

Allison's Journey to 3rd Degree Black Belt June 4th, 2016



Grandmaster Ralph Krause made it clear to his students that he wanted ASKA to remain a traditional martial art school. Master Hien, now Grandmaster, has been successful at doing that and has passed that importance down to his students. ASKA will remain traditional in technique and form and there is a great responsibility to do that.

Going from a 2nd degree to a 3rd degree was a little over whelming at times. I feel like it has been totally different from going from brown belt to 1st degree and even from 1st to 2nd degree. I have learned a tremendous amount during this time. Most of it coming from the leadership role and what it takes to start a new school and helping teach students that have zero martial art experience. Learning how to lay the "foundation" techniques, how much to show them, so not to overwhelm them, and when to "yap" and slow it down a bit. It is nothing like I thought. The way I would have started a school, would have left an empty room. Fortunately, I have been able to observe Grandmaster Hien at the new location in Brighton and the class continues to grow.

I am forever grateful for my family, all of the leadership in the organization, the students and those even out of the ASKA organization, to help me reach this point. We have fun. We laugh. We sweat. We hurt. We get stronger. We are family.

Thank you,

Allison

Dec-14-2014
Allison Johnson
2nd Dan Black Belt



Journey to a Black Belt

It truly is a journey to each new belt that you receive. No matter whether you are going from white to yellow or 1st degree to 2nd degree black belt and so on, what you learn in between is what matters. I have learned so much from Master Hien and my fellow classmates and leaders since I put on that white belt. Every class is a learning experience and every test I take I learn something about myself. My first black belt test was learning to face a fear of failing. This test was completely different in many ways even though much of the requirements were the same. With this test I learned that I am stronger than what I give myself credit for most of the time. When I feel weak, I can think of this accomplishment and know I can do it. I am grateful to be able to continue the journey and build upon what I have been taught.

I want to thank my husband, Matt for being supportive and spending hours and hours watching our children so I could spend time learning and doing something I love. I also want to thank Master Hien, Kelly, Mona, Heather, Khoi, and Miguel and all of my classmates for helping, assisting, encouraging, and taking extra time to work with me. Just like a single thread, separate we have weaknesses but when we all come together as a team, we can make something really strong. I look forward in being a part of what makes ASKA a strong organization where we can all learn and have fun together. Sacrifices were made by a lot of people to allow me to get to this point in my journey, and I am very grateful for that.

AJ

Dec-15-2012

**Allison Johnson, 1st Dan Black Belt
Journey to a Black Belt**



If you told me that I would have a black belt five years ago, I would have thought you were really funny. We were introduced to ASKA through a friend. We wanted to get our oldest son involved in a physical activity and he was not interested in team sports.

We went to class and after about a month of encouragement from Master Hien, I caved and started participating. I thought ok, this will be good for me- just for exercise. However, the more I went to class the more I loved it. After a while it wasn't just to get exercise, it was to learn. The black belt doesn't mean you or I have learned it all. For me, my black belt symbolizes a lot of hard work not only on my part but also my instructors and my family and for facing a fear. I am notorious for starting something and leaving it undone. It is easier for me to walk away than to face a fear of failing at something. I put a lot of pressure on myself to reach this part of my goal and I am not through learning. I don't have a goal of reaching a certain degree but more of a goal to be prepared the best way I can in a worst case scenario that I would need it. I want to take this opportunity to thank those that have helped me reach this part of my goal. I have to thank my husband, Matt for sacrificing lots of family time so we could be in class on Sundays and Wednesdays. He lets me punch and kick him and when I learn a new take down or something to inflict pain, he gets volunteered to be my partner! Master Hien, thank you for being a great teacher. Always teaching. Not only teaching techniques and self-defense, but life lessons as well. Those are beyond value. Kelly, just for being you and a great leader! I watch you closely when I am trying to get a technique down. Bryant-for pushing all of us physically beyond what we think we can do. I owe a lot of sore muscles to you! Heather, for being patient with me when I ask a million questions, especially when we are doing katas! Van, you helped me a ton, mentally, those few weeks leading up to BB testing. I needed that! I am so glad I faced my fear and earned my first degree black belt!

A J