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## Minuet in civil court! Dancewave sues rogue travel agent

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scammed out of more than \$10,000 on the eve of a triumphant trip to an international recital fired back on Tuesday, suing the travel agency that allegedly profited from the swindle.

Dancewave lawyer Jay Itkowitz filed a civil suit in Manhattan claiming fraud by Adam Travel Services, a Virginia-based agency that has an office on West 38th Street.

The tragic story actually began with a great moment of joy, when Dancewave owner Diane Jacobowitz learned that her teen dancers were the only American company to be selected to perform at the prestigious 2010 Aberdeen International Youth Festival.

Jacobowitz said she wrote a check for \$8,585 and authorized a credit card payment for a lesser amount to a "travel consolidator" who had been recommended by the parent of one of her dancers. That parent had used the consolidator for a trip to Jamaica, and the agent promised to book a block of tickets for the young dancers at a half-priced group rate.

Jacobowitz received receipts for the July bookings via e-mail, and was satisfied that the transaction was complete.

But on Jan. 15, she got a frenzied call from the parent who had recommended the travel consolidator telling her that the woman had never actually paid for that Jamaica ticket. Jacobowitz then went back to her travel documents, and sure enough, her booking receipts also indicated that the seats had been set aside, but had not been paid for.

That consolidator has not explained where Dancewave's money ended up, said Itkowitz, who is handling the case for free. His case goes after Adam Travel, which specialized in Islamic pilgrimage trips, because the consolidator was working "as an agent of Adam."

"Adam committed fraud against [Dancewave] ... by intentionally misrepresenting that it had purchased airline tickets for its students with knowledge of the falsity of the statement," Itkowitz's court papers said.

Worse, Dancewave's performers are not wealthy scions or debutantes.

"Most of the students involved could not afford to take this trip," Itkowitz wrote in his court papers. "But they were so excited about this special opportunity that they held a special fundraising dance performance and even babysat to get the money necessary for the trip."

A woman at the Manhattan office of Adam Travel said that her office had "never heard of this situation" and that Dancewave would need to serve the main office in Boston with papers. The woman would not give her name.

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