

**NEWSLETTER #63** 

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#### A History of the Karate Connection ... Videos and Beyond

Many of you know the story of the Karate Connection Video Training System but for those of you who don't, here's how it all came about.

Sometime in 1988, Vic approached me with the idea of putting our techniques on video tape for a group of United States Air Force personnel that he was teaching out at an Air Force Base near Barstow, California. Because these guys were at the mercy of their duty in the military, they were frequently transferred to places where they were needed without their wishes or consent being a factor.

Vic came to me, first of all, because I was his instructor and felt he might need some help in designing a program, but probably more because he was aware of the fact that I had spent a lot of time in film school and had produced the first series of Kenpo Training Films to be offered to the public. In reality, those eight millimeter films that Ed Parker and I did in the mid-sixties was the first series of training films on the subject of Karate to be offered in any style or system. Others followed but we were the first.

The reason Vic needed a person of such background was because several of the Air Force personnel studying with him were being transferred and many came to him and asked if there was any way for them to continue studying with him at a distance, like, could he put something on video for them to study and learn from.

Not many people had video capabilities in 1988 but a few did and it seemed like a good idea at the time, that is, until I began shooting holes in Vic's plan. I told him that putting our techniques on video was not a really good idea because the techniques alone only tell about half of the story. What the student really needs is a complete knowledge of the basics and most of the people he was teaching at that location barely knew their basics at all, let alone having a comprehensive understanding of them. But what I was most apprehensive about was the fact that even if we were to put the necessary information on video how would we know if the student was getting it or not? That's what concerned me most of all. Teaching is not simply showing someone something; it's making absolutely certain that your students have it before moving on to the next phase of any program. I learned that lesson through the 8mm films I produced with Ed Parker in the 1960s. Those films showed Ed Parker in action and what Kenpo was all about, but as far as really teaching anyone anything, they didn't live up to my expectations. In that respect they were a disappointment. They generated a lot of interest in Kenpo, which was a good thing, but that's about all.

So, what do we do about teaching the basics, which I have always regarded as the most important phase of anyone's martial arts experience.

One of my favorite bits of information from the "Old Man" was when he described the importance of the basics. He said, "Having poor basics is like building a skyscraper on sand. It ain't gonna stand, Brudda." So, as far as I was concerned, that was the end of the conversation, it was actually over before it began. If we couldn't be sure that the people studying our videos were really getting what we were teaching, I wasn't interested and how could we ever be sure? This discussion went on for well over a year.

Well, naturally, you're way ahead of me because if you've learned from our videos you know how we know if you are getting it. It's simple looking back, but it wasn't so simple at the time. In fact, it took several months to come up with the solution. For months and months, Vic would hound me about doing videos and for all that time I

used the same argument. And then one night after a class we were talking about it once again when I was somehow reminded of something that had happened several years earlier.

I remembered a student coming up to me after a class and saying that he had something funny to tell me about Chuck Norris. I suppose this student thought that Chuck and I were probably not on friendly terms being competitors in the same general area of the Los Angeles Basin, he in Redondo Beach and we only a few miles away in South Inglewood at the time. Well, nothing could be further from the truth, Chuck Norris and I had a healthy respect for one another. My students held the same regard for his people as well. Chuck was a great competitor and an all around stand-up guy, but I was curious about what my student had to say, so I let him go on.

What he was referring to was that he had heard that Chuck wanted rank as a Blackbelt but because his instructors were in Korea, there was no way for him to get it without making a trip there and at that time Mr. Norris didn't have the financial means to fund a trip to Kansas, let alone a trip to Korea, so what he suggested to his instructors in Korea was that he make an eight-millimeter film for them and if they thought he was deserving that they might then bestow further rank upon him.

I remember the student laughing at that and asking, "What do you think about that" as if I was going to shoot the idea down out of hand. Instead, almost immediately, I said "What's the matter with it? If they tell Chuck what they want to see and he shows it to them on film, how can that be bad? What's the difference if he's doing it in front of them or doing it on film, either way he's doing it, isn't he?" I remember the student being shocked by my answer, and that was the end of the conversation which I forgot all about, until later that night while talking with Vic.

I knew from experience that silent film would never work for instructional purposes but suddenly realized that video might, and why, because that medium is both visual and audible, because of the fact that we could explain what we were doing while we were doing it and get into the finer points as well. Good, so now that takes care of the teaching end of it, but how about knowing if the student has truly gotten it or partially got it, or missed it completely? The answer: have him or her <u>show</u> it to us, then there's no doubt at all. And a new day had dawned, the day of Kenpo Video Training. Even as primitive as video was in its early stages, it was good enough, and it's gotten so much better since that time that it's amazing.

The rest of the story is history, as they say. Over these past twenty-plus years we have seen our teachings go out across the country and around the world and we've seen it work time and time again.

t was my experience with the 8mm films that I produced with Ed Parker that helped me with our video project but it was my time in Film School that implanted the idea of someday making a feature length movie. Not training films, or shorts, or videos but a full length movie with a story, a plot, locations, actors and the whole nine yards.

I have been a movie buff for the past seventy plus years. What you have to remember is that movies were our main source of entertainment when I was a kid. Movie theaters changed programs three times a week so there was always a fresh source of entertainment for us, and that frequency was about all the average family could afford anyway. Even at a dime for a Double Feature plus Cartoons, plus a MovieTone Newsreel, and another dime for a box of popcorn, it added up. This was in the 1930s and 1940s before TV. Yes, my friends, there was a time before TV and it ultimately became known as the Golden Age of Motion Pictures.

Making an honest-to-God movie has always been a burning desire of mine, but the necessary funding was always the biggest problem. Even if a feature length movie was to be shot on sixteen millimeter film, the cost would be prohibitive for the average working guy. Even as late as 1990 when I was cast in a major role for a low budget movie as DEA Agent Jack Slade, in a movie titled "The Killing Zone", produced by a small production company, the costs were prohibitive. That movie cost just under a hundred thousand dollars to produce on sixteen millimeter film and the costs they incurred for the actors was probably the least of it. Most of us worked

for less than we made on our regular jobs but being a labor of love we did it anyway, just for the experience and just for the hell of it. And it was a great experience; it was a hell of a lot of fun.

Video equipment in the early days was much too primitive to be able to put anything together in the way of an actual story. The major drawback was the editing. Even when we produced our Video Training Series in 1989 and 1990, the editing was so primitive, it was pathetic. It was done by using two recording decks, one deck to play the video we shot and the other deck to record what we wanted on the finished tape. We would need to watch a segment and decide beforehand where we wanted to stop it for each segment and then get the next segment and so forth. If we were able to shoot an entire sequence, that was fine. The problems came when something would happen while shooting, and something always seemed to happen, therefore we would need to stop to cut something out or to reorient ourselves and then continue. Trying to bridge the gap between those shots was a real challenge. Having to stop the recording machine at the precise moment we wanted to make a cut and then start it again when the proper instant came later on in the shooting was really tough, not impossible, but really difficult, they called what we were doing at that time, "editing on the fly." And if you didn't get it right the first time, you ate up a little of the end of the shot you wanted to save, so that meant if you didn't get it right two or more times, we would need to go back and reshoot the segment we ate too much of because there was no way of saving it or having a copy of it to work with if you ruined one. Today that doesn't exist. Today the editing programs available are so sophisticated you can do frame-by-frame editing and a lot more, so much more it's just astounding. And it's affordable! Today even the most sophisticated editing programs necessary to make a feature length movie are within anyone's reach if they really need to make a movie. Oh yeah, it's gonna cost you but it's doable.

So today we have the editing facilities, but that still leaves the art of making the movie itself without a ton of money behind you, and without a professional crew and professional actors. This manner of filmmaking falls into a category commonly

referred to as GUERILLA FILM MAKING. This is not to be confused with LOW **BUDGET** movie making. Low budget movies still have an actual budget of between \$40,000 and \$150,000. Guerilla film making, my brothers, is **NO BUDGET** movie making. This is where you beg, borrow or steal whatever you need to get the job done. And, oh ves, there is stealing involved. Not physical things, of course, but take for instance when you need a location for say only a quick shot or short scene and you're not sure if the owner of the house, vacant lot, apartment building, store, garage, field, meadow or alley will give you permission to shoot there, so you just grab the shot and are on your way before anyone knows you've been there. This is literally referred to in the industry as "Stealing a Shot." And it's even done by some of the big time movie makers, probably a throwback to their Guerilla film making days. A lot of big time film makers had to start this way. The good thing is that you're probably not going to get busted but I have had the police called on me once and had to explain what we were doing there. It was a little embarrassing and more than a little irritating but the cop was cool and nothing came of it. I've learned how to be a lot sneakier since then so it probably won't happen again, at least I hope not, it's a pain in the ass and it's time consuming.

Now, all you need is an idea and you're on your way. That's all any movie begins with, an idea for a story, then comes the screenplay for that story. I started out by writing scenes for screenplays, as class projects, back in the 1970s when I attended film classes at Los Angeles City College, and in time I moved on to full-length screenplays.

Ask me how many I got sold. Ask me how many I got through the front door of a studio. None! Not even one. No, I take it back, I did get one of my scripts to a big name movie director/producer who read it and sent me a note that he would like to work with me in doing the film. But then there was a series of downturns for this particular director and nothing ever came of it. Hollywood turned its back even on him, and this guy had some really big hit movies, really big. I won't name drop here but he was a major player back in the day. He was also the only contact inside the industry I was ever able to make. And in the movie industry it's all about who you know.

So, it was back to square one with all these ideas and no one to even read them. You know, in time even the most stouthearted among us might begin to falter, but not yours truly. A couple of years ago I took another Film Course, this time on video. Does that sound familiar? Learning something through video; how unique.

There was a lot of good information in that course but the one thing that I came away with that meant the most to me was when the instructor said, "If you want to be a filmmaker, make a film", and that struck a chord with me. I look upon making your first film as the equivalent of earning your Orange Belt in Kenpo, it's the most important belt you'll ever earn because it gives you the basics and all you need to go on to getting your Black Belt. No one has ever gotten a Black Belt without first getting his or her Orange Belt, and that's a great accomplishment. In the Karate Connection Video Training Program, we have seen it hundreds and hundreds of times. What we haven't seen are all of the thousands of failures. We never see the people who start only to drop out and never get their Orange Belt. We got to see people who started and then dropped when we were teaching live in the dojo, but we'll never know the statistics on how many begin on video only to drop out. We've seen only the successes. And so it is with the movie business.

I can't even imagine how many people have had the vision, the talent, the creativity and maybe even the resources to make a feature length movie only to fall to the wayside for a myriad of reasons, another casualty of the Film Industry. And I'm happy that I came away with at least that much from that filmmaking course, the fact that I had to make my first one or there will never be a second. My first movie is my Orange Belt so I guess the Black Belt will be the one that earns acclaim in the eyes of the industry or better yet in the eyes of the audience.

# Over Half a Century for a Dream to Come True

When our first-born came along I was all of twenty-four years of age. In anticipation of his arrival I went out and bought an eight millimeter movie camera and some film to capture the first few days of this addition to our family and as soon as that camera was in my hands, it started my motivation to make a movie.

Those first few reels of eight millimeter film still reside in the Sullivan archives, somewhere. They're in color, they're brilliant, and they're boring. What you see is people standing around, holding a baby, not one close-up or cut-away and certainly no story line, just moving pictures of people not really moving and certainly not talking.

For more than half a century, I have wanted to make an honest to God movie with a storyline, plot and acting. You know, the real deal. But for all that time it was neigh on to impossible because of the cost of such an endeavor. The cost of the raw film stock alone was unaffordable. The lab costs for processing was even more prohibitive. The cost of the editing equipment was overwhelming.... So.... I never was able to make an honest to God movie.

In the interim, I read whatever books I could find on the subject and even went so far as to enroll in filmmaking classes at Los Angeles City College back in the 1970s to learn what I could about the art form I loved so much. I was the *old guy* in the class even then; the rest of the class was made up of kids just out of high school. I think I was even older than the teacher.

What I learned was that I would, in all probability, never be able to direct or produce a movie or even come close to it. I realized that I would never end up in the film industry because I knew that I would never be able to make enough money to support my family through the lean years and there would certainly be lean years before I could become established enough to make a decent living and I couldn't see making my wife and kids suffer for my whimsy. But go to school I could do, so I attended four semesters in the Los Angeles City College film program and felt it was well worth the time and effort.

Actually I was saddened when it was over. As much as I hated school when I was a kid, being forced to study things I had absolutely no interest in, is how much I loved college where I was studying something I loved, and I did learn a ton of stuff, the most important being how to put together a screenplay from beginning to end. So, even though I couldn't make movies, I could at the very least write them. That cost nothing but the paper they're written on and I could certainly afford that, so I started writing, and I wrote a bunch of 'em. Did any of them sell? What do you think? Of course not! As I've said, without contacts there is no chance for an outsider in the movie industry to sell anything, ever. That's just the way things are in that business. Those in the driver's seat stay in the driver's seat, and that's just the way it would be if I were in the driver's seat. Don't kid yourself, that's the way it would be if you were in that seat, too.

I also learned early on that, when writing any screenplay, you need to be constantly aware of the cost of each and every shot. If you write a scene in a Church, you better know where you're going to get a Church that you can shoot in, and that it will be the right denomination. If you include a scene, or even just a sequence, of a horse galloping on the beach at sunset, which would be a great visual, you better know where you're going to get the horse, the beach, the transportation for the horse, the people who are going to clean up the beach after the horse and the wrangler whose job it is to feed and tend to the horse, plus the mobility for the camera crew to track that animal as it races across the landscape. And you better visit your local church to pray for a good sunset. Sunsets only last a scant few minutes here on the Coast of Southern California, one minute the sun is up blazing in its full glory and the next it's already into the ocean. Ask me how I know.

I know because the final shot for "In Honor Of:" was shot on a bluff in Palos Verdes, overlooking the great Pacific Ocean at sunset and we needed to be there four separate evenings to catch the sunset we needed and felt lucky that we got it on the fourth trip, otherwise we could still be out there.

So, the first thing you need to understand is that each and every shot needs to be considered, first and foremost, for location availability, and then of course, for who is going to be in the shot, and what they are going to be doing, and do you have the

actors, props and wardrobe for that scene? Or can you make one of your friends into the actor you need for that scene? Oh yeah, you will be calling upon your friends, relatives, neighbors and even complete strangers to be in your film and for *no pay* at that. That's the first thing you need pick up quickly, how to ask people to work for you without getting paid. How many other jobs can you think of where that's even an option? The beauty of it is that professional actors make it look so easy that the average person is at least willing to give it a shot. That's when they realize why the professional actor gets the big bucks but it's still fun trying and to the amazement of everyone, sometimes a complete novice does it brilliantly. They're called "natural actors".

# First Effort Completed

So, I've made my first feature length movie and I would hereby like to offer it for your viewing pleasure. Now, you might have expected some sort of Martial Arts movie from me, but that isn't the case. Personally, I've never found much entertainment value in those Chop-socky Martial Arts films that I've seen. It drives me up the wall when I see some guy getting hit with the kind of force that would cripple a locomotive only to have him jump back up and hit his opponent twice as hard, only to see that guy spring back up and hit three times as hard and four times more often, and then, to see those guys in the next scene without so much as a scratch or a bruise. Rarely have I been able to get all the way through such nonsense. So, I made the kind of movie I myself would enjoy watching, a movie about people I can relate to, and believe in, more real life, something entertaining.

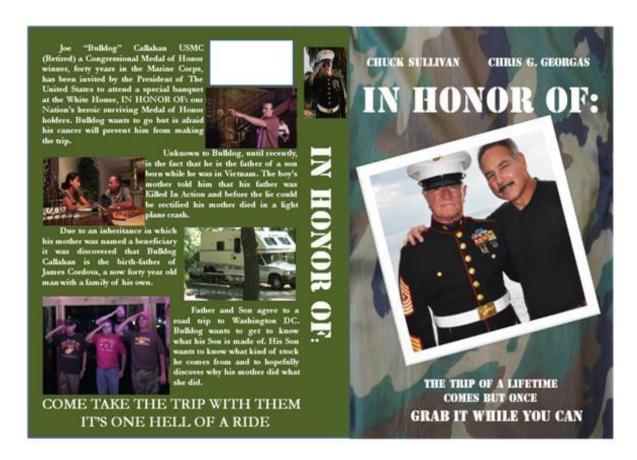
What I made is a drama, a story about a father and son who didn't know of the other's existence for forty years and about their getting to know one another. There's drama, there's humor, and there's a certain amount of mystery about why they didn't know about each other in the first place. There is even a very, very brief <u>fight scene</u> that you'll get a kick out of, and if you've gotten to the Green Belt level of the Karate Connection Video program, you will, without a doubt, recognize the technique we chose

and you'll know the reason why. It's because it takes just as long as any Kenpo fight needs to be. To do more might get you arrested.

This is a fictitious story and has no bearing on anyone living or dead, but like all good fiction it should provoke thoughts and images of real life. At least I hope it does.

The title *IN HONOR OF:* refers to a banquet in the storyline that is being hosted by the President of the United States, which is being held "In Honor Of" the surviving Medal of Honor holders at the White House in Washington DC, to which the main character Joe "Bulldog" Callahan and a guest have been invited. Bulldog has chosen his son to accompany him so that they might get to know one another on the road trip from the West Coast to Washington DC.

The only way this movie is being offered at this time is through self distribution until I can interest a distributor to pick it up, which I am in the process of at this time. Below is an order form. Address your order to the same P.O. Box as the Karate Connection, and please make your check payable to Chuck Sullivan.



#### The Road Less Taken

### Joey Cadena 6<sup>th</sup> Dan, IKCA Kenpo



There are three elements that must be developed in order to become a "total" martial artist. These elements are mind, body, and spirit. In class, the obvious focus is the element of body. When the sweat is flowing and the muscles are aching, the body is

developing. As you train to internalize the new movements of a technique, struggle to remember a new section of the Master Form, or practice reciting the Creed, you are developing the mind. However, I feel that the third element — spirit, is overlooked and underdeveloped.

These days, there are few martial artists who stand out in my mind that exemplify the development of this third element. I have had the great fortune to learn from masters that have such a well-developed spirit that you can sense the "force" that these individuals have without them moving once. This "force" is not something mystical like in Star Wars, it is the inner confidence and powerful will that a person develops when they have worked through so many hours of training and focused learning that you can just see their "spirit." There is a tremendous difference between spirit and arrogance. As one begins to become proficient in the martial arts, developing the proper spirit is of great importance.

With the attainment of physical skills, the chance of getting swept up with the new-found ability can lead to the development of an overgrown ego — a sickness that infects many talented martial artists. This false sense of invincibility can lead to problems and actually inhibits the growth of spirit in a practitioner. Ultimately, if left unaddressed, ego and poor spirit will lead to failure in the completion of training. The "shine" of physical skills eventually loses its luster and the training becomes boring. However, when a martial artist seeks to develop ALL three elements, there is a much deeper meaning to training and therefore becomes infinitely more rewarding.

The constant challenge of reaching a goal and then being humbled by another challenge set before you is what develops a humble attitude which is the MOST IMPORTANT trait of a true martial artist. Mr. Parker once wrote: "A true measure of humility is when you remain what you are regardless of the success that you've become." I truly feel that Mr. Parker's words should be taken to heart and are the key to developing the true spirit of the martial arts master. A master, in my opinion, is one who develops obvious strength, pride, and confidence — yet is tempered by HUMILITY.

In order to be humble, there must be the absence of EGO — these traits cannot exist together. If a practitioner is unwilling to "empty their cup" how can it be filled with the knowledge that the instructor has to offer? You must be willing to forget previous training or preconceived notions in order to see clearly what is being presented. You must be willing to open your mind, your ears, and close your mouth, for how can you listen to what is being taught over the sound of your own voice? The only way to arrive at any realizations is through future analysis and assimilation of skills from intense practice, experience in the art, and meditation on the new information that a practitioner can truly evaluate what they have learned. Mr. Parker said it best, "One becomes great when he comes to the realization that what he knows is very little."

Wise words. Thank You Mr. Cadena.



We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your promotion. We know what kind of dedication and perseveranbce it requires to earn rank in the Martial Arts and we wish to pay our sincerest respects to you for having shown what it takes to appear on this list.

Chuck Fisher	Downey, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Brianna N. Silva	Edmond, OR, USA	PURPLE BELT
Lawrence Crowfoot	Alberta, Canada	GREEN BELT
Robert E. Lee Hill	Rossmoor, CA, USA	PURPLE BELT
Laua'e Schweitzer	Redondo Bch, CA, USA	YELLOW BELT
Steve Economos	Redondo Bch, CA, USA	PURPLE BELT
Daniel Rodriguez	Redondo Bch, CA, USA	YELLOW BELT
Cristian Jimenez	Redondo Bch, CA, USA	PURPLE BELT
Natascha Hedrich	Pritchard, Canada	BLUE BELT
Anastacia Fraijo	Fresno, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Blake Marshall	Giard, KS, USA	GREEN BELT
Kevin A. Hirakis	Battle Creek, MI, USA	ORANGE BELT
Tanner Tersiner	Giard, KS, USA	BLUE BELT
Alfredo Gomez	Bellflower, CA, USA	BROWN BELT
Luis Lopez	Bellflower, CA, USA	BROWN BELT
Ryan Lockman	Bellflower, CA, USA	BLUE BELT
Rick Chavez	Bellflower, CA, USA	GREEN BELT
Ernie Quinn	Brooksville, FL. USA	GREEN BELT
Fernando Avalos	Salinas, CA, USA	BLUE BELT
Adam Noggle	Salinas, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Matthew Rathbun	Salinas, CA, USA	YELLOW BELT
Will Smith	Giard, KS, USA	GREEN BELT
Gerard Vigo	Napa, CA, USA	PURPLE BELT
Angela Aguirre	Napa, CA, USA	PURPLE BELT
Griselda Aguirre	Napa, CA, USA	PURPLE BELT
Sally Schweitzer	Redondo Bch, CA, USA	GREEN BELT
Adam Overbury	Rossmoor, CA, USA	PURPLE BELT
Justin Santos	Vallejo, CA, USA	GREEN BELT
Mark Schadwald	Vallejo, CA, USA	GREEN BELT
James Paule	Vallejo, CA, USA	GREEN BELT
Phil Celtic	Fritz Creek, AK, USA	BROWN BELT
Jocelyn Popp	Manitowoc, WI, USA	ORANGE BELT

Ted Lee	Redondo Bch, CA, USA	PURPLE BELT
Carolina Rodriguez	Redondo Bch, CA, USA	PURPLE BELT
Daniel Rodriguez	Redondo Bch, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Michael Pollard	Redondo Bch, CA, USA	YELLOW BELT
Bianca Cruz	Edinburg, TX, USA	PURPLE BELT
Arturo Cruz	Edinburg, TX, USA	PURPLE BELT
Nick Cruz	Edinburg, TX, USA	PURPLE BELT
Daniel Alvardo	Edinburg, TX, USA	PURPLE BELT
Twyla Olson	Pritchard, Canada	PURPLE BELT
Morgan Endean	Pritchard, Canada	PURPLE BELT
Kiara Endean	Pritchard, Canada	ORANGE BELT
Nadja Hederich	Pritchard, Canada	PURPLE BELT
Andre Taggart	Bowie, MD, USA	BLUE BELT
Marco Taggart	Bowie, MD, USA	ORANGE BELT
Alex Taggart	Bowie, MD, USA	ORANGE BELT
Alex Guerrero	Napa, CA, USA	GREEN BELT
Richard Jones	Rockland, MI, USA	GREEN BELT
Richard Jones	Rockland, MI, USA	BROWN BELT
Reid Brown	Hudson, FL, USA	GREEN BELT
Steven Turner	Australia	ORANGE BELT
David Shawn Lee	Reno, NV, USA	<b>5TH DEGREE BLACK</b>
Stephen Patterson	Vass, NC, USA	BROWN BELT
Jeffrey Allen Howard	Vass, NC, USA	PURPLE BELT
Katherine Aquaro	Redondo Bch, CA, USA	YELLOW BELT
Andrew Jackson	Bowie, MD, USA	BROWN BELT
Isabella Heine	Napa, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Rodrigo Mendez	Napa, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Staci Freeman	Napa, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Christian Mendez	Napa, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Samuel Valle Contreras	Napa, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Hayden Larsen	Napa, CA, USA	ORANGE BELT
Eliseo Lopez	Vallejo, CA, USA	BROWN BELT
Luise Razo Diaz	Vallejo, CA, USA	BROWN BELT
Carina Gutierrez	Vallejo, CA, USA	PURPLE BELT
Mark Schadwald	Vallejo, CA, USA	BROWN BELT
Larry Lauer	Torrington, CT, USA	6TH DEGREE BLACK
Larry Lauer	Torrington, CT, USA	7TH DEGREE BLACK-CI
Billy Hayes	Torrance, CA, USA	4TH DEGREE BLACK-CI
Greg Johnston	Torrance, CA, USA	2ND DEGREE BLACK
Amanda Alvarez	Redondo Bch, CA, USA	JUNIOR BLACK BELT
Marty Josey	Durham, NC, USA	2ND DEGREE BLACK
Tony Glorioso	Torrance, CA, USA	6TH DEGREE BLACK

