



Judy Tran
December 2, 2017

Karate Journey to 1st Dan Black Belt

Being involved in American Sport Karate Association has been one of my active and favorite sport back in 2012. I was always motivated and jubilant to go to karate every Saturdays and Wednesdays because I get to hear all experiences and stories about Grandmaster Ralph Krause. I was fascinated to hear stories from Grandmaster Hien and Kelly related to their personal experiences in karate, studies in education, art/culture in martial arts, and much more. The art of karate is truly amazing when I see different cultural perspectives in the real world. Throughout the process of learning, the stories gave me a better understanding about the purpose of respect, integrity, and personal growth. Recognizing these purposes guide me to improve on fundamentals of karate and space for improvements on my leadership skills. Therefore, I truly admire Grandmaster Hien and Kelly whose passed on traditional techniques and developed standards to students.

ASKA has challenged me to become who I am currently as a student. I learned tremendous foundation of techniques, self-defense, and much more. This training comes from muscle memory and working with different students. I learned that everyone will eventually succeed no matter how slow or fast you go and rank. Also, karate is not utilized for fights nor revenge against others. Accomplish goals is the matter of building a character and follow your own pathways with the help of others. I can tell by experiments of Psychology and Chemistry amongst others during karate practice. Also, I truly enjoy performing with the demo team at variety of community events. For additional training, I would often play music on whenever I practice on my katas at home. I also competed and volunteered in tournaments, so that I can watch how people perform from different martial art schools. It was amazing to see variety of abilities, arts, and aggressiveness in each tournament. Therefore whenever I practice at home, I would pretend that I am in a competition or perform for a community event. This truly helped me maintain on the fundamentals of karate and muscle memory for the black black belt test.

The black belt test was honestly difficult because the test took seven hours of hardcore techniques, step up/step through, sparing, and more. Basically, everything I learned in the past years in karate. Everyone had to deal with the test mentally and physically. The first two or three hours of the test was the hardest. However, I was glad that most people made it through the test and was relieved at aftermath. I received great feedback from each instructor to reflect on my performance in the test. The judges gave everyone encouragements and feedback to ensure we help our partner and make your partner look good. Along with other helpful advices for us to improve in the next test. Therefore, it is absolutely an honor to receive a black belt and I realized that my first dan black belt journey starts now.

I would like to thank and appreciate Grandmaster Hien, Master Joe, Kelly, Allison, Heather, Khoi, Miguel, and other fellow instructors who helped me from the beginning until the black belt test. I love the view of family and fun in karate practice because it shows how dedicated and committed the students were in karate practice. I was inspired by Allison because I always consider her as my role model. I would ensure my techniques are precise by following her in karate. I made it through the black belt test with the help of my wonderful instructors and fellow students during karate. In conclusion, I will absolutely maintain this experience and pass on the experiences to students in the future.

Thank you all,
Judy Tran