

**Dec 13rd 2014**  
**Mona Osterhoudt**  
**2nd Dan Black belt**



I am very proud to receive my 2<sup>nd</sup> degree black belt. I would like to thank my instructors for helping me and Master Hien for his expertise in Martial Arts. I would also like to thank my classmates for providing support and encouragement when I was confused, in pain and exhausted.

My initial goal for joining class was to improve my health and now I have made Karate a part of my life. I have met the most amazing people. The best part of learning is continuing even after failing, finding strength in exhaustion and seeing progress when starting back to basics.

Some days I feel lazy and lacking the energy to attend class but I know all the information I gained I would lose. And once I show up to class I always have fun. I like to challenge myself and push myself so that I can say, I did it! During my 2<sup>nd</sup> degree black belt test my knee really started to hurt and I felt more fear than pain. Out of fear my thoughts became negative and I was worried I wouldn't pass or never be prepared at another time to physically complete the test. I am proud that I did not let fear win. I decided to push myself and complete the test not knowing if I was going to pass or not. I just was not going to allow fear to stop me.

I hope I continue to grow as a student and provide others the inspiration to continue their journey with Karate.

Thank you  
Mona Osterhoudt

**June 2nd 2012**

**Mona Osterhoudt, 1st Dan Black belt**



The accomplishment of receiving my black belt has been a journey of self determination, perseverance and trust. I did not initially plan on attending class with my children; I thought my time for this level of physical activity had passed.

All it took was an invitation by Master Hien to join with my kids and I did it to lose weight. The first three months I was in so much pain it took sheer determination to continue to come to class. It was fun to see my progress and see how I kept up. I was proud of my accomplishments and I thought why not make my goal a black belt?

The way to meet my goal was to pay attention in class and follow through with instructions, just being in class is not enough to achieve my goal. I had to get stronger, faster and build endurance. With anything in life if you want something you have to work for it.

I have had fun in class trying new things and pushing my personal limits. I have seen my physical strength come back to me. 15 years ago I battled cancer and lost trust in my own physical strength because I felt my body betrayed me by being so ill. And now since joining class I have completed a mini-triathlon, competed in Karate tournaments, took up swimming during lunch time, run occasionally for fun, and rode my bike 30 miles round trip for, Ride your Bike to Work day in the rain, to a new job I felt I deserved and got! I look forward to continue learning and pushing myself forward.

I have learned to trust myself and my teachers of what I am able to do. I would like to thank Master Hien and the entire instructor for their encouragement, knowledge and kindness for making this experience enriching for me and my family.

Thank you  
Mona Osterhoudt