancers in a positive, nurturing environment and preserving the traditions of classical ballet through quality dance productions and education. Formerly Arlington Center for Dance/The Center Dance Company, the organization moved to a beautiful six-studio 20,800 square foot state-of-the-art facility in July 2008, and offers classes in ballet, modern, tap, jazz, and hip hop for children, teens and adult dancers. The pre-professional ballet program is recognized as one of the best in the Metro Washington DC area, and BalletNova also has an extensive Adult Dance Division with classes in several levels of Ballet, Contemporary, Tap, Jazz and Theater Dance.

BalletNova is supported in part by the Arts Council of Fairfax County, Arlington County through the Arlington Cultural Affairs Division of Arlington Economic Development, the Arlington Commission for the Arts, and the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

For more information on BalletNova Center for Dance visit <http://www.balletnova.org/> or call 703-778-3008.

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