



# ZenQuest Martial Arts Center

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An Okinawa Karatedo Association, Demian Mata Jiu-jitsu Network and Siyodtong Boston Affiliate

## NEWSLETTER October 2023

### Best Defense

When most people begin their martial arts journey they do it in part to improve their ability to defend themselves in the event such a situation would arise. There is a broad spectrum of effectiveness in the world of martial arts ranging from extremely effective to not much at all. In addition, there can be a big difference from one gym or dojo to another, and even from one instructor to another.

We are happy to say that each of the martial arts we offer at ZenQuest are useful in real world self-defense. Over time, students in our Muay Thai, Jiu-jitsu, Karate and MMA programs will become proficient in effective self-defense skills. Let's take a look at each martial art at ZenQuest and it's value in self-defense.

**Muay Thai** - Muay Thai is a 'striking' style which focuses on using blocks, punches, kicks, elbows, and knees from a measured distance away from an opponent. It also employs some stand-up clinching (grabbing a hold of an opponent) and throwing. Although these skills are very good for self-defense, in it's modern form Muay Thai is ultimately based on sport competition. In it's ancient form or what is known as 'Muay Boran' the techniques and strategies were geared more toward actual combat and, therefore, more effective for serious self-defense.

**Brazilian Jiu-jitsu** - BJJ has become known as one of the most effective martial arts in the world. With its takedowns, restraints, submissions, and escapes it is very useful for real world self-defense. Where BJJ is weak, though, is in situations where there is more than one attacker or an attacker is armed. Also, submissions generally aren't great with opponents who don't understand 'tapping' or are just willing to take damage in order to continue their attack.



**Karate** - Karate has taken a lot of grief in the last 30 years, mostly because of Karate practitioners jumping into early MMA competitions without any business in doing so. Since those early days though, there have been several successful Karate fighters in MMA including George St. Pierre, Lyoto Machida, Steven Thompson, Michael Page, and Michelle Waterson to name a few. Like with any martial art, there are styles and gyms that do not have a good grasp on effective self-defense but, done right, Karate training is among the best available for real world self-defense. This includes situations involving armed or multiple attackers. Traditional Karate typically focuses on what is known as 'one-strike-kill' strategies. This means that the student is taught techniques that are not designed to trade blows with an opponent, but end a situation as fast as possible. Interestingly, this is often what plays out in MMA where each fighter

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## Paint the House

The ZenQuest paint project is progressing nicely and is nearing the final stages of phase I. This includes preparing and painting the east and north faces of the building. Repairs and preparations for this phase are now finished, and the first coat of paint is currently being applied. The final coat of paint will be a nice blue color with white trim. Phase II of the paint project will be prepping and painting the west and south (front) faces of the building. This is planned to begin in the springtime of next year.

This is no small feat as the building is about equal to two average sized houses. For years the property had been somewhat neglected under its previous owners. However, in December of 2021 ZenQuest officially became the owner of the building, and repairs and improvements began almost immediately.

The entire painting project is scheduled to be completed in 2024. Along with the painting effort other projects are also in the works, including new doors and signage on the front of the building. Students should feel good about the efforts being made to bring them the best facility possible for their training.

Special thanks to Matt Moreau, Glen Giumarra, and Russ Moody for their help with this portion of the improvements.



## AC News

On Saturday, September 23, ZenQuest held an 'Advanced Concepts' clinic for our advanced Uechi-Ryu Karate students. The workshop focused on some drills known as the 'Okuhama Kumite' set. These are applications of classic strategies from the style in self-defense situations. The drills were originally introduced to a ZenQuest group who visited Okinawa in 2018 directly from Master Shinmatsu Okuhama himself. A small but enthusiastic group of advanced Uechi students enjoyed learning the first 6 of the 15 drills. Advanced promotions are required to be done formally by the Okinawa Karate Association (not in seminars like our Advanced Concepts clinics.)

On Saturday, September 30 we held another 'Advanced Concepts' clinic for our advanced Sityodtong Muay Thai students. For this one the focus was on lateral or sideways movement. The students were taken through a series of individual and partner drills for evading attacks in a way to allow immediate counters. At the end of the training the participants had the opportunity to use the strategies covered in a few rounds of sparring.

At the conclusion of this clinic some students were promoted including: Cristhyan Garcia to 1-stripe white Prajiet, Darren Bradley to Blue Prajiet, Glenn Giumarra to 3 stripe Blue Prajiet, and Tilo Jackson to 3 stripe purple Prajiet. Congratulations to all!

Keep an eye out for our next round of Advanced Concepts early next year.

## Tapping Cancer

Several ZenQuest students are preparing to compete in the 2023 'Tap Cancer Out' tournament in November. The annual fundraising event will be held in Danvers, Massachusetts on November 19th. YOU can help by sponsoring one or more of them, or just contributing to the cause using the link: <https://wecan.tapcancerout.org/zenquest>. Proceeds benefit cancer prevention and research.

Boa sorte and boa luta (good luck and good fight) to all of the competitors!

**IMPORTANT DATES**

**Monday, October 9 - NO CLASSES**  
**Week of 10/16-10/21 - Karate Sparring week**  
**Tuesday, October 31 - NO PM CLASSES**  
**Sun, November 18 - Tap Cancer Out Event,**  
**Danvers, MA**  
**Wed, 11/22, Thurs, 11/23, Fri, 11/24 -**  
**NO CLASSES**

**NEW STUDENTS!**

**Welcome:** Livia Hess, Meredith Bleier, Aaron Kollmer, Lincoln Ladeinde, Delilah Allesio, Myra Bansal, Aarav Bansal, Lauren Kuster, Victoria Artega-Tucker, Jeff Daignault, Everett Stever, Logan Osorio, Quinn Lennon, Ella Cermak, Otis Cermak, Walker Haskins, Mason Goodrich, Elias Yared, Frank Carroll, Mahad Ali, and JJ Hastings

**Welcome Back:** Ryan Thebeau

***HAPPY BIRTHDAY!***

**Darren Bradley 10/1**  
**Brandt Mears 10/1**  
**Stephen Dalton 10/2**  
**Kaden Macy 10/3**  
**Lincoln Daley 10/5**  
**Luca Ismail 10/6**  
**Levi Giumarra 10/6**  
**Thomas Aube 10/7**  
**Tilo Jackson 10/14**  
**Jacob Doyle 10/14**  
**Dan Dufur 10/15**  
**Kyle Dube 10/15**  
**Parker Lamont 10/17**  
**Mariana Broderick 10/18**  
**Connor Burt 10/23**  
**Sophia Perreault 10/24**  
**Benjamin Wood 10/26**  
**Nicholas Sondrini 10/29**  
**Theo Poulson 10/29**  
**James Mercier 10/30**

***RECENT PROMOTIONS*****TIGERS:**

9kyu - Miles Carvahlo  
 8kyu - Axsell Robbins, Silas Cunningham, Amelie Ishmail  
 7kyu - Miles Stanton, Caleb Tullock, Hayden Joyce, Andrew Arce, Abby Havill

**DRAGONS:**

7kyu - Grey O'Donnell, Smith O'Donnell

**COBRAS:**

8kyu - Sophia Perreault

**UECHI:**

8kyu - Mary Hannah Parkman

**PYTHONS:****JIU-JITSU:**

2-Stripe White Belt - Cristhyan Garcia  
 3-Stripe White Belt - Andrey Norin  
 Blue - Ricky Jennings

**MUAY THAI:**

1-Stripe White Prajiet - Cristhyan Garcia  
 Blue Prajiet - Darren Bradley  
 3-Stripe Blue - Glenn Giumarra  
 3-Stripe Purple Prajiet - Tilo Jackson

**Terminology****Dedication**

**Japanese: Kenshin**

**Brazilian: Dedicação**

**Thai: Kan Botit Soan**

**“Best Martial Arts Academy”**  
**ZenQuest Martial Arts**



*Berkshire Eagle's*  
*Readers Choice Awards*  
**SIX YEARS**  
**RUNNING!**



## Reminders

With many new students in the dojo we would like to mention some important reminders to students and parents. Here are some things to be mindful of while attending classes at ZenQuest.

**Be On Time** - It is important for students to arrive 5 to 10 minutes before each class. This allows students to be physically and mentally ready for their class. Students entering a class late not only disrupts the class, but also leaves them in a situation where they may have missed some important information given at the beginning of the class.

If more time is needed to change or gather the gear needed for the class, students and parents should adjust their arrival time accordingly. We understand that things can happen that are out of our control, but consistently arriving late points to carelessness or simply choosing that pattern.

**When We Open** - Typically, the building does not open until 15 minutes before the first class of the day or evening. Students and parents should be patient when that happens. Sometimes students are waiting when the instructors arrive and may have an expectation to enter the gym right away. But, the instructors usually need a few minutes to prepare the facility properly for the students.

**Beverage Cooler** - As a courtesy for our students we provide a beverage cooler with different choices. As much as we would like to provide these for free, there is a cost for each item in the beverage cooler. When purchasing something from the cooler, please pay at the time of removal. If someone is not at the front desk it is the responsibility of the student or parent to leave the exact change on the desk, or find an instructor to help them with the exchange. Taking items out of the cooler without paying is not acceptable and grounds for dismissal from the school.

**Enrollment** - Students who are not enrolled via our 'Easy Pay' autopayment option are responsible for keeping track of their tuition due dates and making payments on time. We do our best to provide reminders on the attendance sheets at the front desk, so checking them periodically can help. Whenever someone at the desk is checking students in, they will also provide a reminder. Please remember that students should not attend classes without an up to date enrollment. Also, missed classes cannot extend enrollment (except in serious medical situations.)

**Gear** - Once students or parents decide to make a commitment to training they should make sure that they have all of the equipment that they need to fully participate in their classes. For Karate this means a uniform and a set of sparring gear. For Jiu-jitsu it means a heavyweight uniform, cup, and mouthpiece. For Muay Thai it's boxing gloves, shin-guards, cup, and mouthpiece. Sometimes parents will delay investing into the proper equipment for their kids until they show some commitment, but children can actually get discouraged and loose interest if this is delayed too long.

So, please be mindful of these aspects of training and your martial arts journey will be amazing!



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has the ability to knock the other out with one blow.

**MMA** - Training in mixed martial arts or mixing martial arts will provide a rounded package of self-defense skills. Generally this means training in a 'striking' art like Karate or Kickboxing, and learning a 'grappling' art like Jiu-jitsu. At ZenQuest, the absolute best combination for real world self-defense is Karate and Jiu-jitsu. For students who want to practice or compete in MMA, the best combination is Muay Thai and Jiu-jitsu. Attending our 'Team Sparring' sessions sometimes is also a good idea for anyone looking for serious self-defense training as the intensity tends to get turned up a bit there.

Self-defense training must be tempered to be age-appropriate for children. Little ones can't be expected to have the proper judgment or discretion for strategies that can be damaging or lethal for others. So, we tend to give them safer versions of escape and restraint techniques.

Lastly, self-defense strategies must be practiced consistently over time to work in real situations. Just doing a workshop for a few hours will probably not be enough training to provide a working knowledge of strategies that will hold up to the stress and chaos of a serious attack. The defender ultimately needs to develop instinctive muscle memory for different situations and be able to change from one strategy to another based on what's happening in real time. Most people can only get that from dedicated training over a longer period of time.