



Why Tae Kwon Do?

Tae Kwon Do by definition is “The art of hand and foot fighting. It is a martial art that has no equal in either power or technique. Tae Kwon Do stresses the importance of harmony and balance between the mental and physical. By doing this, one can have a stable and balanced system. Then one can learn how the mind and body become the weapons of Tae Kwon Do.”

There are hundreds of different martial arts, but Tae Kwon Do came to Bethany, Missouri through Master Dennis Meggers in 1985 and became a part of my life in 1986. I took my son to watch a “demo” and I was hooked. The discipline aspect of Tae Kwon Do to help with a super active six year old was exactly what I was looking for. Tae Kwon Do is about the tenants: Courtesy, Integrity, Perseverance, Self-Control, and Indomitable Spirit. I live my life practicing each tenant every day. Tae Kwon Do was not about fighting but being able to defend myself if a situation would arise and having self-confidence by not being a victim.

This is a family activity that encompasses a wide range of ages. Dedication to passing down traditional Tae Kwon Do is extremely important to me. My Tae Kwon Do family has been apart of my life for decades. I am passing down to my students what my instructors have taught me through the years. I spend three nights a week teaching or participating in Tae Kwon Do class. My Tae Kwon Do family spends time together at tournaments, tests, demonstrations, parties, going to Eagles Nest, and even going to China and Korea together. There is such a strong bond between martial artists, we always know we have each other's backs.

My form is about balance, one of the key ingredients to Tae Kwon Do. I have always tried to balance Tae Kwon Do with my family, my job, and my faith. To neglect any one aspect would off balance my life.

Having bilateral knee replacements has made me learn to balance in a different way to accomplish the leg and foot techniques. To teach correct movements, I pick a talented student to demonstrate for the class the difficult techniques. The older I get, the more my focus changes on what is the important parts of Tae Kwon Do for me. It is more the mental aspects I work on. When I had my knee surgery, my orthopedic doctor suggested I do another activity that would not involve so much stress on my knees. That was not an option for me as Tae Kwon Do is my lifestyle, not an activity.

This last year has been challenging starting up Heritage Tae Kwon Do to honor our roots from Master Meggers. Master Hall has been the instructor or taught the instructor of every single student in Heritage Tae Kwon Do. He has led the Missouri branches for 26 years. Although I started training under Mr. Folgate, Master Hall has been my instructor for all of my Tae Kwon Do career. Master Hall let the students help develop our name and patch. Running our school has brought our four branch schools closer together as we work for a common goal to have a traditional Tae Kwon Do school. Mr. Strade has put in hundreds of hours doing all the behind the scene jobs that are required to make our school a success. Mr. Strade, along with Jim Hunsucker, built our website and have done a wonderful job. We are not for profit. Keeping our fees reasonable has allowed a lot of students to train even though they don't have much money. For all of our black belts, it is about passing on our art to as many students as possible.

I would like to thank Grand Master Jung for bringing Tae Kwon Do to the United States and passing this art down to hundreds of black belts. It amazes me how many lives have been impacted because he has followed his dream. When I started out as a white belt, my goal was to become a black belt. When I became a black belt, my goal was to become a Master. Today I will hopefully fulfil that dream. I also want to thank every single black belt that has helped me accomplish my goals down through the years. COM SAM NI DA.

