

TRUE NEWS - OVERLAKE

The TRUE way of the warrior is honor, strength, and love.

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Edition 102

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Black Belt

This month's black belt test brought me to reflect on what a black belt really is. As I looked for inspiration, I found an essay by Yu Dan Ja Nim Lukáš Corey that I wanted to share with our students – those who have reached Black Belt and those who are still working toward it. Here is a piece of that essay. It has been edited for length. – SBN Jennifer

Black Belt is a goal, something to reach for, and for some, an achievement. It is what we, as martial artists, strive for. Sweat and bleed and train for. It is a goal so important and wanted, that we endure the pain and spend vast amounts of time, for only a chance to get it. The rank of “Cho Dan” is much more than just a belt – it is the code and the way by which to live.

All people who train in martial arts (below Black Belt) are on the road to Black Belt. The road is the most perilous in existence and takes forever to finish. Many drop out or lose hope of ever reaching the end, but those who get there, find the end of the path, deserve what they get. There were many times I tripped and was on the edge of quitting, but I always regained my balance. It is a slippery slope, but one well worth going along.

The path is not traveled for materials or wealth. The pathway is taken because at the end is the greatest gift of all – the knowledge to know that you can do it. You can do what it takes to become black belt. You are good enough and are able to travel the extremely long path. You can look back and say to yourself: I did it. Black Belt is the understanding that you have done something extremely difficult that not everybody has done. It's the understanding that you can do virtually anything because you can put in the time and effort to complete any task. A Black Belt is an extension of the feeling you get at the end of a long journey – I can do anything.

Something very important about Black Belt is that it is not something to show off to your friends. To go on Facebook and brag about your rank. It is such an awful thing to show off your rank with the intention of making others feel inferior. I don't believe I have ever started a conversation with someone with the intension of telling them my rank in the martial arts or even telling them that I do martial arts, simply because they don't need to know. I may have told some people when they asked me if I do any sports or physical activity but not for any other reason.

A Black Belt is also not the end of training. You can't think that once you have reached Black Belt you are done and have no more to do. The rank of Cho Dan (First Degree Black Belt) comes from the name of the first degree black belt in various Japanese styles which is “Shodan.” Shodan means beginning degree, meaning that achieving this rank is only the start of another part of training. One source I saw put is as: *the individual has learned how to walk and is just starting his journey*. Black Belt is a huge achievement and an opening to a whole new world of learning. Black Belt is a state in which one can acquire extreme amounts of knowledge in the martial arts as well as be proud of himself for the distance he has already come.

The road to Black Belt also demands mental fitness. You have to realize from the start that you have to be willing to do anything to get this rank. You have to accept that it will take everything you have, and go through it anyway. At all times you have to think to yourself that you can't stop now, after all you have done. You can never think to yourself that you might not be able to do it. That there is a chance that you are not good enough. You have to be willing to run around the world for Black Belt.

Upcoming Activities for October/November

October 2 nd	Breaking Seminar, 6:30 pm
October 3 rd	Arnis Seminar, 10:00 am (no make up class)
October 23 rd	Private Black Belt Test, 6:30 pm
October 24 th	Tae Kwon Do Test, 6:30 pm
October 30 th	Halloween Open House
November 7 th	Arnis Seminar, 10:00 am (no make up class)
November 20 th	Tae Kwon Do Test, 6:30 pm
November 26 th	Thanksgiving, TMA Closed

NOTABLES

CONGRATULATIONS STUDENT OF THE MONTH –EUGENE YUM!

Eugene is a steady student who always comes to class with a good attitude. In his five years of training, he has shown real growth. Recently his drive to succeed and excel has intensified and we are excited to watch him progress. Keep it up, Eugene!

Welcome Our Newest Students

Amit Agarwal, Veronica Featherly, Medha Jain, Rohan Khandelwal, Alon Lavy, Tanisi Mattu, Emily Michaud, Archith Praveen, Ankith Praveen, Siddarth Shankar, and Nicola Tzenov

Welcome New Black Belt Club Members

Shira Levi, Sai Hrishi Kalagara, Amiya Madhurakuzhiyil, Zairah Madhurakuzhiyil, and Adi Megiddo

Arnis Promotions for September

Yellow Belt: Adam Davies, Benjamin Davies, Sophie Davies, Veeral Goradia, and Cade Prusch

Green Belt: Pranav Balaji, Sai Hrishi Kalagara, Amiya Madhurakuzhiyil, Zairah Madhurakuzhiyil, Etta Spangler, and Fred Stephenson

Brown Belt: Kyle Jamison and Apuroopa Kavikondala

Provisional Black Belt: Maya Eng

Tae Kwon Do Promotions for September

Yellow Belt: Faizaan Uddin Mohammed

Adv Yellow Belt: Harry Yang

Green Belt: Pranav Balaji, Claire Benincasa, Evan Spangler, Isaac Tolman, and Katherine Xu

Adv Blue Belt: Gryphon Stern

Brown Belt: Kristiina Tulleau

Adv Brown Belt: Eugene Yum

October Training Anniversaries

One Year: Saharsh Barorkar, Amy Shrivastava, and Ayan Vikram Wani

Two Years: Elizabeth Berg and Selene Stohl

Three Years: Kimberly Budinger and Rebekah Waterbury

Five Years: Eugene Yum and Ian Yum

October Birthdays

GJN David Barrett, Amit Agarwal, Romy Baror, Claire Benincasa, Drew Bogdan, Sydney Coe, Theresa Fancher, Medha Jain, Nakul Kade, Yael Megiddo, Cade Prusch, Eshika Saxena, Amy Shrivastava, Illaria Wessling, Reed Wessling, Chelsea Wessling, Katherine Xu, Harvey Yang, and Ian Yum

We apologize if any of the above information is incorrect. Please submit corrections, in writing, at the front desk.