



ZenQuest Martial Arts Center

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

NEWSLETTER November 2023

The Votes are In

We're happy to announce that ZenQuest has been voted "Best Martial Arts School" in the Berkshires for the seventh year in a row! The award was given by the Berkshire Eagle's 'Best of the Berkshires 2023'. As usual, we were pleasantly surprised by the award after the voting had closed and the results were tallied.

We believe that this is the result of years of doing everything we can to provide the best facility, instruction, and training environment possible. Our facility is very functional and 'user friendly' for students, families, and visitors. It is designed to optimize the experience for everyone. We are constantly working to improve the gym inside and out and are excited about plans for the future.

We take great pride in providing world-class instruction in all of the programs we offer. With three internationally recognized parent organizations, our teaching standards and methods are guaranteed to be high quality and authentic. Also, with a combined experience of over 70 years between Senseis Connie and Mark, as well as an experienced support staff, we're happy to help others optimize their own martial arts journey.

The training environment we've created may be our biggest accomplishment and reason why our students and families support us as they do. ZenQuest will always be a place of mutual support and respect, where anyone who is sincere about learning can thrive. Instructors and students know that welcoming new people is crucial in maintaining a friendly environment for all.

Another element worth a mention is that we set high standards for students to advance in their chosen arts. Rank promotions are based on effort, progress, and personal development. The ranks earned in each of the arts that we offer are recognized around the world. This may seem like a matter of course, but too often in the martial arts world students are pushed through ranks based on memorization, false confidence, and monetary gain.



The Best of the Berkshires 2023

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Paint the House

Our painting goals for the year have now been finished! Phase I of this project included preparing and painting all of the east and north faces of the building. This meant repairing and replacing portions of the wood siding, removing loose paint, and applying a primer coat of paint. The final coat of paint is a nice blue color which will be surrounded by a white trim (to be added later.)

Phase II of the project will be prepping and painting the west (playground side) and south (front) faces of the building. This is planned to begin in the springtime of next year and completed by the fall. Since the building is about equal to two



average sized houses this is no small task.

For years the property had been somewhat neglected under it's previous owners. However, in December of 2021 ZenQuest officially became the owner of the building, and repairs and improvements began almost immediately.

In addition to the painting and repair efforts the old doors in the front of the building were recently replaced. New signage will also soon be added to the main entry door.



Students should feel good about the efforts being made to bring them the best facility possible for their training.

Special thanks to Matt Moreau, Glen Giumarra, and Russ Moody for their help with this portion of the improvements to ZenQuest.

Tapping Cancer

Several ZenQuest students are preparing to compete in the 2023 'Tap Cancer Out' tournament in November. The annual fundraising event will be held in Danvers, Massachusetts on November 19th. YOU can help by sponsoring one or more of them, or just contributing to the cause using the link: <https://wecan.tapcancerout.org/zenquest>. Proceeds benefit cancer prevention and research.

Boa sorte and boa luta (good luck and good fight) to all of the competitors!



WEATHER CLOSURES

Occasionally, the weather will become intense enough during the winter months to present a serious travel risk for our students and instructors. This can result from a single, severe weather event happening at the time of classes; or from an accumulation of events leading up to the time of classes. Other indicators can be other major organizational closings and local travel advisories. If it appears that travel will be too risky during class times, the school will close for that time. Students can verify these closures by checking the school's website or Facebook page, checking their e-mail, and by checking for a message on the ZenQuest phone at 413-637-0656.



IMPORTANT DATES

Week of 11/13-11/18 - Karate Sparring week

Sun, 11/19 - Tap Cancer Out, Danvers, MA

Wed, 11/22, Thurs, 11/23, Fri, 11/24 -
NO CLASSES
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

NEW STUDENTS!

Welcome: Chase Bashara, Aubre Garand, Ronan Whelan, Frankie Payano, Ethan Stalker, Ben Boscarino, James Horth, Ella Piretti, Shawn Chambers, Chris Boyle, Isaias Ramirez, Frankie Miller, Clara Jeanette Miller

Welcome Back: Jeff Scrimo

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

William Ezell 11/2

Livia Hess 11/3

Todd Dort 11/6

Jesse Blumenthal 11/7

Andrew McMahon 11/10

Marcus Drake 11/10

Riley Campbell 11/10

Abby Havill 11/11

River DiVecchio 11/13

Jonah Frank 11/15

Grey O'Donnell 11/15

Charles Villagran 11/19

Herbert Gregg 11/20

Layla Wixsom 11/20

Chase Bashara 11/22

Caleb Cimini 11/24

RECENT PROMOTIONS**TIGERS:**

9kyu - Athena Pereira, Aarav Bansal

8kyu - Maggie Williams

7kyu - Joel Ospina-Cruz

DRAGONS:

9kyu - Myra Bansal

7kyu - Paige Blake

COBRAS:

9kyu - Victoria Artega-Tucker, Jesse Fillio

UECHI:

9kyu - Aubre Garand

PYTHONS:

1 stripe white belt - Penelope Chavez-Norbury

2 stripe white belt - Sebastian Chavez-Norbury

Grey/white belt - Montanna Inesta

3 stripe Grey/white belt - Gustavo Perez

JIU-JITSU:

2-Stripe white belt - Zach Lecuyer

Terminology

Good Morning

Japanese: Ohayo

Brazilian: Bom Dia (Gia)

Thai: Sawadi Pon Tao

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



*Berkshire Eagle's
Readers Choice Awards
SEVEN years
running!*



Reminders

With many new students in the dojo we would like to mention some important reminders to students and parents. Here are some things to be mindful of while attending classes at ZenQuest.

Be On Time - It is important for students to arrive 5 to 10 minutes before each class. This allows students to be physically and mentally ready for their class. Students entering a class late not only disrupts the class, but also leaves them in a situation where they may have missed some important information given at the beginning of the class.

If more time is needed to change or gather the gear needed for the class, students and parents should adjust their arrival time accordingly. We understand that things can happen that are out of our control, but consistently arriving late points to carelessness or simply choosing that pattern.

When We Open - Typically, the building does not open until 15 minutes before the first class of the day or evening. Students and parents should be patient when that happens. Sometimes students are waiting when the instructors arrive and may have an expectation to enter the gym right away. But, the instructors usually need a few minutes to prepare the facility properly for the students.

Beverage Cooler - As a courtesy to our students we provide a beverage cooler with different choices. As much as we would like to provide these for free, there is a cost for each item in the beverage cooler. When purchasing something from the cooler, please pay at the time of removal. If someone is not at the front desk it is the responsibility of the student or parent to leave the exact change on the desk, or find an instructor to help them with the exchange. Taking items out of the cooler without paying is not acceptable and grounds for dismissal from the school.

Enrollment - Students who are not enrolled via our 'Easy Pay' autopayment option are responsible for keeping track of their tuition due dates and making payments on time. We do our best to provide reminders on the attendance sheets at the front desk, so checking them periodically can help. Whenever someone at the desk is checking students in, they will also provide a reminder. Please remember that students should not attend classes without an up to date enrollment. Also, missed classes cannot extend enrollment (except in serious medical situations.)

Gear - Once students or parents decide to make a commitment to training they should make sure that they have all of the equipment that they need to fully participate in their classes. For Karate this means a uniform and a set of sparring gear. For Jiu-jitsu it means a heavyweight uniform, cup, and mouthpiece. For Muay Thai it's boxing gloves, shin-guards, cup, and mouthpiece. Sometimes parents will delay investing into the proper equipment for their kids until they show some commitment, but children can actually get discouraged and loose interest if this is delayed too long.

So, please be mindful of these aspects of training and your martial arts journey will be amazing!



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All of this comes somewhat against the odds. Although students are shielded from the behind the scenes challenges as much as possible, some of these have been pretty intense over the last 20-plus years. They include a recession, a pandemic, a less than ideal ownership transition, loss of facility, and far too much drama at times. However, a core group of dedicated students and instructors have stuck with it through it all and helped make ZenQuest the amazing place that it is today.

We would like to thank our staff, students, and families for their continued support. We would not receive the recognition that we have over the last seven years without them. We will continue to do everything we can to make it all even better! Thanks again Team ZenQuest!!!




Offering the BEST in:
Uechi-Ryu Karate • Brazilian Jiu-jitsu
Thai Kickboxing • Mixed Martial Arts

We'd like to thank all of our students, instructors, parent organizations, families, and supporters for helping to make ZenQuest amazing. Huge thanks for voting us **Best of The Berkshires for SEVEN years in a row!**




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