



# ZenQuest Martial Arts Center

55 Pittsfield Road-Building 10, Lenox, MA 01240

(413) 637-0656 \* zenquestmac@sprynet.com \* www.zenquestmac.com

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

## NEWSLETTER August 2023

### Secrets to Success In the Martial Arts

Many people begin their martial arts journey with energy and enthusiasm. They may have a goal of getting into better shape, gain self-defense skills, or achieving to a certain belt level. Many students will quit before ever really getting to their goals, though. This can happen for different reasons. Let's take a look at some secrets to making real progress and getting to your goals in the martial arts.

**Regular Attendance** - Probably the single most important thing that we can do to be successful in the martial arts is simply attend classes on a regular basis. Most of us are able to look at our schedule and pick two or three times each week that we can set aside for training. Even with a busy schedule or rotating work shifts, we can usually sort it out from week to week to get our training time in.

**Support System** - Having friends and family that support, or at least accept your commitment to the martial arts is critical to your success. Sometimes the people close to us need to be reminded that this is important to us, reduces our stress, and keeps us physically and mentally healthy. Regular training will improve the quality of our lives and the lives around us, and help us live longer, too.

**Positive Attitude** - At any point in our journey it's important to keep a positive outlook on our training, our partners, and our teachers. We all have bad days now and then, but a bad attitude is a direct line to failure. Being optimistic and bringing some enthusiasm to training will not only keep our own energy up, but contribute to an environment that people enjoy being in.

**Coachability** - One key to longevity in the martial arts is the ability to listen to constructive input from our coaches and senior students. Sometimes we have a tendency to shut down when someone tries to help us improve because we feel like we already know it or just prefer another way. But, we need to remember that people with more experience probably know a little more and can help us to improve. Instead of shutting down we need to see these as an opportunity to grow and get better.



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## Back To School '23

The 'Back-To-School' season here again and at ZenQuest that means organizing our children's classes for the busy season. We do this in order to keep reasonable limits on these classes and insure a positive experience for each student. After an unusually busy summer it is more important than ever for parents and older kids to reserve their classes at this time.

Youth students and parents should notify us at their earliest convenience which classes they will be continuing with this fall. Starting September 1st, student lists will be created for each youth class in the schedule, with limited space available. So, it is essential that we get you onto the appropriate class lists. Students aged thirteen years or older are eligible to transition to Adult classes (including Karate, Jiu-jitsu, Thai Kickboxing, and Strength & Conditioning.) These classes do not need to be reserved.

Students and parents can reserve their classes by any of the following ways:

- ◆ By speaking to someone directly at the front desk
- ◆ By sending an email to [train@zenquestmac.com](mailto:train@zenquestmac.com)
- ◆ By calling us at 413-637-0656



**Please remember that class reservations and lists are made on a 'first come first served' basis.** Waiting lists will be generated for classes that reached their limit. Students who are not able to attend their first choice for classes right away are encouraged to choose alternative classes until space opens up in their preferred classes.

Also, remember that class reservations will only be effective with an active student enrollment. Reservations for students not currently enrolled must be accompanied with tuition payment to restart the student's membership. Remember, too, that 'Partial Participation' discounts are reserved for students age seven years old and younger.

As of September 1st, youth students will be limited to a maximum of three classes per week in each program. This is to balance enthusiastic individual attendance with allowing a maximum number of students to attend. Also, parents and students need to be careful to prevent 'burnout' in younger students. This still allows most students to attend as much as six classes per week between Karate and Jiu-jitsu.

We are still using precautionary sanitizing and cleaning, and asking students to exercise intelligent personal care (refraining from attending classes when sick.) Face coverings remain optional and students who are more comfortable wearing them are encouraged to do so. With these measures students can reap the benefits of the learning, physical activity, and socialization at ZenQuest.

There are no changes to the current class schedule, except that Cobras students will have the option to attend the Friday evening Uechi-Ryu class. As always, please let us know if you have any questions or concerns going forward. We will look forward to another great season of fun and learning at the oldest and best martial arts school in the Berkshires!!

## AC Jiu-jitsu

ZenQuest kicked off another round of it's Advanced Concepts clinics on Saturday, August 29 with AC Jiu-jitsu. This time the focus was on something called 'Shoulder Guard' where an opponent can be controlled by locking the shoulder from a 'Butterfly' position. From there different positions and submissions can be set up and executed.

At the end of the mini-seminar some students were leveled-up based on hard work and dedication, including: Levi Giumarra to 1-Stripe Yellow/White belt, Andy McMahon to Blue Belt, Borey Booker to 1-Stripe Blue Belt, Jennifer Somerville to 3-Stripe Blue Belt, Herb Gregg to Brown Belt, and Matt Gerlitz to 3-Stripe Brown Belt. Congratulations to all!



**IMPORTANT DATES**

Sat, 9/2 to Mon. 9/4 - No Classes/  
Labor Day Holiday  
Sat, 9/23, 1:15p - AC Uechi  
Sat, 9/30, 1:15p - AC Muay Thai

**NEW STUDENTS!****Welcome:**

Arlo Loyd, Miles Stanton, Tyler Garrett, James Debowski, William Straub, Simon Wineberg, Srikar Gavindarajula, Cameron Cunningham, Maurice Brown & Matthew Winter

**RECENT PROMOTIONS****TIGERS:**

7kyu - Clayton Correia  
8kyu - Gracie Dufur, Arthur Coleman,  
Logan Polk  
9kyu - Addison Pleu, Amelie Ismail

**DRAGONS:**

3kyu - Jordyn Simmons  
4kyu - Layla Wixsom  
6kyu - Johnson Green  
7kyu - Montanna Inesta

**COBRAS:**

3kyu - Amber Niveló  
4kyu - Zooey Bayles  
5kyu - Lucas Kunde  
9kyu - Sophia Perreault

**UECHI:**

Sempai - Ashton Brennan  
2kyu - Michael Siktberg  
9kyu - Mary Hannah Parkman

**PYTHONS:**

1 stripe yellow/white - Levi Giumarra

**JIU-JITSU:**

3 stripe brown - Matt Gerlitz  
Brown - Herb Gregg  
3 stripe blue - Joe Penna (correction),  
Dennis McCarthy, Jennifer Sommerville  
2 stripe blue - Chalice Mitchell  
1 stripe blue - Borey Booker  
Blue - Andy McMahon  
1 stripe White - Seth Gabriel

***HAPPY BIRTHDAY!***

Ashton Brennan 8/1  
Walison Rosa 8/8  
Elias Casey 8/9  
Beckett Lyon 8/9  
Ezra Wool 8/10  
Devin McLaughlin 8/11  
Michael Reis 8/12  
Phoebe Porter 8/15  
Tyler Woodbury 8/16  
Miles Carvalho 8/17  
Caleb Tullock 8/20  
Liev Musayev 8/22  
Glenn Giumarra 8/24  
Miriam Gluck 8/24  
Amber Niveló-Huerta 8/25  
Sebastian Chavez-Norbury 8/26  
Mercedes Howell 8/28  
Lincoln Brown 8/29

**Terminology****Lineage**

Japanese: Keito  
Brazilian: Linhagem  
Thai: Chusai

**“Best Martial Arts Academy”  
ZenQuest Martial Arts**

Berkshire Eagle's  
Readers Choice Awards  
**SIX YEARS  
RUNNING!**





(Continued from page 1) **Secrets To Success In The Martial Artist**

**Adaptability** - Most of us do start our martial arts journey with some goals in mind. These can vary from one person to the next, but will very likely change as we progress. It is important to adjust our goals periodically, especially once we achieve intermediate and advanced levels in our training. It is very common to get to a certain level in our training and get to the '\_\_\_\_\_ Belt Blues.' This can happen at any of the levels we reach, but it is usually just a time when we need to refocus and grind through whatever is getting us down. The best goal to have is to simply enjoy the training and realize that it will improve the quality of our lives and the lives around us.

We may be faced with other challenges in our training over time including changes to the gym, staff, or training partners. Having the ability to adjust and adapt to these will enable us to continue to enjoy the benefits of training for many years.

**Surviving Setbacks** - From time to time things will happen that will make it difficult or even impossible to train. This can be an injury or illness, financial challenges, or a change in our family life. Usually, with some effort, we can work around the setback and continue to train. In a case where this just isn't possible, we should focus on working through our situation and do our best to return to training as soon as we can.

**Working Through Valleys** - Our progress in the martial arts will rarely be in a straight line. Instead, it will be filled with peaks, valleys, and plateaus along the way. Some days we will be bursting with energy and feel like we're making great progress. On others we will feel like we're wasting our time or even slipping backwards. The crazy thing is that often in the times when we feel like we're doing poorly that we are learning the most, and we are likely on the verge of real progress. Remember that identifying a need for improvement is the first step toward improving. Adults can generally deal with this well, but when children have a bad day or experience a bit of burnout they may feel like they don't ever want to train again. In this case their parents can help them understand the peaks and valleys and encourage them to continue.

**Minimize Drama** - Since the martial arts are based in human interactions, we all need to keep healthy relationships with our training partners and instructors. This means being friends with the people there, but also...keeping them in the 'friend zone'. It is not healthy developing feuds with other students or instructors, OR flirting with or dating other students. This kind of thing will likely result in one or more students leaving the gym. Students should also avoid falling into 'cliques' of friends as this will alienate other students and often breed negativity.

Sometimes a student will enter the dojo who has a personal culture of toxicity. Sometimes that student will start out saying and doing the right things. However, before long they reveal themselves to be someone who enjoys causing drama and making trouble in the gym. When someone begins to do this it is OK to try to gently correct the situation but, if that doesn't work it's best to inform an instructor and let them handle it. These students usually wind up leaving the gym.

**Stay Humble** - As we gain more experience we need to stay grounded and be careful not to let the skills and abilities we gain go to our head. This is especially true when we naturally start to take on some leadership responsibilities in our art. As a more experienced student it is important that we model good technique, behavior, and attitude in training. As someone who newer students will look to as an example, we should carry ourselves in a way that is 'down to earth' and helpful towards others.

**Patience** - In long term training we may be faced with some disappointments or frustrations. These can be anything from not receiving a stripe or belt when we think we should, to simply feeling like we're not progressing the way we should. The best thing to do when this happens is relax and refocus on what we can do to make that thing that we want happen, and less on the expectation that we've given ourselves. As long as we do our best to follow the habits noted and enjoy the training, the rest will take care of itself!

