

BEST GROCERY STORE



Brenna Visser

In the produce section, employees of the Astoria Co-op celebrate being awarded Best Grocery.

ASTORIA CO-OP

By BRENNA VISSER

Runner-up: Main St. Market, Warrenton

Honorable mention: Fred Meyer, Warrenton

When Zetty Nemlowill heard readers chose the Astoria Co-Op for Best Grocery, the co-op's marketing director couldn't help but think of the future.

"I'm excited. We've been working so hard on our new store, and I think a lot of people recognize that since it's in the news. But there's also the work we do everyday in this 2,000 square-foot store,"

Zemlowill said. "The fact people are supporting us here is important because we couldn't be taking this big leap without their support."

The Astoria Co-Op started in 1974 with a vision to provide locally-sourced food to the community. Zemlowill believes readers chose the grocery because the staff genuinely care about the customers.

"We were started by local people who wanted a store with good local food, and we're still doing that," she said. "We put people before profits. It's a unique business model people like in this day and age." **CW**

BEST DANCE STUDIO

ASTORIA ARTS & MOVEMENT CENTER

By KATHERINE LACAZE

Runner-up: Encore Dance Studio, Warrenton

Honorable mention: Maddox Dance Studio, Warrenton

The Arts & Movement Center in downtown Astoria is more than a dance studio. It's a place where people can come to be part of a community, to express themselves, to feel accepted, to grow.

"I've seen people's lives change in that ballroom — their health improves, their confidence grows, they make friends and inspire others, all within a supportive learning environment," executive director and Astoria City Councilor Jessamyn Grace West said. "This studio is community, a community that has a right to creative self-expression and honoring a relationship with the body."

Founded in 2011, the studio averages more than 20 classes and workshops per week. The facility also is home to more than 20 regular and guest instructors who teach Argen-



Dwight Caswell

ABOVE: Jessamyn Grace West leads a belly dancing class at the Astoria Arts & Movement Center.

BELOW: Estelle Olivares (right) with the help of her sister Celeste Olivares leads a couple of Argentine tango classes each week at the Astoria Arts & Movement Center. The sisters have been teaching tango on the coast for about four years.

tine tango, belly dance, contemporary dance, tap, modern dance, jazz, contra dance, Zumba, fitness, yoga, theater, hip hop and more.

In 2018, West and the studio's board president, Andrea Mazzarella, purchased the historic Odd Fellows Building on 10th Street that houses the studio on the second floor.

"It was time to take action and secure our space," West said. **CW**



Katherine Lacaze

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