



United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame



INDUCTEE CLASS OF 2024

Youth

Chloe Black

Teen Leadership

Chloe Black has been a student of Sifu Matt Emery for over 8 years. She also trained under Sigung Taky Kimura, Sifu Andrew Kimura, and GM Richard Bustillo. Over the years, she has competed in numerous martial arts seminars, tournaments, and events. She is also active in musical theater and the varsity drill team, and is on the Dean's List at Brentwood School.

Marcus Carter

Academic Excellence

At the age of 4, Mr. Carter embarked on a martial arts journey that has defined his young life. His instructor, Jose "Big Ram" Ramirez has honored him with Student of the Year twice. In 2002, Mr. Carter became the TKO state champion in board-breaking and second place in the state in continuous sparring. He is a Straight "A" student, and already enrolled in advanced math studies. Mr. Carter understands that Martial Arts Excellence extends beyond the Dojang to every area of his life, and models that for others to see and follow.

Gilbert Chavarria

Youth Martial Artist of the Year

Mr. Chavarria studies Kung Fu, Shaolin Wushu, and Ying Jow Pai Kung Fu under Sifu Oscar Olivarez. He also trains in Taekwondo under Master Lightning Sorrell. In his first year of competition (2023), he took first-place honors at ten tournaments, earning an invitation as a Texas Karate Organization state qualifier. When he's not training, or in school, he enjoys guitar, violin, and football. His instructors say the best is yet to come.

Keira Chiu

Honorable Martial Artist

A student of Sifu Matt Emery for the past 8 years, Ms. Chiu has also trained under Sigung Taky Kimura, Andrew Kimura, GM Richard Bustillo. She assists Sifu Emery in teaching and running classes at Emery Academy. Ms. Chiu attends Palisades Charter High School and is president of the Operation Gratitude Club. She volunteers as a tutor for children with Down's Syndrome and has a passion for graphic design.

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Keon Geramian Teen leadership

Sifu Matt Emery says, “Mr. Geramian is a very loyal martial artist, a hard-working individual, and always willing to lend a helping hand.” He has trained with GM Bustillo, Sigung Taky Kimura, and Sifu Andrew Kimura. Mr. Geramian currently has a Brown Belt in Wushu, Kali, Eskrima, and Jun Fan Gung Fu. He is a student at Palisades Charter High School and when he is not training or studying, he enjoys swimming.

Hannah Goldin Honorable Martial Artist

Ms. Goldin has spent the last 13 years training in Wushu, Kali, Eskrima, and Jun Fan Gung Fu under Sifu Matt Emery, currently holding a Brown Belt. She has also trained with GM Richard Bustillo, Sigung Taky Kimura, and Sifu Andrew Kimura. She is a Straight-A student at Milken Community School, plays on multiple volleyball teams, and works in a research lab for sports medicine.

Frankie Marie Olveda Youth Competitor of the Year

Embarking on her Taekwondo journey at the age of 7 under GM Robert Aguilar, Miss Olveda early on demonstrated martial arts prowess and leadership skills. In 2022, she earned 2nd place AOK state honors in forms and sparring and 1st place AOK state honors in forms and sparring in 2023. Overcoming the challenges of dyslexia and ADHD, she has also excelled in her academic pursuits. Ms. Olveda aspires to pioneer an All-Girl Taekwondo Fight Team, showcasing her passion for empowering young girls.

Austin Roy Teen Leadership

An 8-year student of Sifu Matt Emery, Mr. Roy has had the privilege of training with Sigung Taky Kimura, Sifu Andrew Kimura, and GM Richard Bustillo. He has participated in several seminars and tournaments, taking two first place titles in forms and weapons at the 2023 Flores Brothers Martial Arts Tournament. When he's not training in martial arts, Mr. Roy is active in soccer, track and field, and cross country.

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Christian Royce

Leading By Example

A green belt in Taekwondo and a yellow belt in Hapkido, Mr. Royce is a student of the legendary GM Dan Roberts. He is known for always lending a helping hand to other students, demonstrating techniques, or helping them hone their techniques. He lives out good values in his community as well, opening the door for elders, picking up trash, sharing his lunch with schoolmates, and helping them with their homework. He is a Cadet Corporal with the US Marine Corp Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps and a member of the nationally recognized JROTC Drill Team.

Karis Shu

Teen Leadership

Ms. Shu has trained with Sifu Matt Emery for 8 years, participating in numerous seminars, tournaments and events. She has also trained with Sigung Taky Kimura and Sifu Andrew Kimura. When she is not training in martial arts, she is honing her skill as an accomplished tennis and softball athlete. Ms. Shu is also an Honors Student at Crossroads School.

Cameron Torkian

Honorable Martial Artist

A student at Palisades Charter High School, Mr. Torkian has been training in Wushu, Kali, Eskrima, and Jun Fan Gung Fu for 11 years. He has trained with Sigung Taky Kimura and Sifu Andrew Kimura, as well as Sifu Matt Emery. When he is not training or competing in tournaments, he is a board member of Palisades Business Club. Mr. Torkian is also the Southern California President of his Jewish Youth Group.

Bronze

Douglas Arndt

Instructor of the Year

A student of GM Jack Buckley, Sensei Douglas Arndt has invested 30 years of his life in the pursuit of martial arts excellence. Today he is a 3rd Dan Black Belt, teaching American Streetwise Self-Defense, making the streets safe, one student at a time. Sensei Arndt is known as a caring instructor who is passionate about his student's success. He is also a Pennsylvania State Trooper and has served as a military reservist for more than 20 years.

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Catherine Barba **Martial Artist of the Year**

Sibak Barba has been immersed in the Art of Kajukenbo since she was in grade school, training with Sigung Rommel Barba and Senior GM Dan Frazier. For the last 7 years she has reigned as a champion at the international martial arts championship level. As an instructor, she has helped to facilitate and teach several women's self-defense and empowerment workshops. A Navy veteran, she served our country with distinction.

Henry Beckham **Instructor of the Year**

A 2nd Dan in Moo Duk Kwan Taekwondo under GM Frank Ulloa, Sensei Beckham has been a successful martial arts competitor, earning top honors as an Oklahoma Season Champion, United States Champion, and SKI World Champion. served as an Oklahoma Karate Association Board Member. Today, he continues to give back through his work with the Lawton Oklahoma YMCA.

Rodney Brown **Health & Fitness Coach of the Year**

A retired Master Sargeant Marine with 23 years of service, including two combat tours, Mr. Brown left the military to pursue his passion for health and wellness, becoming a certified coach in 2018. Today, he operates his own Health & Wellness Coaching and Personal Training business, as well as contributing his expertise to the YMCA and YWCA. Mr. Brown is completing his Masters in Exercise Science & Wellness with an eye on pursuing medical missions in the future.

Walter Bryant **Grandmaster of the Year**

The principal instructor at the San-Angelo-based Karate Institute, GM Bryant brings a rich and diverse history of training over his 40+ years in the Arts. He has been a force to reckon with within the AOK and TKO circuits for many years. GM Bryant holds a 7th Dan in Tang Soo Do under the legendary GM Clarence "Daddy-O" Smith, and continues his relentless quest for martial arts mastery, in the dojo and in life.

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Damien Burge

Chinese Martial Arts Instructor of the Year

Shifu Damien Burge is a ChunjiDo Int'l Representative for Indiana with more than 15 years of experience in martial arts. He started in Kung Fu, learning the traditional and animal-style forms, and cross-trained in Karate and Boxing. Shifu Burge was privileged to travel to Japan and train in Aikido, and trained in Judo while with the Peace Corps in Europe. His love for Kung Fu led him to move to China to live in a Shaolin Training Temple, training under 34th-generation warrior monk, Master Yu.

The Davidson Family

Martial Arts Family of the Year

Over the past seven years, the Davidson family has been instrumental in shaping both the spirit and skills within Engage Lifestyle Martial Arts. They bring a unique blend of enthusiasm and expertise that has helped foster a nurturing and supportive environment. Beyond the dojo, this family has been a pillar of strength and inspiration to their local community. This family is dedicated to having a positive influence on every individual they encounter.

ChunJiDo International

Martial Arts Organization of the Year

Founded by GM Robert Cutrell in 1996, ChunJiDo Int'l is the governing body for the Art of ChunJiDo. The organization currently has affiliates on 5 continents and in over 30 countries. In 2015, ChunJiDo Int'l hosted a charity event for refugees of war-torn Middle-Eastern countries, raising funds for clothing, personal items, and school supplies for displaced families. The organization regularly hosts seminars and events benefiting organizations such as the Shriners, and organizations for at-risk children and domestic violence. ChunJiDo Int'l has also given thousands of dollars in scholarships to college-bound students to further their careers.

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Milovan Drobnjak Master of the Year

A Master Level 5 instructor in Kung Fu Wushu, Master Drobnjak has been training for 62 years. After a successful career as a competitor, including three world championships, he went on to become the Coach of the Yugoslavia National Team. Master Drobnjak added Kickboxing and Judo to his studies and has continued to expand the martial arts and combat sports throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and Eastern Europe.

Engage Lifestyle Martial Arts Martial Arts School of the Year

Master CD & Michele Young have done an outstanding job making their school one of the best in the state of Nevada. The leadership and staff have made a strategic commitment to put families and community first, and to lead with excellence in all areas of their business. Their goal is to teach their students to thrive in martial arts and in life. They make learning fun, but learning is also a serious business. Top-quality instructors create top-quality students, and this is reflected in the lives they are changing each week.

Terry Garoutte Indomitable Spirit

One of GM Cutrell's first ChunjiDo Black Belts, Sensei Garoutte also holds black belt rankings in Shaolin Kempo Karate, Tang Soo Do, and Jiu-Jitsu. He was also one of the top-rated pilots in the world until a severe automobile accident left him medically unqualified to fly. Working through the neurological and physical challenges he still faces, Sensei Garoutte continues to train and is now teaching others the Arts he has grown to love and embrace. His indomitable spirit is truly an inspiration.

Jacob Grant Black Belt of the Year

Sibak Grant has demonstrated a true dedication to the martial arts, committed to a "learn to teach, teach to learn" approach to training. He is a 2nd Dan in Karazenpo Go Shinjutsu and a 1st Dan in Kenpo and Kajukenbo under Sigung Frank Delgado. He is a member of the Black Belt Society and Kajukenbo Self-Defense Institute.

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Todd Hamlin

Assistant Instructor of the Year

Sibak Hamlin began training in Chinese-Hawaiian Kenpo in late 2010 and currently holds a 2nd Dan under Sigung Frank Delgado. He currently teaches and ministers the art to over a half-dozen youth students at the Isla Ohana Kenpo School in Suffolk VA. These students are thriving under Sibak Hamlin's tutelage as they embrace living life as a Martial Artist both inside and outside the dojo.

Nicholas Hellmuth

Honorable Martial Artist

His classmates and instructors refer to him as an honest, caring, and hard-working young man, always willing to welcome and help others. Mr. Hellmuth has trained under Sifu Matt Emery for 10 years in Wushu, Kali, Eskrima, and Jun Fan Gung Fu. He has attended several Jun Fan Gung Fu Seattle Instructors Conferences over the years, training with GM Richard Bustillo, Sigung Taky Kimura, and Sifu Andrew Kimura. When he's not training, Mr. Hellmuth enjoys spending time with friends in his youth group or helping his dad and grandfather with various projects.

Angel Abner Ibarra

Instructor of the Year

A 1st Dan in Ninjutsu, Ju-Jutsu, Hakko Ryu, and Toyama Batto Do, Sensei Ibarra has made significant contributions to the Hispanic community in Colorado teaching women's self-defense to women who have been impacted by domestic abuse and anti-bully programs to at-risk youth. He works with local law enforcement and fire departments to help teach emergency awareness and situational response.

Ian Ibarra Galeote

Instructor of the Year

After serving as a Marine, Sensei Ibarra has turned his attention to the youth of his community, battling the ongoing problems of youth crime and drug abuse. Through teaching martial arts, he's providing an alternative to a self-destructive lifestyle and setting young lives up for success. Sensei Ibarra is a black belt in Ninjutsu, Ju-Jutsu, Hakko Ryu, and Toyama Batto Do.

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Juan Carlos Ibarra Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

A 7th Dan in Ninjutsu, Ju-Jutsu, Hakko Ryu, and Toyama Batto Do, Master Ibarra has been training for 48 years. When not training or teaching, he also lends his talent to the law enforcement community, protecting and serving the people of Colorado with distinction. Shihan Ibarra regularly hosts self-defense classes for female victims of domestic abuse and at-risk youth who have been the target of gangs or bullies.

Adam James Man of the Year

GM James is a stunt fight choreographer, actor, and talented martial arts film consultant. He is a Level 10 instructor under Leo Fong in Wei Kune Do, Chi Fung, and Modern Escrima and a 5th Dan in Okinawan Kempo Karate. He was also a former director of the World Black Belt Bureau, working alongside the legendary Bob Wahl, Chuck Norris, and Gene LeBell. GM James founded Rainbow Warrior Martial Arts, specializing in private lessons, consultation, seminars, writing, and film. He is a contributor to Black Belt Magazine, Masters Magazine, Asian Journal of Martial Arts, and other martial arts magazines. GM James is a certified nutritionist and personal trainer, as well as a History General and Radio Personality with the Sport Karate Museum.

Cooper Johnson Black Belt of the Year

Sensei Johnson has served as a Taekwondo and Bojutsu instructor for the past 8 years, recently adding instructing ChunJiDo classes at Coffman's Martial Arts Academy. He embraces honor and respect and serves as a tremendous role model and mentor to all students in the dojo. Sensei Johnson is also very active in his community, teaching self-defense as well as serving as a Youth Group Instructor in his church. His excellence and servant's heart extend well beyond the dojo.

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Isla Ohana Kenpo

Martial Arts School of the Year

Under the tutelage of Sifu Frank Delgado, Isla Ohana Kenpo is not only one of the premiere martial arts schools in Arizona, but it has also become a second home to the students who train there. Classes in Kajukenbo, Karazenpo-Go-Shinjutsu, and Filipino Martial Arts are taught throughout the week. The students also receive important instruction in character, values, and self-leadership. The school is also recognized by Karate for Christ International, and the Kajukenbo Self-Defense Institute.

Kelly Kissel

Outstanding Dedication

Sensei Kissel is a 4th Dan in the Art of ChunJiDo. Her instructors say she is one of the most dedicated students they have ever trained. That experience has led to outstanding teaching skills as an instructor. She also leads the ChunJiDo “Mat Chat” program, training students on martial arts etiquette, history, and terminology, and establishing proper decorum and classroom expectations. Sensei Kissel epitomizes what it means to model Servant Leadership in the dojo as well as her personal life.

Sheri Lampkin

Instructor of the Year

Master Lampkin is a 4th Dan in Kajunekbo under Sigung Frank Delgado and is an instructor at Isla Ohana Kenpo. She has also studied Shito-Ryu, hapkido, and is currently working on her Guro certification in Sina Tirsia Wali. Master Lampkin is a dedicated student, and that is reflected in her instruction. She is a member of the Kajukenbo Self-Defense Institute and was previously recognized as Martial Artis of the Year in 2016.

Steven Lampo

Martial Artist of the Year

A student of GM Jack Buckley, who says that Master Lampo is one of the best students he has ever trained. This, he says, is reflected in his commitment to quality instruction in the classroom and continued hunger to learn. He is a 3rd Dan in American Streetwise Self-Defense and has been training for the past 10 years.

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Zachary McManus Enduring Spirit

Sensei McManus began formal training in Okinawa, Japan at the age of 4, earning his black belt in Shotokan at the age of 13 and cross-training in Kyokushin. He self-trained in Parkour at the age of 14 and went on to study gymnastics and cheerleading, becoming the first male cheerleader at Northside Independent School. He graduated as the valedictorian of his welding trade school and was the Ambassador assisting other students to master the Art of welding. In March, 2024, Sensei McManus was diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). He has been married for 7 years and is the father of 2 sons. Tonight, we recognize his enduring spirit as he battles this dread disease.

Billy Newman Silver Life Award

A black belt in the Art of Vale Tudo, Master Newman is a student of GM Dean “Wolverine” Pyles. An avid sport karate competitor, he has 8 NASKA championships under his belt, along with numerous titles throughout his fighting career. His mission now is to pass on his knowledge and experience and preserve the legacy of his Art for future generations.

Austin Norris Weapons Instructor of the Year

A New Mexico representative of ChunJiDo nt'l, Master Norris holds a 5th Dan in American Kenpo and a 2nd Dan in Shotokan. Seeing an inherent absence of a cohesive weapons curriculum in most martial arts systems, he began to develop the North House Kenpo/Kobudo System. Today, this globally accredited program has been embraced by schools around the nation who desire to add a weapons curriculum to their traditional open-hand systems.

Jim Norris Instructor of the Year

Chodan Norris holds a 1st Dan in Taekwondo, having followed in the footsteps of his father as a martial artist and U.S. Marine. After his military service, he went to the University of Miami where he helped to start the University of Miami Taekwondo Club. Today, he is an instructor at the University of Miami where he continues to inspire students and impart the values of discipline, leadership, and indomitable spirit of martial arts.

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Katrina Older

Martial Artist of the Year

A 4-year black belt in Taekwondo and a certified Krav Maga instructor, Sifu Older also trains in Jiu-Jitsu and Kajukenbo. Her students proudly state she is a great instructor and a good person who represents the best in martial arts, even when she's off the Mat. She is a former IMAC World Champion and a member of ATA Martial Arts.

Gino Ossorio

Black Belt of the Year

A student of GM Sandy Larwood, Master Ossorio holds a 4th Dan in Aikibujitsu and a 1st Dan in Shotokan. He teaches Aikibujitsu classes while at the same time taking his instructor certification class in Shotokan. Master Ossorio restructured the curriculum at a prior dojo he instructed at, filling in the gaps in training, allowing the students to gain a better understanding of the Art he still teaches at Shotokan Karate and Fitness.

Amanda Piepgras

Female School Owner of the Year

A Kyokushin black belt, Sensei Piepgras founded Amanda's Adaptive Martial Arts as a nonprofit to serve the needs of special needs children regardless of their ability to pay. She is a Certified Autism Specialist and her school was the first to become a Certified Autism Center by the IBCCES. In her spare time, she volunteers for other nonprofit adaptive organizations and teaches self-defense at the Challenge Center. She also mentors others who want to start their own adaptive martial arts programs.

Gio Ramirez

Martial Artist of the Year

Training since the age of 5, Sensei Ramirez early on demonstrated exceptional dedication and skill. A 3rd Degree Taekwondo Black Belt under his father, Jose Ramirez, he has become the Chief Instructor of the University of Miami Taekwondo Club. Under his leadership, they have hosted several exhibitions and self-defense seminars, engaging the university staff and students. Sensei Ramirez also formed a competitive team that has competed against other university martial arts clubs across the country.

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Jose Ramirez

Master of the Year

A gifted instructor with the heart of a selfless servant, Master “Big Ram” Ramirez leads the Christian Taekwondo League by example. He is the first to arrive and the last to leave, and always going above and beyond for his students. His skill with the blade has earned him invitations to travel and teach, and he does so with excellence and humility. Master Ramirez is a veteran IMACUSA Training Camp Instructor and continues to serve behind the scenes to make sure our annual events serve our attendees with excellence.

Nathan Steele

Instructor of the Year

A retired teacher by trade and a martial artist by passion, Sensei Steele holds a 3rd Dan in ChunJiDo. After a 30 year career as an educator, he retired from teaching to become a full time martial arts instructor. Today, he is the Senior Instructor at the Evansville ChunJiDo Academy where his excellent leadership skills have transformed what was already a highly successful school. He is not only an excellent teacher, he remains a hungry, dedicated student who leads by example.

Lawrence Sullivan

Master of the Year

Under the tutelage of GM Frank Delgado and GM Dan Frazier, Master Sullivan has grown to become a model instructor who teaches with excellence. He is a 5th Dan in Kajunekbo who has also served with distinction in the U.S. Navy. Master Sullivan is a member of the Kajukenbo Self-Defense Institute, Karate for Christ, World Head of Family Sokeship Council, and he is a Hall of Fame alumni.

Rene Susim

Honorable FMA Instructor

Guro Rene is an outstanding martial arts instructor and a longtime student of Guro Dan Inosanto. He specializes in FMA empty hand techniques and frequently travels to the Philippines for additional research and training. Today, he holds a 1st Dan ranking in Filipino Martial Arts and has been training for more than 15 years.

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The Tillery Family

Martial Arts Family of the Year

For nine years, this extraordinary family has been at the heart of Engage Lifestyle Martial Arts enriching the lives of students while modeling unwavering commitment and dedication. They have also contributed numerous hours to martial arts events, community services, and various service projects. This family models strength and unity, and reflect the true spirit of the martial arts both inside and outside the Dojang.

Miguel Zacarias

Instructor of the Year

This instructor is not only creating quality martial artists, he is actively engaged in his local community combating drugs and providing a positive outlet for young, impressionable lives as an alternative to drugs or gangs. Sensei Zacarias is a black belt in Ninjutsu, Ju-Jutsu, Hakko Ryu, and Toyama Batto Do.

Silver

Michael Armstrong

Silver Life Award

Shihan Armstrong has overcome blindness to become not just a highly respected martial artist instructor, but an adventurer and motivational speaker. In 2009, he and twenty-four of his best friends (seven of them blind) summited Africa's highest mountain, the legendary Mt. Kilimanjaro. After losing his sight, Shihan Armstrong founded Blind Tiger Martial Arts Academy and has been privileged to help other visually impaired individuals learn how to defend themselves and walk with greater confidence in life. He holds a 7th Dan in Kyokhsuin Karate and inspires others, sharing his personal story of triumph over tragedy as he helps people re-evaluate what is and is not a handicap.

Lewis Arnold

Distinguished Master

Professor Arnold started teaching Kajukenbo in 1983. He is the owner and Chief Instructor at LA Academy in Greenville SC. His focus is on raising up a new generation of martial arts students who walk with confidence and live disciplined lives. Professor Arnold is also a professional bodyguard providing protection services to A-Listers, professional athletes, and Hollywood actors.

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Jacob Atkinson **Distinguished Instructor**

A 4th Dan in Okami Do Ninjutsu, Master Atkinson has spent more than 20 years training in martial arts. He is a member of the Honor Martial Arts Association and Gray Wolf Native Martial Arts Council. Master Atkinson is also the co-founder of Yama No Ken (Mountain Fist Martial Arts), where he teaches a blended martial arts system inspired by the Korean arts of Tang Soo Do and Karate.

Damon Bell **Making a Difference**

Damon Bell is a Kentucky native and a lifelong martial artist. He was recognized by the Indiana State Hall of Fame for his exploits as a kickboxer, with a 77% KO record. Today he runs one of Kentucky's most successful fighting gyms, Triumph Combat. Kru Bell holds ranks in Dutch Kickboxing, Muay Thai, BJJ, Wing Chun, Ninjutsu, and Boxing.

Christopher Braun **Distinguished Master Instructor**

Recently promoted to 6th Dan in Okinawan Karate, Renshi Braun has been training for 42 years. He is also proficient in Feeding Crane Kung Fu and has trained in Escrima and Aiki-Jitsu. Today, Renshi "Frozen Crane" Braun is the Chief Instructor at Martial Arts 4 Peace, where he is known for hosting outside classes when it is "warm enough" in Wisconsin (35 degrees) to train. Renshi Braun has previously earned the Presidential Sports Award, the Mayor's Youth Commission Award, and was the 2021 Outstanding Nurse of the Year.

Dylan Brooks **Serving With Distinction**

A decorated corrections officer for the City of Henderson NV, Mr. Brooks was awarded with a "Life Saving" award for saving the life of an inmate who attempted suicide. He is also an instructor with the Law Enforcement Academy and serves on the Rapid Response Team for his corrections facility. Mr. Brooks also has more than 20 years of martial arts training and has competed as an amateur MMA fighter.

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Jason Brooks

Distinguished Defensive Tactics Instructor

A protégé of GM John Natividad and currently a 7th Dan in Bushinkai Ninjitsu, GM Brooks holds also black belts in Tang Soo Do, Karate, and Krav Haganah. In his career with the Marines, he trained over 3500 active duty Marines and 300 Recon Marines, in all aspects of nuclear, biological, and chemical warfare. After retirement, he became a lead tactical instructor for the CRI Israeli Counter Terrorism Training School. Today, he serves on the UFC Executive Protection Security Team and is the co-owner and lead instructor of Assault Counter Tactics, a personal and professional security training company.

Corey Brown

Distinguished Instructor

His instructor, GM Donald Williams, says, “Master Brown is a top student. Very obedient and disciplined. He is a hard worker in martial arts, always giving his all.” Today, Master Brown is a 6th Dan in Okinawan Goju-Ryu and a 2nd Dan in Shotokan. He teaches at the Oneida Karate Club where he continues to instill in his students this same dedication to discipline and diligence in training.

Greg Brown

Martial Arts Excellence

A long-time student of legendary GM James Debrow, “Shogun” Brown is the Senior Executive Grandmaster Chief Examiner of the Fighting Tigers School of Champions and is in charge of all operations and rank advancement. He also operates one of the largest karate schools in the state of Kansas, Shogun Martial Arts Center International. He holds a 9th Dan in Shin-Do-Ryu, an 8th Dan in Okinawan Kenpo Karate, and 7th Dan rankings in Okinawan Kubudo, Aiki-Bu-Jitsu, and a Black Sash in Chi’na 18 Postures Kung Fu. “Shogun” Brown has trained military and law enforcement security details globally.

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Don Burnell

Honorable Grandmaster

Grandmaster Don Burnell is an Air Force veteran with more than 44 years of experience training in martial arts. He holds a 7th Dan in Doshin Kaikan Karate-Do and has trained in Tang Soo Do, Taekwondo, Kickboxing, and Combatives. He held the #1 ranking as a contender in the Armed Forces Kickboxing Association during his military career and was the Ramstein Air Base Black Belt Karate Champion. GM Burnell is a California State Certified Security Instructor and owner of The Academy of Applied Sciences.

Edward Cadiz

Honorable FMA Instructor

An honorable man and an outstanding martial artist, Guro Edward Cadiz has been a student of Guro Dan Inosanto for 34 years. When not training, he is serving the needs of those in the intensive care unit of the hospital where he works and inspires others. Guro Cadiz models what it means to be a servant leader.

John Paolo Canlas

Empowering Others

As a teenager, Sifu Canlas started with the fundamentals of Filipino Martial Arts, Arnis de Mano, Suntukan, and boxing, refining his craft into adulthood. He later added Modern Arnis, Pekiti, Tirsia Kali, Muay Thai, along with several other styles. Sifu Canlas blended his vast knowledge of styles to become an in-demand self-defense and boxing coach. He founded Sunset FMA, a group of like-minded FMA practitioners to train, share, and learn.

Gregory Carter

Leading By Example

Master Carter has led a life marked by dedication, service, and community. He rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant in his 7 years of military service, earning distinction as an Electronic Warfare Systems Repairer. Post-military, he has become a respected Cyber Security Assessor. Master Carter connected with the Christian Taekwondo League through his son, Marcus, and has become an integral part of not only teaching martial arts but shaping lives and strengthening families.

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Charles Cherry

Serving With Distinction

Professor Cherry is a big man with an even bigger heart. He started training in Kung Fu with his father at the age of 5 and later trained in Tang Soo Do, Boxing, Shito-Ryu, Hakkoryu Jiu-Jitsu, American Kickboxing, and Judo. After a distinctive 28-year law enforcement career, but continues to teach defensive tactics, firearms, and tactical medicine at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. He is also a former U.S. Judo Bronze medalist who has also won multiple NAGA Championships. Over the last four years, he has adapted his Master's degree in Applied Behavior to work with martial arts students struggling with Autism, ADD, and other developmental disabilities.

Antonio Cicconi

Leading By Example

Professor Cicconi has been teaching Jiu-Jitsu since 1999, impacting many lives over his illustrious career. He has promoted over 60 black belts, and still actively teaches and competes. Professor Cicconi holds a 5th Dan in Jiu-Jitsu and a Black Belt in Judo. He has earned a gold medal at the Orlando and Atlanta Championships, a gold medal at the World and South American Championships, along with many other awards.

Rick Cockrell

Distinguished Law Enforcement Officer

A Texas State Adjunct Instructor for Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training, Mr. Cockrell's distinguished law enforcement career began after serving in the U.S. Army, where he was an Air Assault Honor Graduate from the Warrior Training Center at Fort Benning. He has been a law enforcement instructor since 2011, specializing in firearms, close-quarters combat, vehicle assaults, active shooter response, and SWAT. Mr. Cockrell is a JPX International Less-Lethal Munitions Senior Master Instructor and serves in Texarkana as a threat intelligence officer and training officer.

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Heather Coffman

Distinguished Female Instructor

Master Coffman exemplifies what it means to live a life of martial arts excellence. She is a dedicated instructor, school owner, competitor, devoted student, and role model. Master Coffman was the Bronze Medalist in Women's Kata at the 2023 ISKA World Championships and has won numerous national tournaments in her career. Her school was voted the #1 martial arts academy in Southern Illinois the same year. She holds a 5th Dan in Taekwondo and a 3rd Dan in ChunjiDo.

Kurt Cornwell

Empowering Others

Guro Cornwell comes from the prestigious Minnesota Kali Group and is a certified instructor in JKD, FMA, and many other Arts. His passion for empowering others has led him to create accessible training opportunities where people from all walks of life can feel comfortable training and gain the confidence that only martial arts can deliver. Guro Cornwell believes martial arts is a shared human inheritance, passed down from generation to generation in the spirit of keeping peace. He is a Level 3 Instructor in the MKG Method, under Guro Rick Faye and Guro Dan Inosanto.

Roy Corpus

Honorable Martial Arts Instructor

With more than 40 years in martial arts training, Guro Corpus has spent much of his life mastering the Filipino Martial Arts. He is known as a humble man who has dedicated his life to the development of others. Guro Corpus has spent the last several years working with Las Vegas Charter Schools to teach wayward youth the value of martial arts, even coaching some of them to championship belts in amateur and professional competitions. He only looks to train and to make the lives of others better through the martial arts.

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Stacey Councilman Empowering Others

A 2nd degree black belt in Kung Fu San Soo, Sensei Councilman also holds an advanced Krav Maga instructor certification. A 4-Stripe Brown Belt in BJJ, she has been the #1 ranked female for the IBJJF and a 5-Time Master World Champion in BJJ. Today, she leads Mean Girl Self Defense, helping women build confidence, resilience, and self-worth through a 5-level course. Sensei Councilman has presented over 600 free self-defense and violence prevention seminars throughout the United States. Her passion for self-defense has been instrumental in bringing more women into the world of martial arts.

Jeffrey Everetts Distinguished Grandmaster

GM Everetts is the Pennsylvania ChunjiDo Int'l Representative and holds a 10th Dan in Chang Moo Kwan Taekwondo. He is also certified in Yon Moo Kwan Taekwondo and Hapkido under the World Hapkido Federation. In 2011, he became a Master Trainer for the United States Police Defensive Tactics Association and Military Combatives, serving as a New York State Director. GM Everetts is also a certified referee for Full Contact Karate with the World Karate Association. He also served 7 years in the U.S. Army and was highly trained in nuclear, biological, and chemical warfare and communications.

Susan Everetts Distinguished Female Grandmaster

A 9th Dan in the Art of Chang Moo Kwan and 8th Dan in Hapkido, GM Everetts is a ChunjiDo Int'l Representative for Pennsylvania, celebrating 50 years in the martial arts. She serves as the Int'l Hosinsul Federation's head instructor in the United States and is a faculty martial arts instructor for the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford. A Master Trainer for the United States Police Defensive Tactics Association, GM Everetts serves as the New York Associate Director. She is also a member of the National Women's Martial Arts Federation and is considered one of the ranking overseers in the U.S.

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Becca Fusselman Changing Lives

Sibak Fusselman earned her 1st Dan in Kanjuenbo in 2023 while cross training in Shinja Kenpo Karate. She and her husband, Spencer, felt a call into Christian Karate Ministry and together they teach Shinja Kempo, a Christian-based martial arts system in three locations in New Mexico. Their program is supported by generous donations, allowing them to offer martial arts without payment. Together, they are changing lives.

Spencer Fusselman Martial Arts Leadership

Shihan Fusselman, along with his wife, Becca, co-teach a Christian-based martial arts program for at-risk children in New Mexico. Incorporating faith-based principles into the teaching of martial arts, Shihan Fusselman is committed to training the whole person, body, mind, and spirit. He recently developed a Phone App for their Shinja Martial Arts Program, allowing them to expand beyond the borders of New Mexico. He is committed to raising not only excellent martial artists but Warriors for Christ.

Tracey Goetz IMB Academy Honorable Affiliate

A long-time student of GM Richard Bustillo, Ms. Goetz is a certified IMB Instructor teaching boxing, JKD, and FMA. She is currently a student of Sifu Freddie Jin and Sifu Esteban De La Cruz. Ms. Goetz continues to pass on the lineage and legacy of GM Bustillo and add to her knowledge as she continues to train, learn, and teach.

Terry Gore Excellence in Competition

GM Gore is a Zen Ketsugo Karate and ITF Taekwondo 9th Degree Black Belt. His long, illustrious competition includes a Two-Time South Carolina State Champ, North Carolina State Champ, NASKA Regional Champion, NBL Hall of Fame Competitor of the Year, and has held the #1 SKI ranking in forms and weapons internationally. In 1997, he won 26 Grand Championships and in 2004 he was again the #1 ranked World NBL competitor and in self-defense and creative forms (age 35 and older). Today, he is the Chief Instructor at Superkicks of Conway in South Carolina.

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Mark Hawley

Making a Difference

GM Hawley is the Founder and Soke of the blended art of ATAVISM. He also holds Black Belt rankings in PolyGoju, Jujitsu, Kenpo, and Lua. He is a member of the Northern Arizona Martial Arts Association, Pacific Rim Martial Arts Association, and Hawaii Karate Federation. GM Hawley is the Chief Instructor at Family Self-Defense School, where he is making a difference by instilling confidence in his students, young and old, that they can live life unafraid.

Kalvin Henderson

Tenacious Warrior

Known in the boxing world as “Hot Sauce”, Calvin Henderson is making a name for himself, with his hands doing the talking. He is the NAMA Middleweight Boxing Champion and the UBF Intercontinental Super Middleweight Boxing Champion, currently ranked #10 in the World by the WBA with a record of 18-2-1 with 13 KOs. Fighting out of Fayetteville AR, “Hot Sauce” is a tenacious warrior in the ring, wearing his competitors down physically round after round before dropping them to the canvas.

Doug Herrington

Serving With Distinction

An elite Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Instructor, Officer Herrington also teaches within a large metro tactical SWAT unit as well as mentoring and training boxers and kickboxers in his local community. He has received the Medal of Honor and Meritorious Service Commendation from the Amarillo Police Department and is a 2-time recipient of the Lifesaving award. Officer Herrington also holds a 1st Dan ranking in American Karate and is a member of the USA Boxing Association.

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Nathan Hill

Community Service

Lt. Nathan Hill, Choctaw Nation Law Enforcement Officer, promotes and advocates for his community and the State of Oklahoma at many levels. He is an adjunct instructor for the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Program, and travels the country teaching rapid response strategies and tactics to active shooters and attackers. In his spare time, he offers self-defense and situational awareness classes to civilians, empowering them to recognize signs of danger and fight back when escape or avoidance is not an option.

Alfred Hogan

Distinguished Service

Professor “Al” Hogan began his martial arts journey studying Karate in Okinawa while his father was stationed there. As his father’s military career moved him from station to station, he was privileged to expand his training to include Taekwondo, earning a Black Belt in the Art. During his own 22-year military career, he taught Taekwondo at various academies around the world, including the Republic of Korea. In 2008, he was introduced to Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and fell in love with the sport, winning several NAGA and IGJJF competitions as a 100% disabled Army veteran. Today, he offers Jiu-Jitsu training to service members suffering from PTSD and other combat-related disabilities.

Ian Holloway

IMB Academy Honorable Affiliate

A certified IMB Instructor in Boxing, JKD, FMA, Muay Thai, and BJJ, Mr. Holloway is a longtime student of GM Richard Bustillo, now under the tutelage of Sifu Freddie Jin and Sifu Estaban De La Cruz. He also lives out the mantra, “learn to teach; teach to learn” as he perpetuates the legacy of excellence in training that is a hallmark of IMB Academy.

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Sinisa Ivanji

Martial Arts Legend

GM Sinisa Ivanji started training in Judo in 1954, at the age of 8. He added Karate and Aikido to his training regimen and in the 1970s, emerged himself in the Chinese and Filipino Martial Arts, training with the likes of Cacoy Canete and GM Richard Bustillo. GM Ivanji has been instrumental in the mass expansion of martial arts throughout the former Yugoslavia. In 2006, the Int'l Association of Martial Arts recognized his Kung Fu system, Hu Shen Fa Kung Fu which he has expanded through more than a thousand students he has personally trained. He now resides in Temple City CA and continues to teach his Art.

Stephen Key

Distinguished Founder

Sijo Key is the Founder, President, and CEO of Golden Lynx Claw Fist Gung Fu and the Claw Fist Academy of Martial Arts. He has studied Chinese, American, and Okinawan martial arts for more than 30 years, blending the best of these arts into the system he founded and codified. Sijo Key has served as an AAU Chairman for Martial Arts in New England and has been honored by the Boston Police Department, Governor and State Senate of Massachusetts, and is a recipient of the President Obama Volunteer Service Award. He continues to make a difference in the lives of Boston youth.

Monika LaFleur

Leading by Example

After 3-1/2 years of watching her children train in martial arts, this quiet introvert enrolled in a Mom's Class and fell in love with the Arts. Today, she is a 4th Dan in the Art of Shotokan with the heart of a warrior, Master LaFleur is a firm but loving instructor known for her confidence and integrity. She consistently leads well, instilling good leadership skills in the students she trains, helping them to also discover their inner warrior.

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John McBride

Silver Life Award

Celebrating 30 years in martial arts, Master McBride is a 5th Dan in Taekwondo under Choon Lee. He has brought a wealth of experience and knowledge to Amanda's Adaptive Martial Arts and become a pivotal part of the school's mission to make martial arts classes available to children and adults with special needs. Understanding leaders are learners, Master McBride has earned his Certified Autism Specialist designation and used what he has learned to help the special needs students they serve progress in the Arts.

Khayman McDaniels

Honorable FMA Instructor

An extremely well-rounded martial artist, Sifu Khayman holds numerous ranks within the Inosanto Family of Martial Arts, including FMA, JKD, Silat, and Muay Thai. He is a certified instructor under Guro Dan Inosanto, and is the youngest student to receive a black belt rank from him. Sifu Khayman uses his martial arts skills in the entertainment industry. His humility, respectful attitude, and willingness to learn and share are to be commended.

Sylvia McDonald

Martial Arts Excellence

Although she got a late start to the world of martial arts, Sensei McDonald has made the most of her time training. Not only is she an excellent student, she has become an excellent teacher in the dojang and motivational speaker who never fails to inspire. She also teaches women's self-defense classes bi-monthly. A student for life, she is always training, learning, applying, and passing it forward. Sensei McDonald is also a respected pastor with a passion for inspiring the younger generation to rise to their potential.

Bryan Marshall

Enduring Spirit

A 3rd Dan in Shotokan, Sensei Marshall has also trained in Taekwondo and Ninjitsu. His passion for martial arts and wanting to be the best instructor he could be led him to engage with a senior instructor over 300 miles away. The distance did not deter him from committing to learning and growing, both personally and professionally. His instructor, GM Sandy Larwood, demands a lot of him, and he has responded with a newfound sense of purpose and passion for the Arts.

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Jordan Marshall Overcoming Adversity

Diagnosed with Aspergers at the age of 7, Sensei Marshall and his parents had to relearn how to interact and engage with others and adapt to change. His parents made the sacrifice to home-school him, allowing him to focus on his studies and coping skills, as well as begin training in martial arts. Today, he holds a 2nd Dan in Taekwondo and is one of the primary instructors at Shotokan's Marsharu Martial Arts in Jasper TX.

Team Paul Mitchell Excellence in Performance

Founded in 1987, Team Paul Mitchell is the longest-running team in professional sport martial arts. They put the ART in martial arts. Tradition-rich disciplines like Japanese-Okinawan forms and Chinese weapons are mixed with hip-hop moves, spinning back kicks, a sense of flair, and seamless synchronization. They have won more world championships than any other team in the history of sport karate. Team Paul Mitchell lives by a simple creed: Respect, Honor, Integrity, Discipline...and excellence in performance.

Gail Nault IMB Academy Honorable Affiliate

An IMB-certified instructor in boxing, JKD, and FMA, Ms. Nault is a longtime student of GM Richard Bustillo, Sifu Esteban De La Cruz, and Sifu Freddie Jin. She has faithfully attended the IMB Academy Instructors Conference since 2014, taking what she has learned and passing it on to the young students she teaches at MK Boxing. Outside of martial arts, she volunteers at a local food pantry and enjoys fishing.

Katherine Olivar Distinguished Instructor

A 5th Dan Kajukenbo black belt under GM Dan Frazier, Sifu Olivar has dedicated her life to continual growth in martial arts. She also holds a 2nd Dan in Taekwondo and is a member of Karate for Christ and the World Head of Family Sokeship Council. A student first, Sifu Olivar is dedicated to learning, growing, and maturing as a martial artist. She is also committed to paying it forward to future black belts in training.

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Jose Oscar Olivarez Silver Life Award

Sifu Olivarez has studied multiple styles, including Shaolin Wushu, and Jin Jow Kung Fu with some of the best martial artists in the world. He is also certified in Rapid Assault Tactics. He currently trains in JKD, Kali and Krav Maga under the Paul Vunak lineage. When he is not teaching or training, Sifu Olivarez is a Mariachi and Conjunto Director for Donna ISD. He is currently completing his Masters in Educational Leadership. He is an accomplished musician, dancer, and is the official DJ of the Hall of Fame.

Richard Palacios Distinguished Law Enforcement Officer

Officer Palacios is a member of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. You'll often find him patrolling the Las Vegas Strip protecting and serving the residents and countless visitors to the city. In his time off, Officer Palacios meets and trains with other FMA practitioners at local parks, exchanging knowledge and giving back to the community by offering free seminars and workshops. He shares his knowledge with other officers and civilians to better prepare them to defend themselves from violence.

Paul Pawela American Warrior

Master Pawela is a leader in the firearms training community and is recognized as one of the top knife instructors in the country. He is a certified instructor in JKD, Kali, and the American Warrior Free Fighting System. Master Pawela is a former Team Leader and Tactical Trainer for Counter Terrorism and has worked with several Special Forces teams inside the US military.

Robert Pilkington Distinguished Weapons Grandmaster

The Soke of the American Stick and Cane System, GM Pilkington has a deep lineage including GM Mark Shuey, Tom Lang, Gary Dill, and Jeff Heinz. He is also a Tracy Kenpo certified instructor whose accomplishments have been recognized by several prestigious organizations. GM Pilkington has dedicated his life to teaching others how to use the Stick and Cane as personal defense weapons to protect themselves and those they love from harm if they are accosted.

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Jerry Richey

Martial Arts Excellence

A 3rd Dan in ChunJiDo, Sensei Richey is considered one of the most dedicated instructors in this System. He holds himself to the highest standard, both as a student and a teacher, allowing him to expect the same of the students he is teaching. His ability to engage and connect with the students allows him to tailor instruction to each individual in class, enriching the experience for everyone. Because of this, students can't wait to be in his classes because they know they will be encouraged, instructed, and valued. Sensei Richey exhibits martial arts excellence both inside and outside the dojo.

Steven Royce

Silver Life Award

A 4th Dan Master in Taekwondo under GM Dan Roberts, Master Royce is one of the instructors and a cofounder of Emerald Coast Taekwondo in Florida. He is the Chief of Security and founder of American Paratus Security Agency, a multi-state full-service security agency providing armed security personnel, personal protection officers, and private investigations in Texas and Florida. He recently launched Emerald Coast Security Agency, specializing in residential associations and event security in Florida.

Jay Schroder

Distinguished Master

A 6th Dan in Unkinju-Ryu Karate under GM Tom Spellman, Master Schroder also holds a 2nd Dan in Shotokan. A school teacher by trade, he has been commended for incorporating martial arts principles to teaching and enhancing the learning opportunities for the school's students. Master Schroder is an assistant Instructor in GM Spellman's school, serving as he also continues to train and increase his martial arts knowledge.

Mikhail Shermat

Distinguished Competitor

A member of the All-American Sambo Federation, Master Shermat is a boxer and kickboxer with more than 52 years of experience. He is a student of GM Andrei Popandopoulo, founder of Sambo 7. Master Shermat is known as a fierce competitor, as evidenced by both European and World Championships to his credit. He continues to hone his craft and looks to add more titles to his list of accomplishments.

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James Smith

Distinguished Service

A student of GM Walter Bryant and GM Clarence Smith, Master Smith served in the military with distinction before returning to the Karate Institute to serve as an instructor. He is a fierce AOK tournament competitor, both in forms and fighting. He holds a 5th Dan in Tang Soo Do, and is valued by his instructors not only for his military service but for his service to the staff and students of the school where he trains and teaches.

Glen Spence

Distinguished Master

Owner and Chief Instructor of Applied Martial Arts Academy, Master Spence is a 7th Dan in Escrima and a 5th Dan in Taekwondo. He is a 2018 Double Gold Medalist and GBSA Padded Stick World Champion. During his exceptional 30-year career in the military, he was a recipient of the Military Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Joint Achievement Medal, Army Commendation Medal and many other awards. Master Spence is a man of high morals, strong faith, and Godly character.

Clifford Starks

Champion of Change

An American MMA fighter who most recently competed in the middleweight division for the World Series of Fighting. "Big Cat" Starks has been competing since 2009, formerly competing in the UFC, Bellator, and Shark Fights. His record in the cage was an impressive 14-5-0. Today, he is a personal trainer, a transformational coach, and a loving husband and father. He is a champion for change, helping others unlock their potential through learning elite athlete habits and applying them to their personal lives.

Anthony Tesoro

Distinguished Master

A martial artist, pastor, and outstanding community leader, GM Tesoro distinguishes himself by the way he lives his life and empowers others to do the same. He is a 7th Dan in Tang Soo Do and teaches privately at the Anthony Tesoro Combat Karate Club. He is also an actor and stunt man, and teaches stunt acting at Vegas Empire Stunts.

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Silvia Volkmann

Excellence in Service

A 1st Dan in Tang Soo Do, Ms. Silvia has become the “Martial Arts Mom” that makes our National Training Camp and Hall of Fame banquet a success each year. While she’s not teaching classes, she’s doing the important work of managing registrations, manning the front desk, operating the Camp Store, and serving as the “Answer Lady” throughout the event. More importantly, she’s working well in advance of our time together each year to make sure that your experience as a Camper, Inductee, or Guest is an exceptional one.

Donald Williams

Distinguished Master

Shihan Williams serves as the New York Representative for ChunJiDo International. He began his training in Okinawan Goju-Ryu, earning his black belt in 1981. In 2006, he was a Grand Champion in forms and sparring at the AAU Olympic Games. Today he holds a 7th Dan in this art, operating his own dojo in Syracuse. He also holds a 4th Dan in Shotokan. He also teaches in the Syracuse school district helping young students develop confidence, self-control, and discipline.

Ryan Woodard

Distinguished Service

A command staff level fire fighter and EMT paramedic, Mr. Woodard serves the people of Oklahoma City as part of a combined-metro tactical unit. He is an in-demand speaker for the Autism Foundation of Oklahoma at national level conferences. Mr. Woodard was named the Autism Advocate of the Year in 2023 and continues to be a voice for the developmentally disabled.

Brandy Wright

Silver Life Award

A student of the legendary Hanshi Fred Buck, Master Wright is currently a 5th Dan in Kyokushin. A highly decorated tournament competitor, she recently took 1st place honors in women’s full contact fighting at the 3rd annual Shinkyokushin Tournament in 2023. She is a member of the American Kyokushin Karate Association and is actively teaching in Phoenix AZ. Not content to settle, she is always training, learning, and applying.

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James Yeatts

Inspiration to Others

Shihan Wallace is the State Representative for ChunJiDo International, holding a 5th Dan in the art of Tekio Jutsu. He started his martial arts career at the ripe young age of 80 and at age 95, he is still inspiring others. He became an instructor to students with physical challenges at the San Diego Blind Community and began competing, and winning, in the sport karate tournament circuit. He is truly an inspiration to others.

Shingsien Yu

Excellence in Instruction

Master Yu has a reputation of serving others and always adding value. He cofounded the IKF Gardendale Dojo at the age of 27, making a positive difference in the lives of its students. Also a fierce competitor, he was known as a powerhouse in the ring. After relocating to New York, he helped to start multiple gyms and today runs the Muay Thai and kickboxing program at the world renowned International Judo Club in Queens NY.

Gold

Rodrigo Antunes

Pursuing Excellence

Starting in Judo at the age of 4 and Jiu-Jitsu at 8, GM Antunes surrounded himself with incredible instructors who established early on a strong foundation, along with a fearless spirit of competition. He was promoted by GM Joao Alberto Barreto (Helio Gracie's first black belt) with a 6th Dan in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu in 2023, and was honored by Gokor Chivychian and Gene LaBell with a Black Belt in Hayastan MMA. Today, he is a 3-Time BJJ World Champion, a 2-Time Pan American Champion (Gi and No Gi), a 4-Time Worlds Masters Medalist, and was ranked #2 in the World in 2017 and 2023. When he is not competing, he is training the next generation of BJJ practitioners, as well as law enforcement, special forces, and executive protection.

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David Bailey

Lifetime of Distinction

David Bailey is a humble, quiet man who is a legend in the Oklahoma Law Enforcement Community. He has received “Top Cop” and Most Distinguished Instructor honors, Police Officer of the Year and Police Officer of the Decade recognitions and is a long-time CLEET Master Instructor at the Oklahoma Law Enforcement Academy. With more than 54 years of experience in martial arts and defensive tactics training, GM Bailey brings a wealth of knowledge and practical application to his classes. He has served as an IMACUSA Camp Instructor and remains an in-demand D/T Instructor. GM Bailey has been previously inducted into the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame.

Tom Balmos

Lifetime Achievement Award

GM Tom Balmos began his martial arts career in 1969, studying the Art of Taekwondo. In 1977, he met Johnny “Lightfoot” Thompson and the duo earned national recognition from Black Belt Magazine and Karate Illustrated for their Two-Man Weapons Kata. Today, he is a 9th Dan in the Art of Tang Soo Do under GM James Cummings and serves as the Vice-President of the Tang Soo Do Association. He also holds rankings in Taekwondo and Kempo. GM Balmos has been awarded the Emeritus Award by the Greater New Braunfels Arts Council for “Years of Dedication to the Arts of our Community” after serving as President Board of Directors of the S.T.A.G.E. Theater.

Nicholas Cerio

Life of Excellence (Posthumous)

GM Nick Cerio began his historic martial arts career as a boxer, later training in Judo under George McCabe. He later added a black belt in Karazenpo Go Shinjutsu under GM George Pesare and opened his first school, Cerio’s Academy of Martial Arts, and began a 20-year relationship with the legendary Ed Parker. GM Ed Parker awarded GM Cerio with a 9th Dan Black Belt in Kenpo in 1983. He also trained, and earned a 5th Dan in Okinawan Kobudo under the legendary Tadashi Yamashita. His time training with Chow, Pesare, and other influential instructors weighed heavily on the development of his own system, Nick Cerio’s Kenpo. GM Cerio passed away in 1988, but his Kenpo lineage and legacy continue through more than 65 schools in the US, Canada, Europe, and South Africa affiliated with the Nick Cerio Kenpo Association.

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Robert Clayton

Lifetime of Distinction

An ISKA world-ranked Kata and Weapons champion, GM Robert Clayton has more than 100 first-place wins in his illustrious competition career. An 8th Dan in the Art of Shurin-ji-Ryu, he is the highest-ranking instructor under Tarumasa Ogawa in Seikukan Karate Dojo USA. GM Clayton is a NASKA and United States Martial Arts Competition Team member.

Michael Davenport

Lifetime of Distinction

Celebrating 50 years in martial arts, Master Davenport holds a 5th Dan in Taekwondo. He serves as president of the Oklahoma Karate Association and is the Co-Founder of the Oklahoma Sport Karate Association. Over his competitive career, he has won 19 Oklahoma state titles and was a 4-time OSKA Winner. He was also a #1 ranked NBL and ISKA competitor, Black Belt Competitor and 2-time OSKA Black Belt Man of the Year. He is also a law enforcement, firearms, and hostage and crisis negotiation training officer.

Rudy Duncan

Lifetime Achievement Award

Sigung Duncan is the New York State Director for ChunjiDo, also holding a 10th Dan in Kemchido and an 8th Dan in Karazenpo Go Shinjutsu Shaolin Kenpo. He is one of the most sought-after instructors in the Northeastern United States, drawing upon his diverse martial arts background to provide the best possible training to his students. A certified social worker, he has conducted numerous seminars on youth violence and helped to develop a curriculum to teach martial arts to special needs students. Sigung Duncan also teaches Tai Chi to individuals suffering from Multiple Sclerosis or veterans suffering from PTSD. He is also the founder of Kemchido Combat Arts.

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Anthony Ferguson Lifetime of Distinction

A three-time inductee into the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame, GM Anthony Ferguson is a long-time student of the legendary Hanshi Moises Colon, currently holding an 8th Dan in the art of Shorin Ryu. This year, he celebrates 44 years of the endless pursuit of martial arts excellence. With a passion for kata, GM Ferguson is a highly decorated competitor and represented the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame at the Sport Karate Museum's National Kata Wars in 2023. Outside the dojo, he has been recognized for Community Service by the Jacksonville FL Mayor and the Martial Arts Foundation of Miami FL for giving back to these communities.

Eduardo Galang A Life of Distinction

Affectionally known as "Ed", GM Galang began his martial arts career training in Escrima and Judo under the tutelage of his father. He later studied with the legendary Canete Family of Doce Pares Escrima and went on to add Wing Chun and Jeet Kune Do to his training regimen. Blending what he learned, he created Filipino Combat Escrima, making a name for himself both in tournaments and combative circles. GM Galang has served as a bodyguard for the Royal Family in Riyadh even as he established schools in the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, and Sweden. Upon returning to the U.S., he focused his energies on training law enforcement and Homeland Security personnel and training multiple regional and national champions.

Alice Goen Golden Life Award

Master Goen is the co-owner of Elite Martial Arts along with her husband, GM Darrell Goen. She holds a 6th Dan in Kenpo Karate and is ranked in Aikido, Jiu-Jitsu, Kali, JKD, Savate, and Muay Thai. She is a member of the Kenpo International Hall of Fame and has held international titles in sparring and kata over her successful 20-year competition career. GM Goen is also a History General for the Sport Karate Museum.

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Darrell Goen

Golden Life Award

GM Goen is the co-owner of Elite Martial Arts along with his wife, Alice Goen. He holds a 9th Dan in Kenpo Karate and a 7th Dan in SanDoKai Shotokan Karate. GM Goen also holds a Black Belt in Shorin Ryu. He is a member of the Kenpo International Hall of Fame and is a History General for the Sport Karate Museum.

Michael Goldman

Golden Life Award

An 8th Dan in American Karate, GM Goldman has dominated the NASKA circuit, including recognition as the age 40-49 Lightweight Black Belt Fighting World Champion. He is also a recipient of the Living Legends Sport Karate Award and the Joe Lewis Eternal Warrior Award from the Sport Karate Museum, where he also serves as a History General. GM Goldman is also a member of the South Carolina Black Belt Hall of Fame.

Gabriel Green

Living Legend

GM Green started his martial arts training at the Boy's Club, learning the art of Tang Soo Do under GM Clarence "Daddy-O" Smith. After relocating to California, he began to train in multiple disciplines including Shaolin Kenpo. GM Green was also introduced to the blended system of ESKABO, incorporating Eskrima, Serrada, Kali, Arnis, Boxing, and Jeet Kune Do, earning a Guro ranking in the system. He also traveled to China to train with the Shaolin Monks, earning a 2nd Dan ranking in Shaolin Kenpo. Today, he holds an 8th Dan in Tang Soo Do and a 3rd Dan in Shaolin Kenpo. GM Green is an IMACUSA Camp Instructor and a member of the IMACUSA Grandmasters Council.

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Doug Grissom

Life of Distinction

Master Grissom is celebrating 43 years in the martial arts this year, many of those training under GM Phil Wilemon in the art of Taekwondo. He is also a Certified Instructor in Krav Maga under Professor Marty Cale. Master Grissom is a tireless tournament competitor, always learning and striving for improvement. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for Karate for Christ of Arkansas. His accolades include induction into the American Martial Arts Alliance Hall of Honors, Action Martial Arts Hall of Honors, and he is a prior inductee into the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame.

Michael Hornsby

Golden Life Award

With a reputation as a fierce tournament competitor, GM Hornsby is also recognized as an outstanding judge and tournament promoter. He has repeatedly been ranked #1 in Kumite, Kata, and Weapons, dominating multiple divisions and earning the respect of competitors across the state of Texas. GM Hornsby holds an 8th Dan in Taekwondo and Tang Soo Do and is the Founder and Chief Instructor at True Force International Martial Arts Alliance. He is also a member of the IMACUSA Grandmasters Council, Black Knights Karate Association, and the Texas Karate Association.

Lewis Jones

Golden Life Award

A 7th Dan Black Belt in American Karate, GM Jones counts it a privilege to be in the lineage of the legendary GM Pat Burleson. In 1984, he was the AKBBA Competitor of the Year and the Masters Hall of Fame in 2016. GM Jones led the largest martial arts school in Fort Worth TX for 16 years before transitioning to seminars and private events. His past affiliations include the USAKA, TACKA, NAPMA, NBL, AOK, and NASKA.

Adam Keels Jr.

Golden Life Award

A member of the Black Karate Federation, Master Keels has trained under GM Jerry Smith for more than four decades. His illustrious career includes multiple regional and national competitions, fighting (and defeating) many notable legends. He is a black belt in the "Five Level" Method, founded by GM Jerry Smith.

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Sandy Larwood

Golden Life Award

A lifelong student of learning, GM Larwood is an expert in multiple martial arts systems, with a primary focus on Shotokan. She and her trained staff lead more than 100 students each week, focusing not only on martial arts excellence but also instilling important character values. Today, she is not only growing the number of black belts she has promoted, she is also engaging with other schools who want to affiliate with Shotokan Karate and Fitness. GM Larwood continues to lead by example, setting the bar high for herself and her students, and continues her relentless pursuit of martial arts excellence.

Ione Laughlin

Lifetime of Distinction

An 8th Dan in the Art of Pasa Ryu under the legendary Kang Rhee, GM Laughlin has had a long, illustrious career in martial arts. She is a World Black Belt Bureau Certified Instructor and a 2-time prior inductee in the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame. GM Laughlin is a member of the IMACUSA Grandmasters Council, one of the first females to hold this prestigious position within our organization. Her wisdom and guidance continue to be sought by other school owners and instructors.

Gary Lenzi

Lifetime of Distinction

A 5th Dan in Tang Soo Do, Master Gary Lenzi's dedication to the martial arts and his faith have distinguished him among his peers. He is a member of the Christian Black Belt Association, the Martial Arts Chaplains Association, and Karate for Christ International. Master Lenzi is the Chief Instructor at Christian Home Academy, where he focuses on the development of the whole person, body, mind, and spirit. He has integrated faith-based character development with martial arts instruction into his Defending the Faith Martial Arts System.

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Fernando Limon

Living Legend

Named to the prestigious Who's Who in the Martial Arts and World Pugilist Hall of Fame, GM Limon is a living legend in South Texas. From a very young age, he has excelled in every aspects of martial arts. As a junior black belt, he won the prestigious Ed Parker Internationals in Long Beach CA and continued to rack up a historic number of wins in tournament competition in the United States and Mexico. He is an in-demand seminar instructor and still actively teaching and serving on several Black Belt Boards.

Danny Lopez

Martial Arts Excellence

A student of the legendary GM Jerry Smith, Master Lopez has distinguished himself as a fighter. He is an IKBA world middleweight and Jr. middleweight kickboxing champion. He also fought for the WKA, PKA, KICK and ISKA and was regarded as one of the best kickboxers of his era. He later turned his career to boxing, earning the #14 ranked spot with the IBF. From there, he turned his attention to stunt acting, later becoming a Stunt Coordinator, and later, as a Director of Photography, was involved in the TV series "The Camacho Experience," which was nominated for an Emmy.

Drew Miles

Golden Life Award

GM Miles started training in Shotokan at the age of 11. During his military service, he studied Wing Chun in Guam. After his military career ended, he added Gojo Ryu and Chi Fu Ka NinJitsu to his training. A fierce competitor, GM Miles has won over 20 national titles in the NBL and multiple titles throughout his illustrious career, including a USAKKA United States Kickboxing Title and a USA International World Champion. His passion for teaching at-risk youth has been one of his greatest joys, and changed the lives of countless students for the better. He is a true leader by example.

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Brian Neeley

Golden Life Award

A long-time student of the legendary GM Jerry Smith, GM Neeley holds a 10th Dan ranking in Shorin Do Kenpo. His diverse career has spanned nearly four decades, and that wealth of knowledge has been passed down to students of all ages. Believing martial arts is about empowering others, GM Neeley routinely teaches women's self-defense classes, raising their situational awareness and teaching them to effectively fight back when escape is not an option. A member of the Black Karate Federation, he is the curator of the 5-Level Fighting System founded by Joe Lewis and Jerry Smith.

Robert Nichols

Lifetime of Distinction

A 2-time Amazon best-selling author, GM Nichols is also a 13-time US Commerce Award recipient. He is an 8th degree black belt, currently serving as the senior instructor at UTA Martial Arts where he teaches the SAMI Combat System. GM Nichols understands the role of a leader is to raise up those who will one day take his place, and he continues to pour into the instructors he is tutoring, preparing them to be Black Belt Leaders who will continue to teach long after he is gone.

Robert Olmedo

Lifetime of Distinction

Born in Chile, Master Olmeda has more than 50 years training in the martial arts at the highest level. He has black belts in Judo, Aikido, Hapkido, JiuJitsu, Kali, Soo Bahk Do, and Moo Duk Kwan. Master Olmeda has studied with the Secret Service and served as a Professional Bodyguard since the 1990s. Some of his high-profile clients include Princess Diana, Hillary Clinton, B.B. King, Carlos Santana, Sheryl Crow, and John F. Kennedy, Jr. He maintains affiliations with the DEA, NY and CT State Police Departments, and other law enforcement agencies.

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Charles Owens II Life of Distinction

Affectionally known as “CO2”, Master Owens is the owner of JMK Martial Arts & Fitness and President of the U.S. Jung Moo Kwan Association. He also holds a 7th Dan in Kong Soo Sol, 6th Dan in Hapkido, and a 5th Dan in Taekwondo, as well as a certified Krav Maga instructor. Master Owens is a certified expert children’s martial arts instructor, a Personal Trainer, as well as a Chaplain and Reserve Police Officer. He is also an ordained minister, associate pastor, and worship leader, as well as a personal trainer. Master Owens continues to mold and shape lives, teaching martial arts, promoting health and wellness, and instilling important leadership and character values in his students.

Lourdes Radelat Lifetime of Distinction

A woman small in stature but big in heart, GM Radelat was one of the top-ranked female fighters and kata practitioners of her era. In 2005, she became a World Record Champion Fighter for her tenacity in the ring. Her exploits in the ring earned her the respect of the men and women she competed with for many years. Today, GM Radelat holds an 8th Dan in Okinawan Goju-Ryu and an 8th Sash in Kung Fu. Among her many accomplishments, she is a recipient of the Sport Karate Museum Natural Kata Award and a Cancer Warrior Ambassador and is a member of the Who’s Who in the Martial Arts.

Gregory Robinson Golden Life Award

Kyoshi Robinson epitomizes the concept of “Learn to Teach, Teach to Learn.” With more than 55 years of experience, he still shows up each year for the IMACUSA National Training Camp where he is on the floor learning right alongside those who are just starting out in the Arts. Kyoshi Robinson is a 7th Dan in Aikibujitsu / Goshojitsukai. He is a member of the TKA, World Moo Duk Kwan Alliance, and True Force Int’l Martial Arts Alliance. Kyoshi Robinson is one of those gifted instructors who talks the talk and walks the walk.

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Marvin Royce

Golden Life Award

While stationed in Germany in 1979, Master Royce began training in martial arts. Today, he trains under GM Dan Roberts and serves as an assistant instructor at CTX Martial Arts. Master Royce is also a commissioned TX Security Officer and a Private Investigator. When he is not teaching martial arts, he is teaching firearms, active shooter scenarios, defensive tactics, and less-than-lethal firearms. He is also an NRA firearms instructor.

Vicki Rutledge

Lifetime Achievement

GM Rutledge earned her 1st Dan in Kyokushin-Kai in 1992 and today holds an 8th Dan in the Art. For 33 years, she was the Chief Instructor at American Bushido-Kai Karate Association, consistently overdelivering for her students. When she's not teaching or training, GM Rutledge devotes her time to ongoing missions work in Guatemala, bring hope to the indigenous people of this beautiful Central American country.

Ramsey Saffouri

Lifetime of Distinction

Dr. Saffouri is a man on a mission. A medical doctor holding a 6th Dan in Goju-Ryu, he has taken his martial arts skills and medical talents into the executive protection realm, serving on the Presidential Security Detail for several U.S. Presidents, Cabinet Members, and Legislators. He is also the founder of AM/PM Doctor, a national telemedicine firm and the Chancellor of Christ Jesus Bible College and Seminar in Florida.

Marco Sies

Pioneer Award

For over four decades, GM Sies has trained in kickboxing, Muay Thai, Karan, Shotokan, Kyokushin, Taekwondo, Hapkido, Jiu-Jitsu, and Boxing. His accomplishments and honors in competition in martial arts are numerous. They include IKC Featherweight Professional Kickboxing Champion (1997), PKF Lightweight Full Contact Kickboxing World Champion (2003), and WPKO Lightweight Professional Full Contact Kickboxing

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Champion (2004). He also hosted “The Master Method” television program for four years. He has coached several world champions and international title holders.

Clarence Smith Lifetime Achievement

Starting with the Boys & Girls Club, “Daddy-O” Smith rose to become the fiercest competitor of Region 6 of the Southwest. He was consistently ranked a Top 10 competitor and held the #1 ranking in forms and fighting two times during his career. He has gone on to producer champions including Walther Bryant, Clarence Bowman, Jim Ross, and Mike Jones. Owner of Karate for Your Body in Arlington TX, GM Smith holds an MBA in Global Business and a BBA in Business Management. He is an IMACUSA Alumni Instructor and former HOF inductee.

Victor Teran Lifetime of Distinction

An 8th Dan in the Art of Taekwondo, GM Teran is the owner and chief instructor at the International Taekwondo Academy in Arvada Colorado. He is an actor, fight choreographer, and author. A Marine veteran, GM Teran served with distinction in Iraq and later performed diplomatic private security for Blackwater and the US State Department. He is also the author of an award-winning children’s book. His mission remains, serving with distinction and teaching others to do the same.

Cuong (James) Tran Golden Life Award

A 6th Dan in the Art of Bushidokai, Master Tran has been training for more than 40 years. A tenacious competitor, he became a National Karate Champion while still a Brown Belt, and later went on to fight in two World Title kickboxing championships. Master Tran is a recipient of the Sport Karate Museum Ambassador Award. He is also a respected attorney, practicing in Huntington Beach CA.

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Jason Velez

Lifetime Achievement

GM Velez in the martial arts community and a certified expert in Israeli Defense Forces Krav Maga, Law Enforcement Defensive Tactics, and Counterterrorism with 60+ years combined experience. His combined military, law enforcement, and martial arts experience gives him a unique perspective he shares in his instruction. He is a retired Vietnam-era Marine and a Us Army Persian Gulf War Combat veteran who served with excellence over an illustrious 20+ year career. He is a 9th Dan in Hapkido.

Joshua Walkingstick

Lifetime of Distinction

Master Walkingstick is a 6th Dan in Taekwondo, as well as a Krav Maga Full Instructor. He is also ranked in Aikijutsu and Combative Jujitsu. He is the owner and chief instructor at Kaizen Mixed Martial Arts / Kaizen Krav Maga in Duncan OK. Master Walkingstick has dedicated his life to empowering others to learn to become situationally aware and be able to defend themselves if confronted. He is a previous HOF inductee and a recipient of the warrior Journey Martial Arts Compass Award.

Charles-David Wallace

Lifetime of Distinction

The owner and chief instructor at Hoshin Dojo, GM Wallace has been teaching the Art of Shito Ryu for many years. He also holds a 7th Dan in Shito Ryu and Aikido, a 6th Dan in Goju Ryu, and a 5th Dan in Judo. He is a well-respected school owner and instructor, creating a unique sense of community and connection that makes his school feel like a home for the students. GM Wallace is a former HOF inductee.

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Dr. John Williams Global Humanitarian

Dr. John has leveraged his 40+ years in martial arts to impact and change lives around the globe. After 11 years of military service, he turned to global outreach impacting young lives in Africa while continuing to train, compete, and teach. He holds a 7th Dan in Taekwondo, a 5th Dan in Shotokan, Kenpo, and Ju-Jitsu. Dr. Williams holds multiple doctorate degrees and is the founder of Come On In Elite Community Academy. He has been named an African High Chief and an Indian Councilman of the Cherokee Indian Tribe and is an international best-selling author. He is also a 2-time recipient of the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award.

Shelly Williams Trailblazer

For 35 years, Ms. Williams has been a woman making her way in a man's world. She formed Laced Leather Boxing Management where she took on duties including Boxing Manager, Booking Agent, Publicist, Ringside Reporter, Journalist, Matchmaker, and Site Coordinator. She has worked with numerous boxing champions and hall of fame inductees including Ken Norton, Leon Spinks, Earnie Shavers, Hector "Macho" Camacho, "Terrible" Tim Witherspoon, and Laila Ali. She's been inducted into numerous Hall of Fame organizations for her accomplishments in the world of boxing.

Sante Wilson Lifetime of Distinction

A 10th Dan in Shorin-Ryu, GM Wilson martial arts career has spanned more than five decades. He has not only distinguished himself as a competitor, but as an instructor who teaches with excellence. GM Wilson is a member of the TX Black Sports Hall of Fame, the Masters Hall of Fame, and is a former ISKA Featherweight World Champion. Today, he is also developing personal protection devices for civilian use.

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Platinum

Jimmy Anderson

Lifetime Achievement

A visionary businessman with a deep passion for martial arts, Master Jimmy “Fighting Irishman” Anderson has been a highly successful business leader in California and a trainer of champions in the ring. He, along with Bill Nicholson (Amway), Chuck Norris, and John Paul DeJoria, funded the great Bob Wall’s dream of creating the World Black Belt Association. He later stepped up to help GM Joe Corley revitalize the Professional Karate Association (PKA), providing a venue for sport fighting on a grander scale. Master Anderson has also been a major supporter of the Sport Karate Museum and is a History General of this prestigious organization. He has helped many martial arts organizations prosper and see success over the years.

Robert Cutrell

Ambassador

GM Cutrell is a 45-year veteran of martial arts and is the founder of ChunjiDo International with members in 5 continents and more than 30 countries. He is the Soke of ChunjiDo, and also holds black belt rankings in Kempo, Nippon Jujitsu, Taekwondo, and Hapkido. In 2008, the Olympic Committee and Chinese Government recognized him as one of 650 of the most prominent martial artists in the world. GM Cutrell is a member of the IMACUSA Grandmasters Council and sits on the IMACUSA Black Belt Testing Panel. He and his system have been recognized by several prestigious organizations over the years, and he now serves as the ChunjiDo Ambassador for the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame.

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James Debrow III **Pioneer Award**

GM Debrow is a highly decorated veteran of law enforcement, He 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.

Carlos Machado **Lifetime Achievement**

Known as the "Godfather of Jiu-Jitsu", GM Machado has dedicated 56 years of his life to the mastery of the Art of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. An 8th Degree Black Belt under Carlos Gracie Jr., his accolades are too numerous to list. The eldest of the five Machado brothers, has been a 2-time world champion, a 10-time national champion, and a Pan-American champion. Notable students who have trained with GM Machado include Chuck Norris, Travis Lutter, UFC fighter Stephen "Wonderboy" Thompson. His impact as an instructor has been felt globally. Today, he operates a multi-location BJJ Gym in Texas, passing on the Art he loves to children, youth, and adults.

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Dr. Charles Owens **Pioneer Award**

At the ripe young age of 72, Dr. Owens continues to lead by example. He holds a 10th Dan in Kong Soo Sul, a 9th Dan in Taekwondo, 8th Dan in Tang Soo Do, and a 7th Dan in Hapkido. He is a former law enforcement officer and has been a certified instructor for more than 45 years. Throughout his prestigious career, he has been a trailblazer who has led by example. Today, that is still the case. When he's not teaching martial arts, Dr. Owens serves as a pastor, teacher, theologian, author, and an ordained minister. He is a member of multiple martial arts associations. Dr. Owens continues to teach at JMK Martial Arts & Fitness in Alabama, raising up a new generation of instructors.

James Rivera **Pioneer Award**

Hanshi Rivera has been training in martial arts for more than 50 years, and served as a bodyguard and VIP security specialist for over two decades. He is one of the cofounders of the World Warrior Alliance, a conglomerate of legendary martial arts masters. He holds black belts in Ju-Jitsu, Judo, Karate, Boxing, and Self-Defense. Hanshi Rivera's passion is teaching "Old School New York Style", sharing traditional battle-tested martial arts that save people's lives and instill confidence and health to the masses. Hanshi Rivera continues to teach at Owaza Martial Arts, sharing his insights and wisdom with students.

Dan Roberts **Lifetime of Distinction**

A long-time student of the legendary GM Vic Moore, GM Roberts holds a 10th Dan in Taekwondo and a 9th Dan in Soo Bak Kee. In the 1980s, he was a force to be reckoned with in the tournament circuit. He has served as president of the Black Knights Association. He has helped to establish multiple schools, advance many instructors, and continues to teach at Self-Defense America in Killeen TX. He is a prior HOF Inductee and was recently named as a Sport Karate Museum History General. GM Roberts also served in the U.S. Army with distinction.

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Mark Shuey

Lifetime Achievement

The founder of the American Cane Fighting System, GM Mark Shuey has had a long, illustrious career teaching this eclectic fighting art. An 8-time world champion, he wanted to create a defensive protection system for those age 40 and older, and continues to teach this Art globally. GM Shuey has an affinity for the military, often volunteering his time to teach veterans and presenting them with canes for their military service. He is also a Yoga practitioner, helping young and old improve flexibility and strength.

James Singletary

Lifetime Achievement

A 50-year veteran of martial arts, Master Singletary is a 5th Dan in Taekwondo, a 2nd Dan in Hapkido, and a 1st Dan in Gracie Barra BJJ. He is a 5-time IBJJF Master 7 World Champion, a 6-time IBJJF Master 7 Champion, a 2-time IBJJF European Champion, and was the 2021-22 IBJJF #1 ranked Red Belt in the World. He is also a 4-time US Military Open Black Belt Champion and 2-time National Taekwondo Champion. He has also trained law enforcement and military personnel in Dubai.

Gary Wasniewski

International Ambassador

GM Wasniewski is a world-famous martial artist and actor. During a martial arts seminar in Santa Monica, he was approached by Hollywood film director Leo Fong, which led to a career in film. Today, he is an award-winning film and stage actor and director in the United States, United Kingdom, and worldwide. He is also the founder of the International London Martial Arts Hall of Fame, recognizing those who are making a global difference through martial arts.

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Arnold “Zip” White Pioneer Award

A Champion’s Champion in Texas, GM White was a #1 ranked competitor at the state and national level. Ask the likes of Steve “Nasty” Anderson or Billy Blanks and they will tell you “Zip” was the man to beat. He served with distinction for over 20 years with the U.S. Air Force, serving as the head instructor at the Warhawk Gym at Lackland Air Force Base, expecting nothing less than perfection from himself and his students. After his military career, he became an elementary educator while still teaching martial arts with excellence. He is truly a pioneer who remains a trailblazer in the Arts.

Diamond

Eric Lee Lifetime of Excellence

Known as the “King of Kata”, Eric Lee is a living legend in the martial arts world. He is the Founder and Grandmaster of Wun Hop Kuen Do (Kung Fu) and has received more than 100 awards and commendations in his illustrious career. GM Lee has also trained in Northern and Southern Shaolin Kung Fu and has won more national and international awards than any martial artist in the United States, with more than 100 world titles to his record. His face has covered almost every martial arts magazine in the world, and he was a co-founder of the World Black Belt Bureau. GM Lee has been an actor and fight choreographer for more than 80 movies and TV productions and has authored four books. He is proficient in more than 40 martial arts weapons and holds multiple black belts.

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Freddie Jin Iron Dragon

Sifu Freddie Jin began his martial arts and boxing training in the 1970s at the original Filipino Kali Academy under the direction of legendary martial arts instructors, Sifu Richard Bustillo and Guro Dan Inosanto. Inspired by the traditions and knowledge passed down by his teachers, Sifu Freddie became a member of the Filipino Kali Academy demonstration team, performing in various martial arts exhibitions. Later, with his natural leadership abilities, Sifu Freddie assumed the role of captain of the IMB Academy demonstration team. In addition to his martial arts achievements, Sifu Freddie is also an accomplished boxer, earning recognition as a former Golden Gloves champion. Today, Sifu Freddie shares his knowledge in boxing, Jun Fan, and Filipino Martial Arts, at many renowned martial arts schools, including Erik Paulson's CSW Headquarters, IMB Academy, and the Inosanto Academy of Martial Arts. With passion, dedication, and high-energy instruction, Sifu Freddie honors his teachers as he inspires the next generation. Sifu Freddie would like to express his eternal gratitude to Guro Richard Bustillo and Mary Bustillo. He is forever thankful to Guro Dan Inosanto and Simo Paula Inosanto. Sifu Freddie is deeply grateful for the love and support of his sister, Roberta, his dear Aunt Mary Ellen, and his parents in heaven. He extends his heartfelt appreciation to all of his students. Most importantly, he sends his love to his beautiful wife, Rose-A-Lynn.

Jerry Smith Legacy of Excellence

The founder of the Five-Level Method/Shorin-Ju Kenpo, GM Jerry Smith was a 3-time international fighting champion and one of the founders of the Black Karate Federation. The first BKF school, The 103rd Street School, was chosen to film a portion of the immortal martial arts film, "Enter the Dragon," starring Bruce Lee. GM Smith has been featured in nearly all of the major martial arts periodicals, including Black Belt Magazine, Inside Kung-Fu, and Karate Illustrated. He has trained many champions over his illustrious career,

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and also served as private security for Smokey Robinson, Stevie Wonder, Diana Ross, the Temptations, Helen Reddy, and the Beatle's Ringo Starr. He has trained countless black belts who continue to promote GM Smith's legacy of excellence.



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