



ZenQuest Martial Arts Center

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

NEWSLETTER

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10 WAYS MARTIAL ARTS BENEFIT KIDS

Recently, Mr. Kenny Myers wrote an excellent article on why martial arts training is great for children. It appeared in a blog written by Mr. Myers on his website, and has been posted and reposted around the internet. Here it is:

In a culture that seems to glorify violence in everything from music to video games and television shows, the idea of enrolling your child in martial arts training classes doesn't always seem like a good one. While martial arts-centered action films seem to be filled to the brim with violent behavior and gory injuries, you may be surprised to learn that martial arts' training is actually very beneficial to kids. Like so many other things that Hollywood doesn't always get right, martial arts isn't quite the brutal, vicious pastime that it seems. In fact, these are 10 of the reasons why you may want to consider martial arts training for your kids.



- 1. Fostering Self-Discipline** – One of the central tenets of all forms of the martial arts is an absolute focus on self-discipline. Today's kids are so accustomed to receiving instant gratification that lessons in self-restraint and discipline aren't always easy to come by. Kids with a martial arts background, however, are continually reminded of how essential self-discipline is.
- 2. Boosting Socialization Skills** – Kids who don't always thrive in highly social environments may find it easier to get to know people and make new friends when they're in a room filled with peers who share a common interest. The kids on the playground may not always have much common ground, but devotees to the martial arts are able to get to know one another through shared pursuits. Partner-driven forms like jiu-jitsu can also foster camaraderie, as they force kids to pair off and build their skills together.
- 3. Encouraging Physical Activity** – Limiting screen time is a great idea when it comes to getting kids off the couch and encouraging them to be more active, but it only goes so far. Enrolling an inactive child in such a physically demanding pastime not only discourages the sedentary lifestyle she's used to, but also gives her an enjoyable activity that inspires her to keep moving.
- 4. Learning to Set and Achieve Goals** – Most forms of martial arts are based around an accomplishment system of colored belts that signify the wearer's degree of skill. When your child strives toward each new belt, he's learning valuable lessons about setting and reaching his goals.
- 5. Increased Self-Esteem** – Confidence comes with achievement, so your child's self-esteem level will get a boost with every new move he masters and every belt he earns. Kids who struggle with a low sense of self-worth usually become more confident as time progresses while they're enrolled in a martial arts class.

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2014 Kids Tournament

The **2014 Children's Tournament** is almost HERE! This is a fun way to for ALL of the kids, regardless of their experience, to show their progress to friends and family...and "kick" their skills up a notch in the process!

In this 24th annual event, the kids will be able to participate in a wide variety of events appropriate to age and experience. For the youngest students there are "Non-Competitive" events designed to provide participants with a positive introduction to this kind of experience. These include **Demonstration Kata** or forms events for ages 8 and under, and **Mato-Waza** or target-techniques events for ages 6 and under. Instructors are made available to assist these kids with their performance, and each child is awarded a medal for their participation. "Competitive" events (for ages 18 and under) include: **Kata** (traditional forms), **Kumite** (Point Sparring), **Creative Kata** (non-traditional forms), **Jiu-jitsu**, AND **Submission Grappling** ("No-Gi" Jiu-jitsu.) Participation ribbons and trophies for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place are awarded in each of these divisions. This year's tourney will be the first time that Submission Grappling or "No-Gi" Jiu-jitsu will be added to the tournament. A demonstration event for **Kobudo** (classical weapons) will also be added this year.

This tournament places heavy emphasis on healthy competition and sportsmanship. All divisions or participation-grouping are based on considerations of age, rank, and physical size. This results in students of similar maturity and experience levels grouped together for each division, creating the fairest situation possible for this kind of event.

This year's tourney will be happening on **Saturday, March 22**, with events kicking off at 10:00 Am. The event will, once again, be held at the Pittsfield Boys & Girls Club at 16 Melville Street, Pittsfield. Registration packets have been sent via mail and email to our youth students at this point. Pre-registration is required by March 8th in order to create the best possible divisions of participants. If you haven't received a packet and would like one, please contact ZenQuest and we'll be happy to send one.

Remember, this event has tremendous learning value for kids. Each event helps develop physical and mental skills in the martial arts...AND valuable life skills! The experience gained in the tournament also typically helps each student to advance in their abilities and, consequently, in their ranking or belt system.

So, get YOUR registrations in and we'll see you there!



Advanced Trainings, Promotions

ZenQuest recently conducted advanced training sessions for its advanced students of both Uechi-Ryu Karate and Demian Maia Jiu-jitsu. The trainings are an opportunity for more experienced students to focus on high-level techniques and strategies, and details for training and teaching.

On Saturday, March 1st Jiu-jitsu students ranked blue belt and higher attended another "Advanced Concepts in Jiu-jitsu." For this session, the students worked on an advanced take-down from a seated position called the "Berimbolo Sweep." The grapplers were first given a series of exercises involving inverting themselves and rolling sideways. Next, they all worked on performing the sweep with their partner in a kneeling position, then in a standing position. The students then learned two different counter-measures which negated the move and left them with a dominant position. Lastly, the students spent time "rolling" or sparring.

At the end of the training several students were promoted. These included: Herb Gregg, Thomas Aube and Neil Von Flatern promoted to 3-Stripe Blue Belt; Tim Somerville promoted to Purple Belt; AND Jedd Hall promoted to Brown Belt!!! Congratulations and keep up the great work to all.

On Sunday, March 2nd a group of Senior Uechi-Ryu students also spent time working on advanced material. After kicking things off with Sanchin kata, the students practiced an advanced "Hojo Undo" exercises. These are a series of complicated combinations taken from advanced kata routines. Next, each student spent time on their "Shite" or most advanced kata under the supervision of Senseis Mark and Connie. Lastly, the group worked on advanced sparring drills and the most advanced kata in the style called "Ryuko."

The training was important preparation for these students' advanced or "Dan" promotions, which are given in bi-annual exams. Thanks and "ganbarimasho" to everyone who attended.



Kickin' it Thai Style

Mark DellaGrotte of the famed "Sityodtong" academy in Boston joined us on Saturday, February 15, for some amazing Muay Thai training! Kru or Master Mark is a life-long martial artist, and has trained and fought Muay Thai Kickboxing in Thailand. He is considered by many to be the leading authority on Muay Thai in the U.S., and has trained several notorious Muay Thai and Mixed Martial Arts fighters.

For this seminar, Kru Mark lead an enthusiastic group of eighteen in details of "bread and butter" techniques and movement in the style. Next the master kickboxer showed the group ways to enter into clinch situations, followed by ways

to strike and take an opponent down from the clinch.

In the group were visitors from parts of Connecticut including Sityodtong affiliate Coach Matt McCusker of Hartford, and Josh Randorf of Soulcraft Jiu-jitsu in Hamden (who's now pursuing an affiliation.)

Thanks to everyone who joined in on this amazing training and special thanks to Kru Mark for sharing his knowledge and experience. Sawatdii Krup!!!



(Continued from page 1) **10 WAYS . . .**

6. Instilling a Sense of Respect – Learning any martial arts style will require your child to show her instructor unflinching respect. Today's kid culture doesn't always include respect for authority, adults or those in advanced positions. When she goes to her karate or tae kwon do class, though, your child will be learning lessons in respect along with new moves.

7. Encouraging Non-Violent Conflict Resolution – Thinking that martial arts instruction promotes violent behavior is justified if your only experience with the activity comes from television or movies. In fact, many defensive styles teach kids peaceful, non-violent conflict resolution skills and emphasize the importance of avoiding a physical altercation.

8. Improving Listening Skills – In order to master the skills she's being taught and advance through the belt ranks, your child will have to exercise superior listening skills. Kids who aren't always adept when it comes to paying attention to what they're told can benefit from the verbal instruction and one-on-one work in her dojo.

9. Developing Teamwork Skills – Whether he's breaking boards to get a new belt or sparring in a practice setting to master a new maneuver, there are few things that your child does in his martial arts classes that will be done on his own. Working together to learn new things and accomplish goals is an important life lesson for kids to learn, and instruction in the martial arts can help your child learn that lesson.

10. Improvement in Other Areas of Life – The benefits of martial arts training don't end in the dojo. The boost in confidence, increased fitness level and new cooperation skills will also help your child navigate the academic and social aspects of school, affect his behavior at home and have an all-around good influence on him as he develops into an adult.

If you're still concerned about encouraging violent tendencies or teaching your child to fight, it may be helpful to visit a few dojos/gyms in your area. Speak with the instructors, administrators and other parents to get an idea of how things operate, and hold off on forming a negative opinion of the martial arts until you've done a bit of exploratory research. You may even find that training is the perfect activity for your entire family to do together! For more information about Kenny Myers or his writings visit <http://www.kennymyers.com>



RECENT PROMOTIONS**CRANES:**

1 Red - Jack Ginsberg

TIGERS:

9kyu - Jackson Almeida

DRAGONS:

5kyu - David Ulmer III

8kyu - Arianne Resca, Nico Resca

9kyu - Emmitt Shove, Emilie Resca,
Ryan Timm**COBRAS:**

8kyu - Jake Lyons

ADULT UECHI-RYU:

7kyu - Mike McCauley

9kyu - Jason Dragonetti

ADULT JIU-JITSU:

Brown - Jedd Hall

Purple - Tim Somerville

4th Blue - Herb Gregg, Tom Aube, Neil Von Flatern

2nd white - Steve Curtin, Beth Yanuskiewicz

YOUTH JIU-JITSU:

5th yellow/white - Liam Nester

3rd yellow/white - Jessie Scrimo

Yellow/white - Matt Moreau

3rd white - David Ulmer III

2nd white - Harry Albert, Ella Hall, Abigail Winger

WELCOME NEW STUDENTS!**YOUTH:**

Bryce Coty, Teresa Navin, Daisy Ribero, Diego Cabrera

ADULTS:

Ben Minifie, Karen Bienia

IMPORTANT DATES***March/April*****Sunday, March 16, 1:00p: Tournament Practice**
(Judges/Referees arrive, 12:30, please!)**Saturday, March 22: Tournament 2014**
NO REGULAR CLASSES**Sunday, March 30, 1:30p: Possible Kyu Test****Sat, April 5, 1-3p: Charlie Liu Jiu-Jitsu Seminar****Friday, April 11: Neil & Eugene MMA Fights****Sunday, April 20: Easter Sunday**
NO CLASSES**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!***Mar-3 Ena Parchment**Mar-6 Alex Fruet**Mar-10 Cormac Mathews**Mar-11 Timothy Somerville**Mar-12 Carlo Petrucci**Mar-19 Jason Roy**Mar-19 Philippe Mortelliti**Mar-21 Shawna Labbee**Mar-22 Noah Farevaag**Mar-23 Mia Faggioni**Mar-24 Taylor Carlino, Mark Flynn**Mar-29 Finn Mathews**Mar-30 Jenner Kittle**Mar-30 Sebastian Chaires***"Jits" for Juliette**

Join us for a special seminar with Charlie Liu on Saturday, April 5. Charlie, a Matt Serra Black Belt and excellent instructor, will be providing us with two hours of Jiu-jitsu attacks and counters, from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

Charlie has visited ZenQuest and generously shared his knowledge in the past. Now it's time for US to support him in a noble cause. This event is a fundraiser for a four year old autistic girl, named Juliette, who is in need of a service dog.

The cost is \$40 to attend, and 100% of the proceeds will go to the cause. Please join us in helping Charlie help Juliette! Register in person, by phone at 413-637-0656, or at zenquestmac@sprynet.com.

