ZenQuest Martial Arts Center
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An *Okinawa Karatedo Association, Demian Maia Jiu-jitsu Network* and *Sityodtong Boston Affiliate*

NEWSLETTER
June 2026

Respect Matters

A martial arts gym is more than just a place to get fit. It is a community where people come to learn, grow, and challenge themselves. One of the most important parts of a strong martial arts community is a culture of respect. Respect affects the way students train, how safe they feel, and how long they continue practicing martial arts.

Training Environment - Respect helps create a positive training environment. When students and instructors treat each other with courtesy and patience, people feel welcome and supported. New students are less nervous when they see others encouraging each other instead of showing off or acting aggressively.

A respectful gym is also a place where students can learn and make mistakes without feeling embarrassed. Learning a martial art takes time and effort, and nobody masters it overnight. Students should have the opportunity to learn at their own pace.

Longevity - Many people quit activities because they do not feel comfortable or accepted. In a martial arts gym with a culture of respect, students are more likely to stay for years. They build friendships, trust their instructors, and enjoy coming to class.

Longevity in martial arts, or sticking with it, is important because real growth happens over time. Students develop confidence, discipline, and mental toughness through consistent practice. A respectful atmosphere helps people stay motivated during difficult moments and keeps them coming back.

Better Learning - Learning is easier when students trust their instructors and teammates. Respect allows students to be more focused and open-minded. Instead of arguing or trying to prove themselves, they can pay attention and work to improve.

Martial arts often requires students to practice techniques and strategies together. If partners are careless, rough, or disrespectful, learning becomes difficult. Good partners help each other improve by staying controlled and practicing safely.

Safety - Training safely is one of the biggest reasons respect matters in martial arts. Students must have faith in their instructors and training partners. Respect means understanding that everyone has limits and that no one should be reckless or try to hurt their partners in practice.

A respectful student controls their strength, follows the rules, and stays focused. This is especially important during sparring or grappling. Instructors who create a respectful culture also make safety a priority by teaching proper

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Spring Cleaning

As you probably know, the mats and equipment get cleaned on a regular basis at ZenQuest. We also have a cleaning that happens at the end of each week to keep the place looking and smelling good. In addition, we hold a 'Spring Cleaning' each year to give the place a really thorough going through, along with some repairs and minor projects.

Originally, Senseis Connie and Mark would do this with a few instructors assisting. Over the years more and more people would join, and now a virtual army shows up to help. This year Spring Cleaning will be on Sunday, May 31. The start time will be 9:00 AM and is expected to go for a couple of hours. Morning treats will be available for the participants, and we'll have pizza available for lunch. So, stop by and pitch in if you can!

Pause in Play

In the spring of 2011 we erected a playground on the west side of the ZenQuest building. Since then hundreds of kids have enjoyed the structure, which features swings, slides, and a climbing wall. In recent years we've done our best to maintain the playground, but now it has reached the end of its useful life. So, the existing playground will be taken down soon.

Don't worry kids (and parents) the old playground will be replaced with a new one! The new structure will be at least as big and fun to explore as the old one. Right now the plan is to remove the old playground during the month of May, and put up the new one in June. This will result in some time without a playground in the picnic area next to our building unfortunately.

As an alternative we recommend visiting the area between the On A Roll restaurant and Chocolate Springs. We will also provide some outdoor toys during this time for our students and families. We appreciate your patience and understanding during our playground transition time.

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technique and encouraging students to speak up if they don't understand or something feels wrong.

Without respect, injuries and conflicts become more common. With respect, students can train hard while still protecting each other.

Beyond Martial Arts - The lessons learned in a respectful martial arts gym can also help students outside of class. Respectful practice teaches us how to work with others, stay calm under pressure, and handle disagreements in a mature way. These skills are invaluable at school, at work, and in everyday life.

It is crucial that more senior students, instructors, and even guest instructors set the example for respect in a martial arts gym. They are the ones who reinforce how everyone should train and conduct themselves there. In the end, respect is one of the foundations of martial arts. It creates a positive environment, helps students learn, encourages long-term growth, and keeps everyone safe. A gym with a strong culture of respect is not only a better place to train—it is a better place to grow as a person.

IMPORTANT DATES

AC Jiu-Jitsu - Saturday, May 30, 1:15 pm
Spring Cleaning, Sunday, May 31, 9a-Noon
Kyu Test - Sunday, June 14, 1:30 pm
Karate Sparring Week - June 15th - June 20th
NO CLASSES - Friday, June 19

NEW STUDENTS!

Welcome: Rae Allen, Anders Tierney, Ezekiel Pratt, Erika Stubbs, Jacob McNeice, Luke Pellegrino, Sebastian Burgos Rosa, & Ander Yosef Moreno Roa

Welcome Back: Joe Ospina Cruz, Trace Kimple, Ryan Johansen, Clara Jeanette Miller, & Frankie Miller

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Matt Hill
Jessica Logsdon
Andrey Norin
Kelly Minahan
Thomas Frelinghuysen
Hunter Hamiliton
Andrea Moreau
Sean Callahan
Isaac Terry
Avah Jones
Brantley Jones
Benjamine Chagnon
Theodore Didio
Penelope Chavez-Norbury
Abigail (Abbey) Callahan
Stella Gabriel
Kiara Pradeep
Sophia LaRange
Luna Costa
Joe Terzigni

RECENT PROMOTIONS

TIGERS:
9kyu - Marvi Buchinski, Everett Calderone, Hudson Calderone
8kyu - Margo Boska
5kyu - James Horth

DRAGONS:
8kyu - Kate Mayott
7kyu - Enoch Ortiz-Ramirez, Hazel Hage

COBRAS:
8kyu - Aaron Mayott, Evelynn Mayott, Oliver Wilson, Killian Olsen, Max Roll

UECHI-RYU:
9kyu - Justin Winters, Desmond Winters
8kyu - Chalice Mitchell, Wendy Adam
6kyu - Ed Partyka
3dan - Matt Hill

PYTHONS:
2-stripe white - Jonathan Curinga, Kiera Schneider
Grey/white - Justin Mullet
2-stripe grey/white - Myra Bansal
3-stripe grey/white - Montanna Inesta
Grey/black - Weston Aube

JIU-JITSU:
1-stripe white - Mike Lillie

MUAY THAI:
1-stripe white - Michael Siktberg

Terminology

Role Model

Japanese: Mohan
Brazilian: Modelo A Ser Seguido
Thai: Ton Bab

Voted
"Best Martial Arts Studio"
EIGHT years In a row!
In the Berkshire Eagle's 'Best of the Berkshires'
ZenQuest Martial Arts