

# Martial arts students place at tournament



Above, Kai Williams gets a high-five after winning best focus. Right, Erin Lauraine poses with her students. Inset, ATA students compete.



**By Caitlyn May**  
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Time has flown for Erin Lauraine who has owned ATA Martial Arts in Cottage Grove for more than a decade. Next month, it will be 14 years and countless tournament winners.

And last weekend, she added to her total when she accompanied nine of her students, ranging in ages from six to 35, to an American Tae Kwon Do Association tournament in Salem. The group joined 600 other competitors at the open tournament who came from as far away as Canada to take part.

Lauraine, who teaches regularly at the studio, attends three or four competitions a year outside of invitation-only events which at least one of her students qualified for on Saturday.

"We had some winners and a number of them competed and didn't place," she said. "But they definitely had a great time and I was really proud of how optimistic they were and how they focused on what they did well and what they had to work on."

Among those bringing home an award for ATA were Anthony Richey who's zeroing in on his third-degree belt, Mia Piscopo who took third in combative weapon sparring and Ed Drago who won first in forms, weapons and sparring in the autism division.

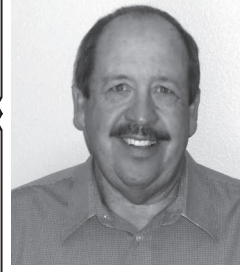
Connor LeCompte, however, did not place but had reason to cel-

ebate. It was the first time he had competed outside of the autism division.

"It was his first time in standard division and he came this close to placing," Lauraine said. "He was very excited about that."

The next competition for the studio will be in Oregon City in June where eight of ATA's students have been invited to compete.

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