



JAN 26

UMD Dance Team takes third place in Nationals

Ellie Gerst

The UMD Dance Team brought home the third place trophy at the Universal Dance Association's national competition on Jan. 15.

Competing against 33 other teams in their division, UMD dancers made it to the finals with 17 other teams.

"We were hoping to make it to finals this year, that was our team goal," Melanie Long, team captain and UMD senior, said.

The competition was in Orlando and the team stayed at a resort on Walt Disney property with the other competing teams.

"We chose to do a jazz dance this year," Long said. "It was super intense, super fierce and super hard-hitting. A lot of times teams do two dances, but with the limited funding that we get and the time we had to fundraise, we just did one dance this year."



Video by UMD Dance Team

According to Long, the team relies heavily on fundraising to cover their costs.

"Club Sports allocates us money each year which usually goes towards paying for nationals, but it doesn't cover the full cost for each girl," Long said. "A lot of the girls pay for it themselves."

Fundraisers the team put on this year included a bowling fundraiser, a Chipotle fundraiser and their annual dance show. On Saturday Jan. 28 the team will be having a spaghetti fundraiser at American Legion.

"We got so much help from so many people around Minnesota," Long said. "The dance team spirit around Minnesota is insane and everyone is so supportive."

After a successful competition, the team got to experience Magic Kingdom and Hollywood Studios together before flying home.

"It was a super exciting and positive year for us, we couldn't have asked for a better season," Long said. "We are completely happy with our performance at finals."



Photo by UMD Dance Team

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Ellie Gerst

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