

# Fry's work rewarded

The Gym Jesters founder, owner and director receives recognition from the President's Council of Physical Fitness and Sports

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Helen Fry turned 70 years old on Sept. 29, but the founder, owner and director of Saginaw's Gym Jester Gymnastics and Fitness Center received an early birthday present in the form of recent recognition on behalf of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

Fry was just one of 16 recipients in the United States, and the only one in Michigan, to receive the 2009 PCPFS's Community Leadership Award. What the award means is that Fry's passion for physical fitness — as well as her involvement within the community — haven't gone unnoticed.

"It is a real honor to be recognized in this manner after a lifetime of striving to provide a program to the community and the communities surrounding Saginaw that is truly worthwhile," said the New Jersey native and 1961 graduate of Michigan State University. "We have been able to do that and maintain it for 47 years. It's wonderful to have that recognition."



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Helen Fry, founder and owner of Saginaw's Gym Jester Gymnastics and Fitness Center, received recognition on behalf of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

Dr. Catherine Baase, Chief Medical Officer at the Dow Chemical Company, has served on the President's Council and nominated Fry for the award. Its recipients are those who improve the lives of individuals within their communities by providing oppor-

tunities to engage in sports, physical activities and/or fitness-related programs, as stated by the press release announcing the award.

"We have so many adults who come in and register their children, who were doing it themselves when they were young," explained Fry. "You can't have a business exist for all these years without doing something right. This has truly been a labor of love."

Though it is based in Saginaw, Fry is happy to say that Gym Jester Gymnastics has had an effect on the surrounding communities as well.

"We wanted to make a really good contribution to whatever community I lived in, and it turned out to be Saginaw, but we touch 26 communities surrounding Saginaw," said Fry.

An annual Gym Jester's enrollment of roughly 700 students partake in a curriculum that varies from pre-school motor skill development to recreational gymnastics for elementary and middle school-aged students to USAG competitive teams for both boys and girls. Other family friendly activities that are offered include field trips, birthday parties and specialty classes.

"Our main hope is that everyone who walks through our door is going to realize how important fitness is to the wellness of our future," said Fry. "We've had years of great athletes who've gone on to compete at very high levels, and we hope to never go away."