Arts and Entertainment

Moab Stars: Local doctor, dance instructor take top prize at annual event to benefit MVMC

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Competition at Dancing with the Moab Stars is fierce, friendly

Sisters-in-law Jessie and M'kenna Sorenson perform their dance routine Friday, Sept. 13. Jessie owns Pilates Moab, where her dance partner M'kenna, who owns a classical ballet studio in Moab, also teaches pilates. Photo by Carter Pape

During a night of dancing and entertainment headlined by local stars and talent, family doctor Pablo Johnson and his dance partner Erika Ring, a Moab swing dance instructor, took first place at the Moab Multicultural Center's sixth annual Dancing with the Moab Stars.

The event Friday, Sept. 13, in the Grand County High School auditorium featured stars including Grand County Attorney Christina Sloan, high school therapist Kyle Dern, Pilates Moab Owner Jessie Sorenson and first-time dancer Rob Malgeby. Each spent the weeks leading up to the competition choreographing their performance and practicing with their respective dance partners.

Sloan and her dance partner Cadence Sorenson, a local middle schooler and lifetime dancer, took third place during the competition. Second place went to Ruth Lowe and Jenna Whetzel, program manager for the Housing Authority of Southeastern Utah.

KZMU Manager Serah Mead and City of Moab employee Didar Charles together won the Colin Fryer's People's Choice Award for the loudest crowd reaction of the night.
Local dance instructor Erika Ring celebrates after she and her partner, Moab family doctor Pablo Johnson, win first place at the Dancing with the Moab Stars event held Friday, Sept. 13. Photo by Carter Pape

Dancing with the Moab Stars is an annual fundraising event hosted by the Moab Multicultural Center, enabled by “countless hours” of volunteerism and support, according to the organization. The center is a nonprofit organization “dedicated to building bridges across language and culture,” in Moab.

Fryer and the Moab Lodging Group underwrote the event this year, doubling all donations to the center made during the evening of entertainment, for a total of nearly $14,000. Last year’s event raised $12,000, over 4% of the center’s income in 2018.

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