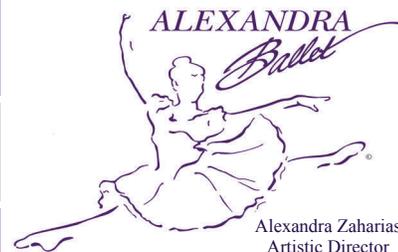


# Alexandra Ballet

*Celebrating 25 Years of Educating, Elevating, and Enriching the Community through the Magic of Dance!*

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## Alexandra Ballet Dancer Shines at YAGP

Makensie Howe, a member of Alexandra Ballet's First Company, was selected to compete in the final round of the Youth American Grand Prix (YAGP) Finals on Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup> and performed in *Grand Defilé* in the Stars of Today Meet the Stars of Tomorrow YAGP Gala on Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup> in New York City .

Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP) is the world's largest student ballet scholarship competition that awards over \$250,000 each year in scholarships to leading dance schools worldwide. The 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. Launched in 1999 by two former dancers of the world-renowned Bolshoi Ballet, Larissa and Gennadi Saveliev, YAGP is a non-profit organization created with a mission to provide extraordinary educational and professional opportunities to young dancers, acting as a stepping stone to a professional dance career.

Makensie had not participated in a ballet competition before when she qualified for the YAGP finals at the Chicago Semifinal, one of ten U.S. and four international regional semifinal locations. Makensie received second place in the Contemporary Competition semifinals for her solo *Liebesleid*, choreographed by Alexandra Ballet's Ballet Mistress CiCi Houston. For the Classical Competition she presented Kitri's Act I variation from *Don Quixote* in the semifinals, and the Peasant Pas variation from *Giselle* at the finals. The scores for both categories were averaged together at the finals, and the top 20 Senior Women Soloists (age 15 - 19) were selected to compete in the Final Round. Makensie was one of only eight competitors from the United States who qualified for the Senior Women's Final Round!



Makensie at YAGP Semifinals performing *Liebesleid*, choreographed by CiCi Houston

YAGP is just one of many opportunities for Makensie as of late. The diverse repertoire at Alexandra Ballet has kept Makensie challenged this year. She danced in the *Nutcracker*, as the Sugarplum Fairy, Bournonville's *Kermesse in Bruges*, the electrifying *Unplugged*, *Don Quixote Suite*, as Kitri, and *Giselle*, as Peasant Pas de Deux and Willis Corp.

Alexandra Ballet will attend the Regional Dance America Mid-States Festival April 29<sup>th</sup> - May 1<sup>st</sup> in Taylor, Michigan. This three day festival provides hundreds of dancers a unique opportunity to learn from, perform for, and interact with some of the brightest leaders in the dance world today. All three of the pieces Alexandra Ballet adjudicated were selected to be performed with *Don Quixote Suite* having the privilege of closing the Gala performance on the final evening. At last year's Festival, Alexandra Ballet received the great honor of being selected as the Mid-States Regional Dance America's representative to perform the Argentine flavored *Hora Tango* at the USA International Ballet Competition. Regional Dance America will showcase talented companies from each of their five regions at a special matinee performance on June 24<sup>th</sup> during the USA IBC in Jackson, Mississippi.



Makensie & Dillon Malinski in Alexandra Ballet's *Unplugged*, choreographed by Paula Weber

For the last three years, Makensie has been one of thirty dancers chosen for their outstanding talent, ability and promise to be an American Ballet Theatre National Training Scholar. The scholarship covers a portion of their local dance school fees, as well as tuition to attend ABT's Summer Intensive for six weeks each year in New York City. ABT's Summer Intensive has earned a reputation for being the most thorough and rewarding dance experience a student can have during the summer.

This 16 year old sophomore at Fox High School in Arnold has a passion for ballet and aspires to be a professional dancer. "Ballet is in my soul. I look forward to dance every day. People sometimes ask if I regret all the things I am missing because I dance five days a week and I tell them no - I am doing exactly what makes me happy," stated Makensie.

Every year Makensie gets one "grande jeté" closer to her dream!