



United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame



INDUCTEE CLASS OF 2022

Youth

Ethan Usana

Youth Competitor of the Year

An outstanding student who not only trains hard, but is a leader in the classroom with top grades in his classes. As a competitor, he's quickly demonstrating the benefits of diligence in training, besting the competition in event after event, including winning a world championship in 2021. His goal is to continue to hone his craft, gain more confidence, and expand his knowledge of martial arts.

Bronze

Roberto Agostini

Martial Artist of the Year

Roberto Agostini holds a Black Belt in Karate, and joined the Alliance Jiu-Jitsu School of Key Biscayne in 2020 after receiving his Blue Belt in Jiu-Jitsu. His instructor, Rodrigo Antunes, commends his commitment to the school, his passion to the Arts, and his outstanding ability to teach young students with great clarity, allowing them to grow and mature as experienced martial artists.

Anthony Allen

Master Instructor of the Year

Holding an 8th Dan ranking in Taekwondo, Master Allen is a student of GM D.P. Hill with numerous distinctions to his credit. He is an inductee into the Universal Martial Arts Hall of Fame, the Masters Hall of Fame, and a recipient of the Golden Greek Award and the Sport Karate Museum's Natural Fighter Award.

Paul Alley III

Instructor of the Year

A 28-year veteran of the martial arts with a passion for MMA, Mr. Alley is a 1st degree black belt in Korusu Kenpo Submission Fighting. He also holds a Blue Belt in Brazilian Ju-Jitsu and Muay Thai. He is a member of Rodriguez BJJ and an instructor at the Texas Freefighters Submission Academy. He also teaches defensive tactics at two police academies and an active instructor in teaching women's self-defense.

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Daniel Amaro **Outstanding Kenpo Instructor**

With more than 45 years of martial arts training, Mr. Amaro currently holds a 6th Dan in American Kenpo under David Brock. He also holds 4th Dan rankings in Hapkido, Taekwondo, and Judo. He is a member of the BKFI and IKKA and an Ambassador for the Sport Karate Museum.

Holly Arnold **Instructor of the Year**

After being attacked in a parking lot, Ms. Arnold enrolled in a self-defense program taught by GM Billy Smith and Steve Park. It was there she began a 26-year journey into the world of self-defense and martial arts. Today, Ms. Arnold holds a 5th Dan in American Karate and is an instructor at the Billy Smith American Karate School in Burleson TX. A mother of 5 and grandmother of 4, she remains confident she has the knowledge to protect not only herself, but those she loves, and teaches others to do likewise.

Micah Ashby **Distinguished MMA Competitor**

Undefeated in Mixed Martial Arts, Micah Ashby is a former USD lightweight champion and 2013 MMA Fighter of the Year for Full Contact Entertainment. He won "Fight of the Night" honors on three separate occasions. He is also a North American Grappling Federation Silver Medalist and has won a World Tag Team Championship on the Independent Professional Wrestling Circuit.

Rick Avery **Kenpo Instructor of the Year**

A 7th-degree black belt in the Art of Kenpo, Master Avery has trained and ranked under legendary instructor Kenpo instructor Ed Parker and the famed fighter, Joe Lewis. He also holds a 1st Dan in Jiu-Jitsu and a Brown Belt in Shorin-Ryu. He is a recipient of several awards, including the Joe Lewis Fighter of the Year Award, and an inductee into the Masters Hall of Fame. He is a member of the IKKA and UKF.

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Mary Powell Baca **Distinguished Karate Instructor**

Sensei Baca is a 3rd degree black belt in the Okinawan Art of Shorin-Ryu under the tutelage of Senior Instructor Ed Daniel. She is an active supporter of the Sport Karate Museum and personally recommended for induction by Professor Gary Lee.

Jeffery Baker **Excellence in Instruction**

Master Baker is a 5th Dan in Pa-Sa-Ryu under GM Barbara Davis. He also holds a 3rd Dan in Taekwondo and a 1st Dan in Shotokan. He was previously inducted into the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame in 2016 as "Black Belt of the Year." Master Baker teaches at DC Dragons Karate in Olive Branch MS where he passionately teaches his students to pursue excellence not only in their training but in their lives outside the dojo.

Aidan Banafshaha **Honorable Martial Artist**

For the past 10 years, Mr. Banafshaha has trained under the tutelage of Sifu Matt Emery and currently holds a 1st degree black belt in Wushu. He has also trained in Kali, Escrima, Jun Fan Gung Fu, and Jeet Kune Do. An accomplished competitor with multiple wins in regional competition, Mr. Banafshaha has demonstrated what can be accomplished with perseverance and dedication to training.

Joshua Barut **Black Belt of the Year**

A black belt in Kajukenbo, Mr. Barut is known for his deep dedication to and depth of knowledge of the martial arts. He is considered an inspiring instructor, and is especially gifted at working with children. Mr. Barut knows not only how to motivate and inspire, but to help the students see the best within themselves. His instructors have said that he is a great instructor in the school and a great person who represents the best in the martial arts even when he's off the Mat.

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Christina Bayley Coach of the Year

Master Bayley is a fierce competitor going back to her teenage years. In 1988, at the age of 14, she took first place honors at the Junior International Championship and went on to compete for the USA Junior Team. She placed 3rd at the World University Championships as a US Collegiate Team member in 1993 and continued to dominate in competition until an injury forced her retirement in 2002. She has gone on to coach the USA National Team for USA Taekwondo and is currently the USA National Team Coach for the AAU. In 2002, she was inducted into the AAU Hall of Fame for coaching.

Kayla Beebower Honorable Martial Artist

A student of Sifu Matt Emery, Ms. Beebower is a 1st degree black belt in the Art of Wushu. She has also studied Kali, Escrima, Jun Fan Gung Fu, and Jeet Kune Do. She is an active, accomplished competitor in school tournaments. Ms. Beebower has been involved with the National Charity League, embracing philanthropy and leadership while working to make a positive difference in her local community.

Allen Dale Clifton Jr. Outstanding Karate Instructor

Master Clifton is a 9th degree black belt in American Karate and has been training for the past 45 years. The STKBBA previously recognized Master Clifton as “Outstanding Martial Artist.” He is a member of the Professional Karate Association and an STKBBA Board Member. Master Clifton teaches at the American Karate Institute in Victoria TX.

Heather Coffman Master of the Year

Recognized in 2019 as the Instructor of the Year by the Illinois TKD Association, Master Coffman holds a 6th Dan in Taekwondo and a 3rd Dan in Chunji-Do under GM Robert Cutrell. Both she and her school, Coffman’s Martial Arts Academy, have also been recognized by the Anna Chamber of Commerce for their outstanding success in molding, shaping, and influencing lives. Master Coffman hosts an annual “Break-A-Thon” raising thousands of dollars for local children and supporting organizations that help disabled veterans and homeless animals.

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Antoine Cook **Competitor of the Year**

Known as “A.J.” in the school, Mr. Cook is a 2nd-degree TKD black belt and a full-time instructor at Union UTA Martial Arts and dedicates much of his free time to competition. His students say he is a “high-energy” instructor who makes learning, especially sparring, fun. Mr. Cook recently took 2nd place at the ISKA US Open and is currently the Street Beefs Heavyweight Kickboxing Champion.

Austin Curtis **Instructor of the Year**

An honorable martial artist who has dedicated his life to his family and his students, Master Curtis has been teaching for more than 25 years. He and his students actively support a number of charitable causes in their community, transforming the lives not only of those they serve, but the students who are learning the value of serving others. Master Curtis holds a 6th Dan in Hapkido, a 1st Dan in Taekwondo, and a Blue Belt in BJJ.

Johnnie Ellis Jr. **Instructor of the Year**

The youngest of six children, Master Ellis started training at an early age and was in and out of the martial arts until an encounter with GM Scott Warren, which led to an introduction to Hall of Fame Great, GM Billy Smith. He began a lifelong pursuit in the martial arts, with a brief time off to start a family. Now a 5th Dan in Karate, Master Ellis is giving back to a new generation of students as he continues his own quest to grow.

Melina Farahmand **Honorable Martial Artist**

Ms. Farahmand has been training in Wushu for 13 years, starting at the age of 7, under the tutelage of Sifu Matt Emery, and has been privileged to also train with notables including GM Richard Bustillo, GM Taky Kimura, and Sifu Andy Kimura. Holding a black belt in Wushu, she has also trained in Jeet Kune Do, Escrima, and Kali. She is a recipient of the Emery Academy Techniques Award.

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Kenneth Gage

Black Belt Instructor of the Year

A 2020 recipient of the Sport Karate Museum's Ambassador Award, Mr. Gage has spent the last 8 years honing his craft in Taekwondo, earning a 3rd Degree Kukkiwon WTF black belt. He's also trained in American Kenpo holding a 3rd Dan ranking. Not only is he continuing his personal development in the martial arts, he is teaching the Art he loves and helping students hone their own craft in the Arts of Taekwondo and Kenpo.

John Goff

Master of the Year

A survivor of severe physical and sexual abuse as a child, Master Goff was haunted for years as a result, ultimately leading to a diagnosis of PTSD and Depression. He was also informed he had an inherited neurological condition known as Tourette Syndrome. Master Goff began training in the martial arts to gain the confidence to say "No More" and at the age of 17 he stood up to his tormentor and the abuse stopped. Master Goff's martial arts journey has been one of healing, preserving life, and conquering inner demons. Today, he teaches martial arts as a means to live a life worth living, leaving behind something that really matters – a legacy of making a difference.

Sara Goldin

Honorable Martial Artist

A student of Sifu Matt Emery for over a decade, Ms. Goldin has not only learned the arts of Wushu, Kali, Eskrima, and Jun Fan Gung Fu, but also the important character lessons of living life as a martial artist. She has been an active tournament competitor at the regional level. Outside of the school, Ms. Goldin pursues her volunteer passions serving with the Junior State of America, Global Jewish Studies Group and others while planning for a future career in veterinary medicine. She's also an active equestrian show jumper and loves riding horses.

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Derek Griner Sport Karate Champion

Actively training in the martial arts for 28 years, Master Griner holds a 5th Dan in Kempo, a 4th Dan in American Taekwondo, a 1st Dan in Moo Duk Kwan, and in Aikido. He is an active tournament competitor and was the reigning Oklahoma Karate Association State Champion in Adult Black Belt Forms, Weapons, Continuous Sparring, and Point Sparring from 2011 through 2018.

The Halstead Family Community Service

Leadership by serving others is how this family is described by those who know them. They not only go above and beyond in serving at CD Young's Karate, but they are also very active in their local community, volunteering at their church and in their community always looking for an opportunity to give back to others. Their instructor, Master CD Young, describes them as *"one of the most helpful, most willing, and most caring families in all my years of service to the arts."*

Cathrine Hancock Pursuing Excellence

Migrating from Norway to the U.S. in 2001, Ms. Hancock began working on her PhD at Florida State University, where she sought out Master Bill Logan to continue her kickboxing training, only to be introduced to her new passion, Kenpo. Not only has she progressed as a martial artist, she is now training alongside her two children, Amalie and Tobias. A relentless pursuit of excellence drives her passion to always be learning, growing, improving, and becoming a better version of herself.

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Sarah Haspel

Honorable Wushu Instructor

A 20-year veteran of Wushu, Ms. Haspel currently holds a 2nd Degree Black Belt under Sifu Matt Emery. She also trains in Kali, Escrima, Jun Fan Gung Fu, Jeet Kune Do, and Krabi Krabong and has won many titles in regional and national competition. Ms. Haspel has also been privileged to train under respected instructor, Guro Dan Inosato. Outside of martial arts, she's an entrepreneur and a mentor to young women in the areas of leadership, communication, and entrepreneurship.

Miah Hernandez

Youth Assistant Instructor

Ms. Hernandez is a student of GM Rene Garza, where she currently holds a 2nd degree black belt ranking in Tendo-Ryu Karate. She is a varsity athlete in basketball, volleyball, and soccer and brings that same competitive spirit to her martial arts training. Ms. Hernandez was recently honored with the title of Sensei by Tendo Ryu Dai Soke Lisa Suarez, and she is a co-teacher of the 3–5-year-old and youth classes at Budo Kai Dojo in Los Fresnos TX.

Mike Janusch

Instructor of the Year

Master Janusch currently holds a 6th dan ranking in American Karate under TX great, GM Billy Smith. An instructor at Billy Smith American Karate, he continues to teach the Art not only to honor his instructor, but to pass on the lineage and legacy of American Karate to a highly energetic group of students. Master Janusch is a prior Hall of Fame inductee and is being personally recognized by his Senior Instructor for his dedication.

Adam Lawson

Assistant Instructor of the Year

Mr. Lawson began training in Taekwondo in 1996 and earned his 1st Dan in 2001. In 2002, he joined Kojukan Jujitsu Academy where he earned a 2nd Dan under Lee Goodridge, who passed in 2013. He is currently training under Master Ramero Ramirez in Koa Kenpo. Having undergone 4 major knee surgeries, his tenacity and persistence has been an inspiration to others.

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Scott LaPanne

Combat Arts Operator of the Year

Holding a Master ranking in Sambo, Mr. LaPanne is a high-energy instructor who is passionate about teaching others to protect themselves from danger. With a background in wrestling, Jiu-Jitsu, Krav Maga, and Combatives experience from his military career, Mr. LaPanne is an accomplished fighter. He is a 4-time National Sambo Champion and a U.S. Open Sambo Champion. He is currently the chief instructor at Sambo Tactical.

Luis Montes

Community Service

A founding student of Budo Kai Dojo, Mr. Montes holds a 2nd degree black belt in Tendo Ryu Karate and has been awarded a 1st degree black belt in Taekwondo by the Kukkiwon. He is a member of the Los Fresnos High School powerlifting team, and volunteers in his community to assist the elderly and underprivileged. At the age of 17, he was granted a special waiver and granted the title of Sensei by Tendo Ryu's Soke, Lisa Suarez. Mr. Montes currently youth and adult classes at Budo Kai Dojo where he still also trains.

Vikki Morrow

Distinguished Female Competitor

As a college student, Ms. Morrow joined the ECU Karate Club and started training with the legendary Bill McDonald, and was the first female to receive a Black Belt from GM McDonald. She is also the first female to win the coveted Bill McDonald Fighting Award and Jim Harrison Fighter Award. Ms. Morrow opened the first commercial martial arts academy in Greenville NC at the age of 22. She was the first female to test before the SEKA at Joe Corley's dojo in Atlanta. Currently holding a 5th Dan rank in Goju Shorin, Ms. Morrow was nominated by the legendary Bob Wall to be included in the 1975 "Who's Who in the Martial Arts." Today, she is considered a pioneer in women's martial arts.

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Robert Nichols

Man of the Year

Senior instructor at Union UTA Martial arts, Master Nichols is a Hall of Fame recognized school owner and instructor. His students say he is a man of exceptional perseverance and determination, modeling the work ethic he demands of his students. In spite of the challenges many schools experienced the past two years, Master Nichols has focused on leading well, and teaching his students to do the same. Not only is the school growing in numbers, the students are thriving as they embrace living life as a martial artist both inside and outside the dojo.

Cooper Ott

Honorable Martial Artist

A fourteen-year student of Sifu Matt Emery, Mr. Ott began his martial arts journey at the age of four. During that time, he's learned Wushu, Eskrima, Kali, and Jun Fan Gung Fu. He's appeared on several TV shows, including Disney's "Jessie" alongside several of his Emery Academy classmates. He was honored to also train under GM Richard Bustillo and developed a special bond with him over the years. Mr. Ott is learning the art of coding and loves technology. He's currently working on a project to make video games more accessible to the visually impaired. Mr. Cooper is a senior at Santa Monica High School with a focus on engineering and design process.

Eric Ross

Overcoming Adversity

Master Ross started his martial arts journey in 1986, learning the art of boxing. From there, he migrated to the art of Tang Soo Do. Although he has cross-trained in several systems, Tang Soo Do remains his passion. Dealing with Degenerative Joint Disease since his youth, Master Ross has undergone multiple surgeries and joint replacements, each time overcoming adversity to keep moving forward. Even a near-fatal accident didn't deter him from his calling, teaching martial arts. With the support of his martial arts teachers and fellow instructors, Master Ross has found his "new normal" and serves as an inspiration to others as an example of one who has truly overcome adversity.

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Marvin Royce **Instructor of the Year**

Mr. Royce began his martial arts career in 1979 while stationed in Germany. He has studied several styles during his distinguished military career. While stationed at Fort Hood, he studied Taekwondo and Hapkido under GM James McMurry. Today, Mr. Royce holds a 2nd Dan in Moo Kuk Kwan Taekwondo and a 1st Dan in Hapkido under GM Dan Roberts. He is an instructor at Martial Sports Headquarters in Killeen TX and a Texas DPS licensed security classroom and firearms instructor.

Steven Royce **Instructor of the Year**

A 2nd Dan in Moo Duk Kwan Taekwondo under GM Dan Roberts, Mr. Royce is an instructor at Martial Sports Headquarters in Killeen TX and co-owner of American Paratus Security Agency. He has also studied Shito-Ryu, Ving-Tsun, Hapkido, and Soo Bak Kee. Mr. Royce is a member of the World Moo Duk Kwan Alliance, the International Soo Mak Kee Federation, and the FIMA.

Paul Schroder **Grandmaster of the Year**

A man who epitomizes the traits, qualities, and attributes of the martial arts, GM Schroder focuses on the safety and education of his students above being recognized for his achievements. He teaches at El Paso Kung Fu and is a Grandmaster in this Art. He has also trained in Kali, Boxing, Wing Chun, and BJJ.

Veronica Schroder **Child Development Instructor of the Year**

Master Schroder has made groundbreaking inroads into the field of child martial arts development, teaching students how to leadership makes them better students, better citizens of the community and positions them for greater success in life. She is a Master in the Art of Kung Fu and teaches at El Paso Kung Fu.

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Keon Vafaee

Honorable Martial Artist

Mr. Vafaee began training in Wushu at the age of 9. Today, he is a black belt in the art of Wushu under Sifu Matt Emery, He has won numerous first place titles in Wushu forms and weapons competitions, and has also furthered this training with GM Anthony, Sigung Taki Kimura, and GM Richard Bustillo. Mr. Vafaee is a distance runner, successfully completing 3 marathons before the age of 17. He will be attending Pratt Institute in New York City in the fall studying industrial and fashion design.

Jose Vasquez

Black Belt of the Year

Mr. Vasquez has been a licensed commissioned security officer for more than 19 years. He is an NRA law enforcement firearms instructor, as well as certified to teach baton, handcuffing, OC pepper spray, taser, and TX License to Carry. Mr. Vasquez began his martial arts career in 2011 and now holds the rank of 1st Dan in Moo Duk Kwan and Soo Bak Kee. He's also trained in Kung Fu. He currently assists GM Dan Roberts at the Martial Sports Headquarters in Killeen TX.

Seward Worley

Distinguished Service

A grandmaster in Dekimasu Shotokan, Mr. Worley has spent 39 years training in numerous systems, including Jeet Kune Do, Kong Soo Do, Musosenbu Kobudo, Jiu-Jitsu, Takeowndo, Wushu, and mixed martial arts. He is a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Army, serving in Bosnia-Hergovina and Iraq. GM Worley earned silver medals in national competitions and top tier rankings in the World championships in 2008. He is a member of the Dekimasu Alliance and the Traditional Okinawan Karate Association. He has also been recognized by Universal Martial Arts, Action Martial Arts Magazine, and the American Martial Arts Alliance.

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Leonardo Xavier

International Instructor of the Year

Born in Brazil, Master Xavier is an American martial artist who currently holds a 5th Degree Black Belt in Gracie Jiu-Jitsu under Master Rickson Gracie. He is a former instructor at the birthplace of Gracie Jiu-Jitsu and has won multiple World Medals in the past 25 years. Known as “The Wizard”, Master Xavier is a charismatic individual who had dedicated his life to furthering the art of Jiu-Jitsu through his students. He is also a passionate self-defense proponent, teaching numerous workshops in his community to empower people to defend themselves, regardless of age, gender, or athletic ability.

John F. Williams

Influential Leadership

A student of GM Richard Osborne, Master Williams holds a 5th Dan ranking in Taekwondo and has also trained in Jiu-Jitsu, Shotokan, Muay Thai, and Aikido. He is a member of MMASC, GM Anthony’s Martial Arts, and the Flying Tigers Fight School. With 27 grand championships under his belt, Master Williams has been a formidable competitor for a number of years. Outside the dojang, Master Williams has committed his life to teaching young men and women to step into their greatness and become a more confident version of themselves. He is also an influential podcaster.

Silver

James Anderson

Distinguished Master

A 5th degree black belt under Professor Gary Lee and Dell Krandell, Master Anderson has been studying the martial arts for more than six decades. He’s a student of American Karate and Hawaiian Kenpo and has dedicated his life to not only growing and learning as a martial artist, but passing his knowledge on to future generations.

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Michael Bowman Distinguished Instructor

Training under the duo of Grandmasters Tim and Pat Fox, Master Bowman currently holds a 5th Dan in Taekwondo. He's also holds a 5th Dan in Karate, a 1st Dan in Judo and has trained in Jiu-Jitsu. Recognized as an outstanding instructor during his military service and in the martial arts, Master Bowman not only actively teaches in the School where he trains, but also gives back to his local community by teaching women's self-defense classes to teen and adult women.

James Butcher Distinguished Master Instructor

A student of the legendary GM Pat Burluson and Professor Gary Lee, Master Butcher is a 6th Dan black belt in American karate. With more than 75 students in an after-school program and more than 200 students enrolled in nightly classes, Master Butcher is focused on raising up a new generation of martial arts students who walk with confidence and live disciplined lives that allow them to achieve their goals and dreams for the future. He has received numerous commendations and earned multiple certifications in fitness, nutrition, first-aid, and personal training. Master Butcher is also an award-winning power breaker and is a member several associations, including the Sport Karate Museum.

Steve Cooper Distinguished Sport Karate Promoter

For the past 35 years, Master Cooper has dedicated his life to the martial arts. An 8th degree black belt in American Kenpo, he teaches at United Kenpo Karate Studios where he passes on the knowledge and experience gained from more than 3 decades of training. As a 6-time international fighting champion, Master Cooper has proven his worth in the ring and now teaches that same instinct to win into the lives of his students. He also holds 1st degree black belts in Lua, Aikido, and Ju-Jitsu. He is the founder of Sport Martial Arts Association and owns SMA Events, an event and expo production and promotion company and has run the Long Beach Internationals, one of California's most prestigious tournaments, for many years.

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David Feliciano

Silver Life Award

GM Feliciano has a distinguished career spanning nearly five decades, culminating in the founding of the Art of Shin-Kakuo-Ryu. He also holds a 10th Dan ranking in Okami-Ryu, an 8th Dan in Karate, a 4th Dan in Kyo-Kushin, a 3rd Dan in Shiri-Jyu-Ku, a 2nd Dan in Sei-Wa-Kai, and a 1st Dan in Shorin-Ryu. He is president of the Armed Forces Karate Association, a member of the All Japan Budo Association, and a History General with the Sport Karate Museum.

Paul Haben

Distinguished Instructor

Mr. Haben began his martial arts journey in 1988, earning his Black Belt in Ju-Ki-Do under his Fater-In-Law, Kyoshi Ivan Ujueta in 1995. Currently holding a 4th Dan in Ju-ki-do, he also holds a 2nd Dan in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and a 3rd Dan in Judo. Mr. Haben is a Bronze Certified Wrestling Coach with USA Wrestling and along with his family, runs Inochi Alliance of Mixed Martial Arts where they believe in integration and growth both on and off the mats. Mr. Haben is a NASKA and NAGA World Champion and was ranked #2 nationally by USA Judo in his division in 2018. He has also served as the Operations Director under Professor Luiz Sergio Correa for the Central and North American Abu Dhabi World Championship Trials, Through all of this Mr. Haben states that he has been most blessed seeing lives touched through Martial Arts fulfilling the mission of IMMA; "To Develop Whole and Healthy Individuals who know how to Live Life on Purpose and Never Quit"

Cindy Hales

BJJ Pioneer

Grappling legend Cindy "Sleeper" Hales is a 4th degree Black Belt in the Art of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. She's a 3-time IBJJF Master World Champion, 2-time IBJJF Pan American Champion, and a pioneer of women's BJJ and mixed martial arts. Known for her prowess as a competitor, Master Hales earned her nickname from her uncanny ability to render competitors unconscious using a variety of traditional and unconventional chokeholds. She's not only a formidable competitor, but she's dedicated more than 20 years of her life to providing highly technical instruction, passing her decades of knowledge and experience on to a new generation of BJJ students.

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Chris Hawkins

Modeling Leadership

With more than 36 years in the martial arts, Master Hawkins is currently a 9th Dan in Isshin-Ryu and Ju-Jitsu under GM Pete Mills. He is also a 9th Dan in Combative Ju-Jitsu and a certified KMA Krav Maga Instructor. Master Hawkins is a prior Hall of Fame inductee and a member of the Krav Maga Association and Universal Isshin-Ryu Karate & Ju-Jitsu Association. He has traveled extensively around the globe to assist GM Mills in hosting martial arts clinics and workshops and trains at Battle Rock Krav Maga. A man who models leadership both in and out of class, Master Hawkins epitomizes what it means to lead yourself well and to make good choices.

Dave Henson

Distinguished Master Competitor

A 5th degree black belt in American Taekwondo, Master Henson has been training for 38 years. He also holds a 1st Dan in Shorin-Ryu and a Blue Belt in Jiu-Jitsu. Master Henson was the AOK Rookie of the year in 1992 and went on to win the Canadian Championship three times. He is also a 5-time Texas AOK Champion and a 4-time NASKA National Champion, and took top honors at the International Law Enforcement Games. He is a Sport Karate Museum History General and a recipient of the Joe Lewis Dragon Image Fighting Award.

Patrick Hickey

Distinguished Grandmaster

Senior instructor and 9th Dan Black Belt at Hickey Karate Center, GM Hickey trains the next generation of students in the art of Hazumu-Lau. With more than 50 years of study, his mission is to instill his knowledge and experience into his students so they can then teach the Art to others in the future. GM Hickey is a member of the USAKF, USAJF, USANKF, USATKJ, and USASJA where he serves with distinction.

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George Hissing, Jr. Distinguished Combative Operator

A 4th Dan in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu under Marcelo Alonso, Master Hissing has more than 26 years of experience in BJJ. He has successfully competed at the IBJJF, Masters Worlds, and American Nationals. Master Hissing has served as a Law Enforcement officer for more than 30 years and is the Lead D/T Instructor for the Seattle Police Department. He is also a strong proponent for those who have endured domestic abuse or have been the victims of human trafficking. To his peers, he is recognized as a man who lives his life with integrity, humility, respect, loyalty, leadership, and love for his fellow man.

Johnny Hunter Distinguished Martial Arts Service

With an 8th Dan in Shotokan and Kempo, GM Johnny Hunter is currently the owner and head instructor at Hunter Shotokan Kempo Karate in Houston TX. He is a past president of the USA Traditional Karate International Confederation and a 4-time Hall of Fame inductee. During his time as a competitor in the Texas AOK, he was ranked #4 in the State and was the 1989 Kumite Champion. GM Hunter has been featured on Fox 26 TV's "City under Siege" and is known for his ongoing community service work within the city he loves. He has been recognized by Action Martial Arts Magazine and serves as an Ambassador for the Sport Karate Museum.

David Johnson Developing Champions

Chief instructor at Team K2 Karate, Master Johnson began his martial arts journey training in the art of Taekwondo. His work took him away from training for a few years, but he returned to training and was the very first black belt to be promoted under Wayne Nguyen. In 1996, Master Johnson won his first world title on the NBL circuit in the art of breaking and went on to win multiple world titles in kata and weapons. He now produces state and world champions within his martial arts studio, "Team K2 Karate."

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Timothy Keef

Distinguished Master

Inspired by the likes of Bruce Lee, Chuck Norris, and Billy Jack, Master Keef began studying by reading martial arts books, as his parents couldn't afford lessons. At the age of 23, he found a school and began training under Sensei T.J. Cauldwell. He was hooked. He has since gone on to win the Oklahoma Karate Association State Championship in forms and fighting in 1989. Starting his own school in 1992, Master Keef made a commitment to teach students, regardless of ability, and has been privileged to work with a number of special needs students, adapting the training to their ability to learn. He began a long training relationship with GM Pat Fox and GM Tim Fox starting in 1993, and he now holds a 5th Dan rank in Tae Kwon Do under these distinguished grandmasters. After a distinguished law enforcement career, he retired as Chief of Police in 2020

Patrick Kelly

Silver Life Award

After a distinguished military career in the Marines, Master Kelly suffered a career ending injury that resulted in more than 30 surgeries. His introduction to the martial arts came through learning the art of Qwan Ki Do. Now a 5th Dan in QKD, Master Kelly has become the technical director for the United States and has taught the Art he loves in more than 30 countries. Even after being confined to a wheelchair in 2003, Master Kelly continues to live a rich and full life, qualifying for a license in Keel Boat Sailing and earning a Distinguished Expert in rifle shooting in 2017

Dexter Kennedy

Silver Life Award

A practitioner in the Art of Isshin-Ryu, Mr. Kennedy has spent more than four decades mastering the martial arts. He's also trained in American Karate and Taekwondo. Sensei Kennedy believes the process of learning and becoming a martial artist is just as important, if not more important, than the rank earned over time. He is both a student and instructor at Genova Karate Studio in Elgin, South Carolina.

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Joyce Knight

Distinguished Female School Owner

After retiring from the KY State Police Department after 27 years of service and seeing the aftermath of violence and abuse to children and young women, Ms. Knight wanted to give back. Taking the knowledge she had gained from training with Shihan Jaff Waddle and Master Paul Bryant, Ms. Knight started a program for economically challenged families, offering martial arts to those who can't afford to pay. Her passion is to create leaders and promote the martial arts as a way of life.

Sam Kuoha

Distinguished Grandmaster

GM Kuoha grew up in Hawaii where he began training in Shotokan at the age of 4, later transitioning to Judo at age 10 before discovering Kempo. He earned his black belt under Master Kuheana, later training under Oshiro Sensei to learn Japanese Kobudo and Professor Andrew Lum to learn Chinese Weapons and Chi Gong. GM Kuoha later learned Aikido from John Damien before returning to Hawaii to train with Professor William Chow, who ultimately promoted him to 9th Dan. At the death of Professor Chow, GM Kuoha was promoted to 10th Dan as the Grandmaster of Kara-Ho Kempo Karate. He is also a former world record holder, breaking 2100 pounds of ice when his head. GM Kuoha has appeared in several magazines and martial arts movies and choreographed fight scenes for numerous films.

Monika LaFleur

Empowering Lives

Master LaFleur is not just a great instructor but a leader in her Christian life. She trains with the belief that God is always in control. She guides students as well as instructors on how to rely on God for hard times as well as happy times. Master LaFleur works well with others and sets an example of how to deal with tough situations. Her instructor, Shihan Sandra Larwood, says she is a true leader in our dojo, understanding the importance in raising students to be productive and responsible citizens. She leads with grace and kindness along with a firm hand.

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Craig Lightfoot

Distinguished Military Service

Colonel Lightfoot began his martial arts training while his father was serving at Bergstrom Air Force Base in Texas in 1965, earning his 1st Dan in Judo in 1968. He began training in Taekwondo in 1968, earning his 1st Dan in 1971. Col. Lightfoot joined the Air Force in 1974 and was instrumental in getting the Air Force to recognize Taekwondo as an Air Force Sport, serving as the first president of the Air Force Taekwondo Association and representing the U.S. Military Team at the 1988 Olympics in South Korea. In 2013, the Air Force bestowed the Armed Services Judo and Ju-Jitsu Soaring Eagle Award on Col. Lightfoot. He has served our nation with distinction, and today teaches at Lightfoot Martial Arts Academy in Georgia.

Janice Mills

Exceptional Leadership

Previously recognized as International Instructor of the Year and Head Instructor of the Year, Ms. Mills continues to set the standard for excellence and modeling that before the students in her school. She and her husband, Todd Mills, are co-instructors at Battle Rock Krav Maga, and long-time students of Professor Marty Cale and Isshin-Ryu Grandmaster Pete Mills. She is a full instructor in Krav Maga and also teaches tactical training to law enforcement and defensive tactics instructors.

Todd Mills

Exceptional Leadership

Master Todd Mills has already had a distinguished career, being recognized as Master of the Year, School of the Year, and Instructor of the Year. He and his wife, Janice, are co-instructors at Battle Rock Krav Maga. Master Mills holds a 7th Dan in Isshin Ryu under Grandmaster Pete Mills and is a Full Instructor in Krav Maga under Professor Marty Cale. He currently serves as the vice-president of the Krav Maga Association and teaches defensive tactics training the law enforcement officers and martial arts school owners.

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Ronald Malina, Jr. Distinguished Defensive Tactics Instructor

A 20-year veteran law enforcement officer, Master Malina currently serves as the Training and Recruiting Sergeant for the Sugar Land Police Department. He brings to his extensive D/T background nearly 3 decades of experience as a 6th Dan in American Karate. In 2019, he authored "*Listening to the Masters*" which debuted as a #1 New Release on Amazon. He followed that up with his second book, "*Above and Beyond*," showcasing the good work police officers do across the United States. He loves training new officers and preparing them to serve and protect, and go home to their families at the end of each shift.

Jesus Martinez Distinguished Master

Master Martinez served his nation, and now serves the martial arts community with distinction as a 5th Dan black belt in Goshin Jutsu. After suffering a stroke in 2017, Master Martinez started on a long and difficult road to recovery. With the help of GM Tommy Rodriguez, Master Martinez recovered well enough to begin teaching once again. His tenacity to overcome and persevere is a testament to who he is and serves as an inspiration to his students that they too can overcome any challenge they face.

Drew Miles Distinguished Grandmaster

With over 4 decades of martial arts instruction, GM "Zaki" Miles has won numerous state and national titles and gone on to train other champion competitors. He sees martial arts as not only an excellent means of self-defense but how one develops self-confidence and healthy self-esteem. With over 20 national titles and a World Championship to his credit, "Master Zacki" was a formidable competitor who has dedicated the last 40 years of his life to teaching others to walk the martial arts way and to do so with excellence.

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James Moore

Silver Life Award

Grandmaster James Moore has dedicated nearly 60 years of his life to the martial arts, currently holding a 6th Dan in Kung Jung Mu Sul under GM Soon Tae Yang. He also holds a 4th Dan in Shorin-Ryu and Taekwondo and a 1st Dan in Chinese Kenpo. GM Moore is a recipient of the Immortal Warrior Award and is a Masters Hall of Fame inductee. He is also recognized as a History General by the Sport Karate Museum. Outside the martial arts, GM Moore is a successful entrepreneur and consultant with a background in finance, investment banking, private equity and venture capital and has served as a member of the Board of Trustees for Claremont McKenna College and Franklin University Switzerland, receiving a Distinguished/Outstanding Service Award from each institution.

Thomas Mullikin

Distinguished Master

Dr. Thomas Mullikin holds a Black Belt in Karate and is a certified Army Master Fitness Trainer and Self-Defense Instructor. In 2019, he was inducted into the South Carolina Black Belt Hall of Fame. Dr. Mullikin was featured in Black Belt Magazine in 2017 and recognized as “an accomplished martial artist of several disciplines who holds a black belt in karate.” His accomplishments and acknowledgments during his decorated military career are numerous, and include the U.S. Army Meritorious Service Medal and the Order of Palmetto, South Carolina’s highest award. Dr. Mullikin earned his PhD from Columbia International and his J.D. from the University of South Carolina.

Cirilo Ocampo

Distinguished Boxing Master

Born in Mexico, Mr. Ocampo learned the value of hard work. After immigrating to the United States, he began training, and learning English, under GM Joe Hidrogo. In 1989 and 1990, Mr. Ocampo won the Fort Worth Golden Gloves Boxing Tournament. As he got older he trained in the Sigma Chi Fraternity and competed in their annual boxing tournaments, never losing in 20 years of competition. During these same 20 years, he raised over \$300,000 for the Huntsman Cancer Foundation while also offering free boxing classes to his students. Mr. Ocampo is a man who values giving, as to whom much has been given, much is expected.

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Robert Olmedo

Martial Arts Excellence

A man who has dedicated his life to the protection of others, Master Olmedo is an in-demand international personal protection specialist, protecting the lives of a number of high-profile clients over the years, including John F. Kennedy Jr. Princess Diana, Carlos Santana, Sheryl Crow, and clients of Bridgewater Associates. Holding a 5th Dan in Soo Bahk Do Moo Dak Kwan, he also holds black belts in Judo, Aikido, Hapkido, Jujitsu, and Kali. Master Olmedo is also a certified trainer and has affiliations with several law enforcement organizations.

Paul Ortino Jr.

Silver Life Award

Grandmaster Ortino started his martial arts journey 54 years ago. Today, he holds a 9th Dan in Okinawan Kenpo and Taekwondo, and a 5th Dan in Red Dragon Karate. GM Ortino is a former president of the Hawaii Karate Congress and currently serves as a History General for the Sport Karate Museum. He is the lead instructor at Okinawa Kenpo Dharma-Ryu Dojo.

Paul Parent

Silver Life Award

Grandmaster Paul Parent began a distinguished career in the martial arts in 1993, initially training under the first and only Brown Belt to be granted a school license by Nick Cerio, and as Professor Cerio advanced, so did GM Parent. In 2012, GM Parent partnered with GM Chris Horlbogan to create Zanshin Kenjutsu Kenpo, recognized by the International Kenpo Council of Grandmasters. In 2013, he received his 8th Dan and Grandmaster title from Soki Wali Islam and Sr. GM Steve Nugent, and his 9th Dan in 2015. GM Parent has personally trained over 22,000 law enforcement officers in 32 states, as well as Marines assigned to the Pentagon and Navy Spec Ops at DEVGRU. His proudest moment was founding the Zanshin Charity Foundation, raising over \$75,000 to help wounded warriors, and those dealing with autism and heart disease.

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Steve Parks

Distinguished Grandmaster

After starting in Taekwondo in high school, Grandmaster Parks was later introduced to American Karate and 40 years later, it remains his passion. A long-time student of GM Billy Smith and GM Billy Brammer, and later under legendary GM J. Pat Burleson. After a successful business career, GM Parks is now developing a private ranch for future trophy bass fishing and whitetail hunting in West Texas. He's a decorated martial artist with inductions into the Masters Hall of Fame, a History General recognition by the Sport Karate Museum, and a recipient of the Joe Lewis Fighting Award, among others.

Jenny Pless

Martial Arts Excellence

Master Pless began training in the country of Malaysia, and today holds a 6th Dan in Taekwondo and has trained in the Art of Kung Fu for 14 years. She is also a recognized member of the Superfoot System and a personal student of IMAC Ambassador, GM Bill "Superfoot" Wallace. Master Pless volunteers her time as an instructor at the Fort Bend Women's Shelter, Sunshine Kids Foundation, and the Sugar Land Senior Center. She believes you're never too young, or too old, to learn and benefit from the martial arts. At a time when many martial arts retire from active competition, Master Pless not only continues to be an active competitor, but continues to best the competition time and again.

Creed Potter

Distinguished Master

A 6th Dan in Karate under J. Pat Burleson and Professor Gary Lee, Master Potter has spent nearly three decades honing his craft. He has received a 3rd Dan from the Bushi Bon and holds a 2nd Dan in Kenway-Ashin-Ryu Bu-Jutsu. He was recognized as a "Master Breaker" in 2014 and today teaches at American Fitness and Martial Arts.

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Ramsey Saffouri

Making Room for Faith

A 6th Dan in Goju-Ryu with over 20 years of experience, Dr. Saffouri also holds a 3rd Dan ranking in Iaido and a 2nd Dan in American Kenpo. He is the President and Chancellor of Christ Jesus College and Seminary, an accredited Bible College and Seminary. Dr. Saffouri is the founder of AM-PM DOC, a telemedical service that provides 24-hour medical services to their community. He has been an outspoken advocate for the advancement of medical treatments that help bring a better quality of life to patients.

Eugene Sedeno

Silver Life Award

Grandmaster Sedeno started training in Judo at the age of 10 and today is a 10th Dan in Chinese Kenpo. He also holds a 9th Dan in Kajukenbo Self-Defense, a 9th Dan in Shaolin Kenpo, and a 5th Dan in American Kenpo. In 1980, he received Competitor of the Year commendations from the Chinese Martial Arts Association and International Kung Fu Association. He's a member of the Kajukenbo Self-Defense Institute, the American Martial Arts Alliance, and the USA Martial Arts Foundation. Master Sedeno was a private student of Ed Parker and received a promotion from GM James Mitose just before his passing in 1981. Since 1969, he's been teaching at Sedeno's School of Self-Defense in Albuquerque NM.

William Staley

Silver Life Award

GM Staley, a student of Professor Gary Lee, is a 9th Dan in Shaolin Kenpo. He is involved with hands-on application of security, self-defense, personal protection, investigations, and safety as a lifetime career professional as the Assistant Chief of American Paratus Security Agency. He is an ASIS, "Certified Protection Professional" and trains continually to keep skills sharp. GM Staley is a member of International Association of Security and Investigative Regulators

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Alisha Starnes

Distinguished Female Master

Master Starnes is a 5th Dan Black Belt in American Karate, under the lineage of GM J. Pat Burleson and GM Billy Smith. She, along with her husband GM Steve Starnes, co-teach at the North Texas Karate Academy. Her calm demeanor puts her students at ease, allowing them to feel accepted and valued. Master Starnes models what it means to be a respectful martial artist, leading by example. She has studied Japanese Kobudo and is a recipient of the Women's Fighting Award. Master Starnes has also been named a Cancer Warrior Honorary Black Belt.

Raul Vasquez

Distinguished Grandmaster

The consummate martial artist, GM Vasquez began his training under legendary GM Jhoon Rhee at the age of 17. His distinguished career includes an exhaustive list of victories in tournament competitions between 1969 and 1986. He has also officiated over 200 tournaments since 1971. He began his teaching career at Texas A&I University's Karate Club and went on to found the South Texas Karate Championships. GM Vasquez has been featured in Professional Karate and Taekwondo Magazines and is a member of multiple associations including the U.S. Taekwondo Association and Jhoon Rhee Institute. Today, he holds a 10th Dan in Taekwondo under GM J. Pat Burleson.

Leka Vieira

Silver Life Award

Ms. Vieira is one of the most important figures in the history of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. She was the first female Black Belt World Champion in the sport in 1990. Her tenacity and dedication to continual growth helped to elevate women's grappling, paving the way for new generations to flourish and experience higher levels of success in the martial arts. Today, she holds a 6th degree in BJJ, a Brown Belt in Judo, and has also trained in Wrestling and Capoeira. Ms. Vieira is considered a pioneer in women's martial arts.

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Elizabeth Villarreal Silver Life Award

A student of GM Fernando Limon, Ms. Villareal started competing in 1984, bringing home a 1st place trophy in sparring and 2nd place trophy in kata. She went on to become the #1 ranked beginner, intermediate, and advanced competitor in the UMA and AOK in sparring and kata, and as the #1 international competitor in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico before retiring from competition in 1996. In 1998, Master Villarreal opened the Villarreal Institute of Martial Arts and was the lead instructor until 2014. Today, she is supporting and continuing to train her daughter, Michelle, as she opens her first martial arts school, the Molina Institute of Martial Arts.

Carl Whitaker Silver Life Award

An instructor at The Karate School, GM Whitaker currently holds an 8th Dan in Taekwondo under Bob Beasley. He is a member of the Professional Karate Association and the Sport Karate Museum. He has been recognized by the Masters Hall of Fame, the Universal Hall of Fame, and has received numerous awards and commendations for his many martial arts accomplishments over the years.

Santae Wilson, Jr. Distinguished Black Belt Competitor

An ISKA Featherweight World Champion, GM Wilson is a highly decorated martial arts competitor. He has been recognized by the Texas Martial Arts Hall of Fame, the Masters Hall of Fame, and Texas Black Sports Karate Mall of Fame and is a member of the American Karate Black Belt Association. A 10th Dan in Shorin-Ryu under Ed Daniel, he currently teaches kickboxing at Mezger Martial Arts.

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Micheal Winchester Master Instructor

Master Winchester is currently a 5th degree black belt in the art of Chung Do Kwon Taekwondo under Phil Wilemon and Barry Guimbellot. He is an instructor at Grand Masters Martial Arts, passing on his knowledge so a future generation can experience this Korean Art. Master Winchester is a member of the American Blackbelt Karate Association and a 2013 recipient of the Walt Mason Award. In addition to his 48 years in Taekwondo, Master Winchester has also trained in Kobudo, studying a number of martial arts weapons.

Bruce Lee Wynn Distinguished Service

Master Wynn is a 7th Degree Black Belt in Taekwondo, currently serving as the Chief Instructor at WYN-GYM Kata Martial Arts where he trains youth and adults in martial arts and gymnastics. Having earned his Masters in Business management at Colorado Technical University, Master Wynn has gone on to serve our nation in the U.S Army Chaplain's Corps, focusing on spiritual and safety issues. He certified as a Level Three Security Officer, a Firearms Proficiency Instructor, and a Level Four Personal Protection Officer Certification. He's worked both as a fight choreographer and martial arts actor in film and on stage.

Gold

Manuel Arcos III Master of Excellence

A student of IMAC Grandmaster Council member, Manuel T. Arcos, Master Arcos is a 55-year student of the Art of Kajukenbo, currently holding a rank of 9th Degree. He has also trained in Shotokan, Escrima, Kali, Arnis, Jiu-Jitsu, and Chan-Shu Kung Fu. Master Arcos was previously recognized with induction into the KOA Masters Hall of Fame. His passion is Women's Self-Defense, empowering women to walk confidently in life.

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Norris Broussard Golden Life Award

Master Broussard began training at the age of 17 and 50 years later, it continues to drive his passion as a lifelong student of learning. A student of GM Phil Wilemon and Professor Marty Cale, he holds a 7th Dan in Taekwondo and is an Instructor in Krav Maga. Master Broussard is a member of the Texas Karate Alumni and the International Krav Maga Association. He teaches at Grandmasters Karate in McKinney TX. He will be testing for his 8th Dan in August of this year.

Robert Frankovich Honor Award

The Honor Award is bestowed by our President, and this year's recipient is Grandmaster Robert Frankovich. He has been considered by many in the Song Moo Kwan family as the "glue" that connects the martial arts community that trains in this System. GM Frankovich loves to connect the history of the Art to the passion of its creators, and he travels extensively to teach not only the Song Moo Kwan system but the culture that is at the heart of this Korean system. He is also a 4th Dan (Chief Master) in Haidong Gumdo and 2nd Dan in Seidokan Aikido.

Willie Galloway Golden Life Award

Affectionately known as "Bear", GM Galloway is a giant of a man who walks with reverence, grace, and patience. Even though he demands much from his students every time they enter the dojo, they love and respect him as they know he truly has their best interest in mind and wants to see them succeed. For years a fierce competitor in the TX Sports Karate Circuit, GM Galloway today runs one of the most successful, longest-running tournaments in Texas, The Body, Mind, Spirit Tournament. A 9th Degree black belt in Goju-Ryu, he is an in-demand judge and arbitrator at many AOK tournaments throughout the year for his consistency, and fairness, earning him high respect by competitors, instructors, and promoters.

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Barry Guimbellot

Golden Life Award

A 10th Dan in Chung Do Kwon Tae Kwon Do, GM Guimbellot has devoted more than fifty years of his life to training in the martial arts. He is a student of the legendary Allen Steen, and has trained in Aki-Jitsu and Kobu-Jitsu under GM Ted Gambrodella. GM Guimbellot was co-producer of the Southern Karate Championships and Big "D" Karate Championships for 35 years and has directed many AOK and AKBBA tournaments over the years. He serves on the American Karate Black Belt Association Board of Directors and is currently the owner and chief instructor at Grandmasters Karate in Prosper TX.

John Hawk

Lifetime Achievement Award

At the age of 80, GM Hawk can literally say he's "been there, done that." A 10th Dan in Wado-Ryu, he's is a student of the legendary GM Robert Trias and has been a force in the TX martial arts community for decades. He also holds a 5th Dan in the Art of Goshin-Do Kempo under GM Pete Siringano. GM Hawk has been featured in Action Martial Arts Magazine and currently sits on the Gary Alexander IAMA Senior Shihan Board of Governors, sharing his wisdom and insight with students and instructors. He is also a Senior Instructor at the American Academy of Martial Arts Hombu.

Aaron Huey

Transformational Leadership

A lifelong practitioner of martial arts Aaron's success all began with a small self-defense school in Boulder Colorado, from there, Aaron became an internationally known lecturer on archetypal imagery, body language, and martial arts and the Founder and President of Fire Mountain Programs, and since 2004 has run kids camps, teen camps, and family programming. In 2009, he and his wife Christine opened a residential Mental Health and Dependency recovery treatment center for teens ages 12-17 in Colorado. Fire Mountain Residential Treatment Center was in 2019 named one of the Top 50 Healthcare Providers in the United States and in 2020 named one of the Top 100 Innovators in Healthcare.

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Guy James

Golden Life Award

With more than 6 decades in the art of American Karate, GM James has dedicated his entire life to training in the martial arts. He trained under legendary GM J. Pat Burleson, who promoted him to 9th Dan in 2020. GM James also holds a blue belt in Jiu-Jitsu. He was the World Champion of the Sport Karate International in 1993 and in 1994 earned the National Black Belt League Title. He's appeared in Action Martial Arts Magazine, and received the Joe Lewis Fighting Award from the Sport Karate Museum in 2015. He also received the coveted AMAA Eagle Award in 2018.

Reginald Lee

Golden Life Award

Celebrating his 50th year in the martial arts, Master Lee is a decorated martial artist who is committed to service. He is a 2020 recipient of the Sport Karate Museum's Professional Maximizer Award and a 2021 recipient of the Presidential Volunteer Service Award. Dr. Lee is the creator of Self-Defense Enhancement Training in Virtual Reality (SETVR), a cutting-edge technology to bring martial arts into the virtual world. SERV is a virtual reality platform allowing a practitioner to hone their self-defense skills within a virtual environment, improving eye-hand coordination, muscle memory and honing one's sense of situational awareness. A medical doctor by vocation, Dr. Lee is a 6th Dan in Kung Fu and Koga-Ryu Ninjitsu.

Mick Moore

Golden Life Award

Master Moore started his Taekwondo training in 1967 under Ralph Jaschke. During the "blood and guts" competition era, he was part of two undefeated teams in the tournament circuit. After receiving his 6th Dan under GM Jhoon Rhee, Master Moore is giving back to students as an instructor, and serving as a member of the South Texas Karate Black Belt Association where he sits on various testing boards. He is a Sport Karate Museum Ambassador and recipient of the Ralph Jaschke Memorial Dragon Award.

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Mike Primeau

Golden Life Award

With over 45 years in the Martial Arts, Master Primeau hit the ground running. In his second year in Karate, he took 18 first place finishes, including the Fort Worth Nationals and Karate Olympics. In college, he competed in 125 tournaments. He was awarded the AOK "Toughest in Texas" award as a Brown Belt, before earning his Black Belt under Joe Alvarado with Ray McCallum. After graduating from the University of Texas moved to New York and opened The Elm Street Dojo, teaching Soryu Karate, Kickboxing, and Boxing 20 hours a week while training in BJJ with future UFC Champ Matt Serra under Renzo Gracie. Master Primeau was an early advocate of MMA and an early supporter of UFC traveling to Las Vegas for many of the early fight cards. In 2014, he moved to San Antonio to help build Neuro Sports Performance & Rehab as a sports injury specialist. Today, he continues to work with many Martial Artists who are dealing with injuries, chronic pain, and for sports performance.

Charles Sheffield

Golden Life Award

A student of Kum-Soo-Lee, Master Sheffield currently holds a 5th Dan in Taekwondo and Hapkido. He also holds a 4th Dan Kukkiwon Taekwondo rank and a 1st Dan in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. For more than 50 years, he has been committed to not only bettering himself but sharing his knowledge and wisdom with students of all ages.

Phil Torres

Lifetime Achievement Award

A 34-year veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, Master Torres rose from the rank of Private to Colonel. He is a recipient of the Silver Star Medal for his gallantry in action as a platoon sergeant in Vietnam. He served as Inspector General, Advisor to the Commandant, and as a Commander of a Marine Corps Security Force responsible for the security of a significant portion of the U.S. strategic nuclear triad. He began his martial arts training in 1961, studying Ju-Jitsu in a church basement before transitioning to Shotokan karate in 1964. Master Torres military journey took him across the Pacific, traveling to the birthplace of Karate, Okinawa. Today, he's a 7th Dan in Shorin-Ryu under GM Fuse Kise, and has also trained in Isshin-Ryu. Master Torres has received numerous awards over his distinguished military and martial arts career and he's currently serving as a History General for the Sports Karate Museum.

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James Vallance

Golden Life Award

This year marks the golden anniversary of Grandmaster Vallance's teaching career. A 9th Dan in the art of Shotokan under Nikya Yamashita, he has dedicated his life to adding value to his students to instill the qualities of leadership and discipline that reach beyond the Dojo into every day life. GM Vallance never let money (or the lack thereof) get in the way of training a student wishing to learn. He is a member of Satori Ryu, the International Congress of Masters, and was recently honored with a "Living Legend" award by the Alliance for his decades of service to the martial arts community in Ohio.

Louis Vazquez

Golden Life Award

Master Vazquez, known as "Louie", is known by his peers as a well-respected martial artist. In his competition days, he dominated junior and adult divisions winning state, national, and world titles. His training lineage includes Alfred Torres, George Minshew, and Robert Torres. Today, he's a 3rd Dan black belt in Tang Soo Do and Taekwondo and teaches at Wilson Karate Academy. Some of his accolades include Rookie of the Year, the Sport Karate Junior Award, the Sport Karate Fighter Award, and the Mexico City Fighter Award. He also received an honorary "Key to the City of New Orleans, LA."

Lonnie Walker

Golden Life Award

Chief instructor at Walker's Martial Arts, GM Walker is a Korean stylist holding a 9th degree in the Art. He is also a 6th Dan in Tang Soo Do and a Black Sash in Yang Style Tai Chi. GM Walker has been recognized by the American Martial Arts Association, Action Martial Arts Magazine, and the NBL Hall of Fame.

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Platinum

James Debrow III

Lifetime Achievement Award

A highly decorated veteran of law enforcement, GM James Debrow is one of Texas' most distinguished law enforcement officers. He holds a 10th Dan in Goju-Ryu and Taekwondo and has trained under GM Al Francis, GM Charles Dixon, Dr. Dan Roberts, Dr. Larry Lockhart, and Dr. Victor Moore. He is a member of the Shinji-Masu International Martial Arts Association and the International Martial Arts Council of America and a former inductee of the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame. A former TSDPS state trooper, he is a Forensic Use of Force expert, State Defensive Tactics Coordinator, State licensed and certified Forensic Investigative Hypnotist, Firearms Instructor and Lead Instructor to the Texas Rangers. He has been FBI trained in Interview and Interrogation, statement analysis, use of force, constitutional law for executives, neuro-linguistic programming, investigative psychology, and profiling.

Ramiro Estalilla, Jr.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Grandmaster Ramiro Estalilla Jr. descended from a family of Eskrimadors. Born in the Philippines in 1930, he began studying Eskrima at the age of 11 as a necessity to protect his family and community during World War II. His formal studies began in 1948 under his Uncle Bernardo Banay and later from his father, Ramiro Estalilla Sr., who taught him Kabaroan Eskrima. Grandmaster Estalilla is a minister by profession. Ordained in 1946, he graduated from the Manila Bible Seminary in 1951 and the Philippine Bible College in 1953. He migrated to the United States as a preacher in 1976 and ultimately settled in Fresno, California. He taught Eskrima at Fresno City College and at California State University, Fresno, where he also taught Bible studies, sport fencing, self-defense. He has also worked professionally as a radio broadcaster and has taught philosophy and languages. Over the years, Grandmaster Estalilla founded the United States Eskrimadors Legion, the Eskrima Consultants Association, the Kabaroan Instructors Association, and The Order of Kabaroan. He has taught Kabaroan Eskrima to students all around the world.

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Platinum Plus

Ray Dionaldo

Ambassador

Tuhon Dionaldo has been a global ambassador of the Filipino Combat Series, the art he founded after more than 40 years of training. He is a Master in Modern Arnis, a Lakan Isa in Kali, an Ancient Arts Academy Instructor, an 8th degree black belt in Karate and Kobudo, 4th Dan black belt in Wado Ryu, 2nd degree black belt in Shorin-Ryu, in addition to other ranks and titles to numerous to mention.

Tuhon Dionaldo has produced more than 50 Filipino Martial Arts videos and has been featured numerous times in multiple martial arts magazines around the world. He's traveled to teach FCS in more than 30 countries. As a competitor, he was nationally ranked as a full-contact stick fighter and weapons forms competitor from 1983 to 1990 and named National Instructor of the Year by the Family Sokeship Council International Hall of Fame in 2020.

Today, he is the international distributor for Aku Strike Knives, International blade dealer for Blade Culture International and blade designer for Double Star Corporation. He co-authored "Filipino Combat Systems" with Mark Cody and co-founder of "The Warrior Mindset" personal development seminars. He is a world-renowned edged weapons instructor and is being recognized tonight as an Ambassador of the Arts by the International Martial Arts Council of America.

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Mark Shuey Sr. American Patriot

Mr. Shuey started the Martial Arts in 1970 in the Chuck Norris System of Tang Soo Do. Mr. Shuey received his 1st Degree Black Belt in 1978 under Master Harold Gross, Master Dennis Itchakawa and Master Neil C. Citron and began teaching the Martial Arts in 1979. In September of 1999 he was promoted to 7th Degree Black Belt by the USMA and the ICHF. Mr. Shuey now holds Degrees in Tang Soo Do, Tae Kwon Do and Hapkido and holds Masters Certification by numerous Associations. Mr. Shuey is head of Cane Instruction and Nevada State Director for the International Combat Hapkido Federation. He has been a top competitor in Martial Arts Tournaments for years. He was rated Competitor of the year in 1994. He has competed in Kata, Weapons, Sparring and winning Grand Champion in many of the tournaments that he has competed. He has won National Titles and World Titles on the NASKA Tournament Circuit. He has been an inductee into several Martial Arts Hall of Fames, including our prestigious United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame. He has been featured and inducted into the Black Belt Magazine Hall of Fame as Weapons Instructor of the Year. He is one of the founders and sole owner of Cane Masters and is highly noted for teaching fitness and Self Defense with the walking cane. He has also been featured in numerous magazines and television programs. His American Cane System is now being taught by over 300 Instructors throughout the world.

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SPORT KARATE MUSEUM DIGNITARIES

John Paul DeJoria

Sport Karate Ambassador

An American Entrepreneur and self-made billionaire and philanthropist, Mr. DeJoria is perhaps best known as the co-founder of the Paul Mitchell line of hair products. His rise to stardom is truly a rags to riches story, starting with a stint in the U.S. Navy and working as a janitor, a door-to-door encyclopedia salesman, and an insurance agent. He formed John Paul Mitchell Systems with hairdresser Paul Mitchell using \$700 of borrowed money.

The consummate entrepreneur, DeJoria has founded or co-founded multiple companies in a variety of industries including Patron Spirits, the House of Blues nightclub chain, Touchstone Natural Gas and John Paul Pet company among countless others. His passion for film has led to several producer roles and featured cameo appearances in several movies.

Team Paul Mitchell Karate was founded in 1987 when DeJoria offered head coach Don Rodrigues a corporate sponsorship. In the 27 years that have followed, Team Paul Mitchell Karate has gone on to win more World Championships than any other competition team in history.

Traditional Japanese-Okinawan forms and Chinese weapons disciplines spawned new and innovative competition elements, including synchronized forms, gymnastics, dance, and creative weapons to bring a high-energy approach to competition. When not competing, Team members are doing stunt work and appearing in feature films and television.

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Karen Eden-Herdman Leading with Excellence

A pioneer in women's martial arts, Master Eden is currently a 7th degree black belt, with a total of 7 black belts to her credit. Rising through the ranks in a predominantly male-dominated industry, she has truly blazed a trail and served as an inspiration to other women who are now gaining recognition for their success. Coming from a broken home where abuse was common, the martial arts became a transformational event that empowered her to overcome the trauma of the past and become an advocate for others who are experiencing abuse.

After a career in journalism, Eden turned her passion for the martial arts into a career. A national tournament winner and world competitor, she's authored four books and is a columnist for two monthly magazines. Eden has been inducted into the Bruce Lee Hall of Fame, the Legends Hall of Martial Arts Hall of Fame, the Action Martial Arts Magazine Hall of Fame, the Masters Hall of Fame, and the Sport Karate Museum. In 2016, she was awarded the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award for "building a stronger nation through her volunteer services."

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Terry Funk Living Legend

Born in 1944, Terry Funk is best known for his role as an American wrestler and an actor, which spanned more than 50 years. Known for his “hardcore” wrestling style, Funk was a mainstay in many of the prominent professional wrestling promotions. His championships include the ECW World Heavyweight Championship, NWA World Heavyweight Championship, WWF World Tag Team Championship, and ECW World Television Championship.

Funk has been inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame, the WCW Hall of Fame, NWA Hall of Fame, and Hardcore Hall of Fame. He was also a fixture in All Japan Wrestling from 1972-1991. He concluded his wrestling career with the WWE and later independent wrestling circuits before retiring in 2017.

Funk appeared as a bouncer in the movie “Road House” featuring Patrick Swayze and appeared in several other movies. He choreographed the street fight between Rocky Balboa and his nemesis Tommy Gunn at the end of Rocky V and he has appeared in several WWE video games.

Today, Funk is retired and is being recognized as a “Living Legend” in the world of professional wrestling.

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Roy Kurban

Sport Karate Pioneer

GM Roy Kurban started his historic career in the martial arts in 1965, training under Texas Karate greats Allen Steen and Skipper Mullins. Kurban went on to earn his black belt under Mullins before traveling to Korea to train with Won Chic Park. He is one of the few Americans to hold a coveted "Master Instructor" certificate from the World Taekwondo Federation.

Kurban entered the competition circuit in 1966 and was a formidable competitor for the next 11 years, winning 117 awards in national and international competitions. He was ranked as one of the Top 10 Fighters in the United States for 5 consecutive years and was a Top 10 World Competitor for two years.

In 1980, Kurban was recognized as "Man of the Decade" by Official Karate Magazine and "Outstanding Tournament Referee" by Karate Illustrated the same year. Black Belt Magazine inducted him as "Man of the Year" in 1981. Kurban was responsible for helping to codify the rules for competition and introduced the 2-point kick into the scoring systems. He is the author of Kicking Techniques for Competition and Self-Defense.

GM Kurban also served as an instructor for the U.S. Army, National Guard, U.S. Treasury, and FBI. He established an ongoing accredited karate course for the University of Texas at Arlington Physical Education program.

Kurban also spent time serving as a law enforcement officer, Justice of the Peace, and County Judge. He also was a competitor and coach for the Police Olympics.

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Steven Lambert

Serving With Distinction

Steven “Steve” Lambert is a stuntman and stunt actor since the 1970s. He has doubled for numerous actors including Ken Berry, Fred Ward, Michael Dudikoff, Martin Short, River Phoenix, and Jason Statham. He has also worked as a stunt coordinator for numerous movies including “Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story” and was inducted into the Stuntman’s Hall of Fame in 1986.

In 1990, he was one of the lead terrorists in “Total Recall”, played a stunt punk in “Robocop 3” a middle-class passenger hanging from the Titanic in the movie “Titanic” and played the casino thief in “Ocean’s Twelve”. Lambert also doubled Jeffrey Demunn in “The Green Mile.” He’s performed stunts for Mork & Mindy, The Incredible Hulk, MacGyver, Hill Street Blues, Walker Texas Ranger, The X-Files, and NCIS.

Lambert has appeared in several movies, among them “The Incredible Shrinking Woman”, “The Sword and the Sorcerer”, “Firewalker”, “Ghostbusters II”, “Twins”, “Escape from LA”, “Scream 3” “Red Dragon”, “Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel” and “White House Down”.

He also performed stunts in “Star Trek: Insurrection” and in the first season of the TV series, “Star Trek: Enterprise.”

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Sylvester Stallone Global Ambassador

After a struggling career as an actor, Sylvester Stallone earned what many would call his greatest success as an actor and a screenwriter in 1976 for his role as “Rocky Balboa” in the first film of the highly successful “Rocky” series, earning him a nomination in 1977 for two Academy awards for Best Original Screenplay and Best Actor. “Rocky” was inducted into the National Film Registry and some of the movie props found their way into the Smithsonian Museum.

Today, his iconic statue of the Rocky sits near the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the famed “Rocky Steps” featured in the movie. His role as “Rocky Balboa” landed Stallone an induction into the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

From there, Stallone went on to film a number of “Rocky” sequels before shifting his attention to the PTSD issues faced by soldiers coming home from combat in his next huge hit, “First Blood”. Due to the success of the Rocky and First Blood series, Stallone became one of the highest-paid actors in the 1990s.

After a decline in his popularity, Stallone launched “The Expendables” series in 2010 when he starred as mercenary Barney Ross. He co-starred with Arnold Schwarzenegger in the prison escape movie, “Escape Plan” before returning to the Rocky series with “Creed”, which earned Stallone his first Golden Globe Award and a third Oscar nomination.

Stallone is the only actor in American cinema to have starred in a #1 Box Office Film over six consecutive decades. He is known for taking on physically demanding roles and his willingness to do the majority of his own stunts.

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