

# Oakland County dancers place in statewide competition

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**Fred Astaire Dance Studio student Charlene Proctor and instructor Viktor Tkachenko won the American Smooth Open Championship and Open Scholarship at the Michigan Dance Challenge. Photo from the Michigan Dance Challenge**

Last week, 24 students from Fred Astaire Dance Studio competed in the Michigan Dance Challenge in Dearborn for the first time and danced away with Top Studio and numerous individual awards.

Michigan's only Fred Astaire franchise, located at 2172 Franklin Road, Bloomfield Hills, participated in the state's biggest ballroom competition, won Top Studio for accumulating the most points for dancers performing during the weekend-long event.

A number of individual student awards also took home top honors, including the following:

- Charlene Proctor of Bloomfield Hills won Open Smooth Championship and Scholarship
- Carol Ziecik of Bloomfield Hills and Dan Rutherford of Waterford won Top Newcomer dancer

- Cheryl Angelelli of Clinton Township drew a standing ovation after her wheelchair dance performance, winning Top Solo Showdance
- Stephanie Iacobelli of Rochester Hills won American Smooth and Rhythm Bronze Scholarship
- Michael Ziecik of Bloomfield Hills won the Gentlemen's Bronze Rhythm Scholarship

“We were thrilled to bring such a huge cadre of dancers to the Michigan Dance Challenge,” said Evan Mountain, owner of Fred Astaire Dance Studio with his wife Lada. “Having our studio and students recognized with so many honors was a testament to the training and commitment given by our instructors and students every week.”

The Michigan Dance Challenge, which is part of the Global DanceSport Series, took place March 22 through 25 at The Henry in Dearborn. Mark Brock, the event's organizer for the past 16 years, said it's “one of the largest competitions in the Midwest,” attracting competitors from across the country and Canada.

“I was very excited to have the Fred Astaire studio in Bloomfield Hills join us this year,” Brock said. “People say our competition is not only very competitive, but one of the friendliest competitions in the country.”

For more information about Fred Astaire Dance Studio, visit [www.fredastaire.com/bloomfield-hills](http://www.fredastaire.com/bloomfield-hills).

*–Submitted by Lynne Golodner*