

## ICSB flourishes at Youth America Grand Prix

by MDJ staff

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*The International City School of Ballet was the recipient of the coveted Outstanding School Award for the second year in a row during Youth America Grand Prix. / Special to the MDJ*

SMYRNA — The International City School of Ballet in Smyrna was the recipient of the Outstanding School Award for the second year in a row during Youth America Grand Prix.

Ballet dancers from 77 schools in 16 states participate in the semi-final event at Georgia Tech's Ferst Center for the Arts on January 23 and 24.

Two soloists from ICSB, Anna Slade and Jolie Lombardo, will compete at the international finals in New York City in April. Both ICSB ensemble pieces also scored high enough to move on to the NYC finals. The school's contemporary ensemble entry took first place. The performances featured 19 students, ages 9 to 18.

"I knew that all of our kids were prepared and performed well, but I was surprised we received the Outstanding School award again this year," said Artistic Director Georne Aucoin.

Aucoin was named the YAGP's Teacher of the Year in 2013, and ICSB choreographer Musashi Alvarez was named YAGP's Choreographer of the Year in 2014.

Aucoin began ICSB in Warner Robins in 2004. She opened her Smyrna Market Village location in June 2014 and expanded last year to nearly triple ICSB's space.

"I moved to this area because of the deep talent pool, and I haven't been disappointed," Aucoin said.

Now that the school has a robust program with older students, it is seeking younger ones.

"I love to train and to be a part of the development of young dancers who are just starting out," Aucoin said. "It's very important that children receive proper instruction from the very beginning."