



# 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 Siyodotong Boston Affiliate

# NEWSLETTER

## February 2024

## Kikai is Coming

As you may know now ZenQuest is co-hosting an amazing Uechi-Ryu training camp in July of this year! The 'Kikai 2024' camp will feature six days of instruction and cultural exchange with four Okinawan Masters. This will include Master Atsushi Hamada (Renshi, 6th Dan), Master Tatsuhide Miyazato (Kyoshi, 7th Dan), Master Hirokuni Yamashiro (Hanshi, 9th Dan), and Grandmaster Tsutomu Nakahodo (Shihan, 10th Dan) of the Okinawa Karate-Do Association. This will be the first time such a camp has been held in the U.S. since 2014.

The response for the camp has been tremendous and the registrations have reached the maximum capacity at this time. So, we have started a waiting list for those still interested in attending. On the upside of things, the strong response is enabling us to include one more accomplished Okinawan Karateka for the camp. As it stands right now Atsushi Hamada of the Awase dojo will also be making the trip.

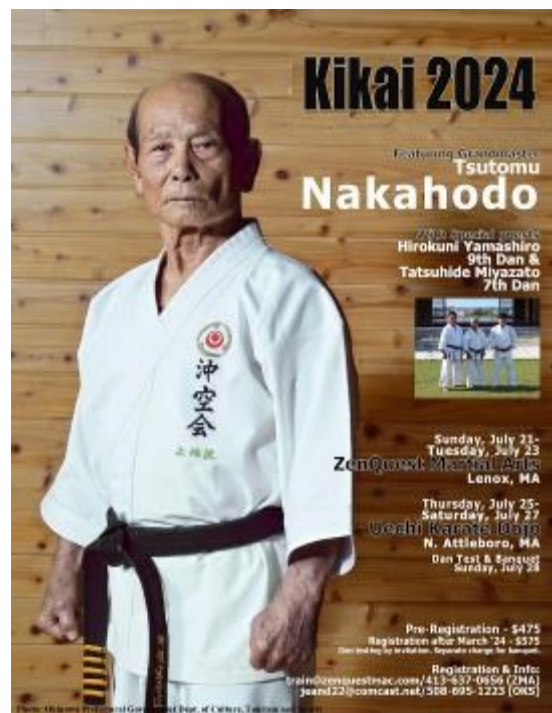
Mr. Hamada is a Renshi 6th dan or 6th degree black belt and director of the Awase dojo under Master Keicho Tobaru. Hamada Sensei is also a two-time Kata champion in the All Okinawa Karatedo Championships.

The camp will cover a variety of topics including Sanchin, Kata, Bunkai, Yakusoku Kumite, Kote-Kashi Kitae and more. Kikai 2024 will be co-hosted by two long established Dojos in Massachusetts.

The first part of the camp will be held at ZenQuest Martial Arts in Lenox from Sunday, July 21 to Tuesday, July 23. After a day of rest for the Masters, the camp will continue at the Uechi Karate Dojo in North Attleboro from Thursday, July 25 to Saturday, July 27. The event will conclude with an advanced Dan Test and farewell Banquet on Sunday, July 28.

In order to keep the event a reasonable size, the event has been limited to dojos and members of the Okinawan Karatedo Association. To be placed on the waiting list for this please contact us for registration materials or visit the ZenQuest website at zenquestmac.com. Registration for the camp will enable participants to attend as much of the six days of training sessions at both locations as they like.

We are looking forward to an amazing camp!



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## Alert!

ZenQuest is in the process of setting up a text messaging system to alert students of important developments related to the dojo. This would include weather and power outage closures, links to our monthly newsletter, and other important announcements. In 2024 approximately 20% of people open email notices like these, but 90% open text alerts.

Interested students will have an opportunity to 'opt into' receiving these notifications soon, and have the ability to discontinue at any time. If you would like to be included in the ZenQuest text alerts, please let us know and provide a phone number. Until we have the system set up you can send your info by email at [train@zenquestmac.com](mailto:train@zenquestmac.com) or simply leave your name and number at the front desk. More details available on this soon!



## Picture Perfect

As we gear up for the Kikai Camp in July some preparations are being made at ZenQuest. As part of that we have commissioned an artist to paint portraits of key Masters associated with the dojo. The artist is none other than ZenQuest student Chalice Mitchel! She is an art instructor at Mass MoCa in the Berkshires, and a freelance artist. Chalice also lived in Japan for about seven years and is conversational in Japanese.

Chalice recently completed the first portrait which is of Grandmaster Tsutomu Nakahodo (shown below.) Shihan Nakahodo is a 10th Degree Black Belt in Uechi-Ryu Karate and one of the most senior living masters of the art. Master Nakahodo is Sensei Connie's and Mark's primary teacher.

Our in-house artist will next do a portrait of Master Hirokuni Yamashiro. Sensei Yamashiro is a Hanshi, 9th Dan in Uechi and Sensei Connie's and Mark's secondary teacher. He has also been instrumental in helping them on their trips to Okinawa, and has visited the Berkshires and other parts of the U.S. several times.

Chalice is styling the new portraits to match those existing already in ZenQuest's front training room. Eventually she will also do portraits of Grandmasters Higa and Takamiyagi who were the Flynn's head instructors until their passing in 2022 and 2012 respectively.

Huge thanks to Chalice for her amazing work on these incredible additions to the Berkshires premier Karate dojo.



## 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 hazardous 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, by checking for a message on the ZenQuest phone at 413-637-0656...and soon by text alerts!



**IMPORTANT DATES**

Week of 2/12-2/17 - Karate Sparring week

2/16 & 2/17 - Professor Silvo Moraes

3/16, 1:15 pm - Advanced Uechi

4/7, 1:30 pm - Possible Kyu Test

4/13, 1:15 pm - Advanced Muay Thai

4/27, 1:15 pm - Advanced Jiu-Jitsu

7/21-7/28 - 2024 Kikai Camp

**NEW STUDENTS!**

**Welcome:** Emily Gabriel, Travis Brecher, Jennifer Joyce, Brian Huntley, Alex McCleery, Shaun Courtney, Hunter O'Neil, Andrew Albert and Caleb Pinsonneault.

**Welcome Back:** Logan Finn, Sienna Huh, Lilly Huh and Nilani Broussard.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

Jasper Stanton 2/2

Elias Yared 2/3

Zooey Bayles 2/4

Sadie Giumarra 2/5

Jack Wendt 2/6

Rebecca Wolfe 2/8

Philippe Peligrad 2/11

Myra Bansal 2/12

Jennifer Sommerville 2/14

Ricky Jennings 2/15

Joseph Pellegrino 2/16

Sienna Huh 2/21

Thomas Bowler 2/22

Zachary Kmetz 2/22

Frankie Miller 2/25

Michael Rynn 2/27

Lizzy Sondrini 2/28

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

6kyu - Miles Stanton, Owen Fachini

7kyu - Theo Susse

9kyu - Louis Allegrone

**DRAGONS:**

5kyu - Jasper Stanton, Westley Didio, Theo Didio

7kyu - Axsell Robbins

**COBRAS:****UECHI:**

8kyu - Kelsey Koldys

**PYTHONS:**

2 stripe white belt - Myra Bansal, Jack Wendt

1 stripe white belt - Henry Fougere

**JIU-JITSU:**

2-stripe white belt - Jesse Blumenthal

**Terminology****Grabbing**

Japanese: Nigeri or Tsukamu

Brazilian: Pegando

Thai: Lohope

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

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



## NAGA Booty

Four ZenQuest students recently competed in the 2024 NAGA championships in Albany, New York. Several of the areas top grappling schools were present, and some had traveled quite a distance to participate. Each member of team ZenQuest medaled, bringing a total of seven medals back to the gym. Individual results were as follows:

- ◆ **Levi Giumarra** - 1st Place in Teens/ Intermediate/ 155# Max./ 12-13 Years/ No-Gi AND Gi
- ◆ **Hunter Hamilton** - 3rd Place in Men's/ Novice/ 225# Max./ 30+ Years/ No-Gi
- ◆ **Borey Booker** - 2nd Place in Women's/ Intermediate/ 130# Max./ No-Gi AND 3rd Place in Women's/ Blue Belt/ 130# Max./ Gi
- ◆ **Glen Giumarra** - 2nd Place in Men's/ Expert/ 200# Max./ 40+ Years/ No-Gi AND 1st Place in Men's/ Purple Belt/ 200# Max./ 40+ Years/ Gi

The event took place on Saturday, January 20th at the Washington Avenue Armory. Everyone on the team fought well and had moments where they really shined. Our team did especially well with takedowns and positioning.

In addition to the four competitors, several team members came out to support them. Thanks to the competitors for an amazing job and thanks to everyone who showed up to support them!



## Tuition Adjustments

To keep pace with increasing expenses, the tuition at ZenQuest has been adjusted slightly. Effective January 1st all basic monthly tuition rates were increased by \$5 per month, with similar discounts for three, six or twelve month commitments and Easy Pay enrollments. Similar discounts for families, college students and Law Enforcement Officers will also stay in place.

Now is a great time to consider enrolling in our 'Easy Pay' subscription payment plan. Doing so will lock in your tuition rates, and remain unchanged for as long as you stay enrolled with it.

For the last seven years ZenQuest has been recognized as the best martial arts school in the beautiful Berkshires. We take great pride in providing the best facility, instruction, and training environment possible for each and every student at ZenQuest. Even with the latest adjustments our tuition is still significantly less than our closest competitors.

To enroll in Easy Pay, or for any questions related to tuition please contact us or stop at the front desk. As always thanks for your understanding and support!




**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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