BRIAN IRR
Defying Future

KATSUTAKA TANAKA
THE WAY OF BUDO

Para-Karate Athlete
JAMIE DRUHAN GREEN

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When it comes to find success as an athlete – as a pro or a weekend “warrior” – people tend to focus on only physical training. This hard work in the gym, the dojo, or the place of your choice is critical but it hardly captures the full scope of what your potential is and what the full training encompasses. A true karateka is like a musician, painter, writer or actor - their art is an expression of themselves. The need to discover who they are becomes the reason for an endless search for the perfect technique, great melody, inspiring poetry, amazing painting or Academy Award performance. It is this motivation to reach that impossible dream that allows a simple individual to become an exceptional artist and master of his craft.

Many of the greatest teachers share a commonly misunderstood teaching methodology. They know the words they could use to teach their students have little or no meaning. They know that to try “self-discovery” in quantitative or empirical terms is a useless task. A great deal of knowledge and wisdom comes from oral traditions, which martial arts, like every other cultural expression, has. These oral traditions have always been reserved for a certain kind of student and considered “secrets,” given only to a special few who have the minds and attitudes to fully grasp them.

Alexandra David-Neel wrote: “It is not on the master that the secret depends but on the hearer. Truth learned from others is of no value, the only truth which is effective and of value is self-discovered ... the teacher can only guide to the point of discovery. No man can learn what he has not preparation for learning. Every man and woman has their call. Their talent and this call depends entirely on the mode their soul incarnates itself in them. Their ambition is exactly proportioned to their powers. The height of the pinnacle is determined by the breadth of the base.”

To find out what the practice of Karate or any other Martial Art means to you, what it does for you, and what it holds for you, is a deeply personal process. Each path is different and we all have to find a personal rhythm that fit us individually, according to what around us.
Updated SafeSport Policies

We have updated our SafeSport Policies to align with the changes recently made by the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee and the U.S. Center for SafeSport. Latest information on the program can be found on our website at SafeSport.usankf.org and the U.S. Center for SafeSport website at SafeSport.org.

Summary of the changes:

1. SafeSport Training is now required annually. Policies around training can be found in the USA-NKF Minor Athletes and Officials Abuse Prevention Policy and Participant Safety Handbook. Training is available to participants 18 years of age and older. Individuals under 18 years of age can take the course with a signed approval from their parents. The SafeSport Training is available at safesport.org.

2. Background checks will be completed every 2 years with our vendor NCSI rechecking annually.

3. We have updated the Participant Safety Handbook which defines the SafeSport Policies for USA Karate. You should review these policies. The Handbook includes:
   • Training and Education
   • Criminal Background Check Policy
   • Athlete Protection Policy
   • Physical Contact with Athletes Policy
   • Electronic and Social Media Policy
   • Travel Policy
   • Reporting Policy
   • Disciplinary Rules and Procedures

4. We have added the USA-NKF Minor Athletes and Officials Abuse Prevention Policies. You should review these policies. The Policy includes:
   • Training and Education Policy
   • One on One Interactions Policy
   • Massages and Rubdown/Athletic Training Modalities Policy
   • Locker Rooms and Changing Areas Policy
   • Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy
   • Local Travel Policy
   • Team Travel Policy

5. Training and resources for parents and youth have been developed. Parent and Youth toolkits are available on the resources page of the safesport.org website. Parent Training and age specific youth training is available at athletesafety.org.

USA Karate is concerned about the safety of all our members and has worked diligently to comply with the standards established by the U.S. Center for SafeSport. United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee and federal law. If you believe there is a violation to the policies or you have a concern please report that concern. Information on how to make a report including anonymous reports can be found at SafeSport.usankf.org!

Phil Hampel
Chief Executive Officer
USA National Karate-do Federation
being a karate athlete on the current international competition circuit, is one of the most amazing things I have been a part of. Every few weeks I travel to a new country, a new culture, and competing in a sport that I love amongst the best in the world. When reflecting on the process, there are not many people who are blessed with the same opportunities. A typical quote when I’m with friends back home is “man, I am so jealous you get to go all over!” Though, many people don’t see what all goes into this process.

As athletes we tend to highlight the best parts of these trips for our friends and family on social media. Yet behind each picture is an immense amount of effort that only the individual themself knows. With our competition season going from January through December, managing time and life can be the most challenging part of it all. USA Karate athletes all have lives outside of the sport. Whether it is within teaching, school, or work we all have different responsibilities besides the sport. Alongside individual responsibilities, most of the USA karate athletes have to fund their own way on these trips. Money fuels our dream, and finding stable resources can be difficult at times. Even to the point where we have to pick and choose which events to go to, because it is the only affordable thing to do. An aspect that many people overlook is also the duration of the karate calendar. Substitute in travel time, time change, and where and tear that the body takes over the course of 12 months of training can be draining. This goes right back into having a solid individual management system where you balance training, rest, and fun. In addition to the physical aspects, the emotional and psychological factor is another challenge on its own. Depending on the individual athlete, so many events can either help or hurt given their performances. What I have found most effective is having a growth mindset and a short term memory. A growth mindset includes always looking for ways to get better, and not looking at a competition/ performance for more than what it is. A short-term memory is also important because whether you win or lose, the next event is new and different from the previous ones. Though even with all of this said, fatigue is everyone’s worst enemy. Not the type of fatigue where you “feel tired,” but where the body completely shuts down. This can lead to lack in motivation, increased risk of injury, and lower happiness levels within the sport. This is one reason why I think that karate athletes do have a separate life outside of the sport. This way energy is designated to more than just one thing, and can help throughout the season.

The commitment karate athletes have is next level. Taking time away from family, friends, and the “average life” is a small price when we achieve the goals we work so hard for. Another overlooked group is our staff. Many coaches are on the same travel schedule, dealing with the same pressures, and challenges we do. Though all this hard work is proving positive. Athletes from the US are climbing the performance ladder throughout the competitions, and great things are to come. No diamond is created without pressure, and the competition process is no different. I am excited for the great things to come.

USANKF
By Teruyuki Okazaki

By telling us to project onto your opponent dangerous weaponry for limbs, Master Funakoshi is emphasizing the importance of respecting your opponent. He is saying to assume your opponent poses the ultimate threat, the greatest danger, to you. Remember what we say in the dojo kun: Respect others.

Don’t think about who is better, or who has more technique. When facing another rank, you have to do so with humility—in other words, you have to clear your mind. It doesn’t matter if you’re facing a white belt or a much higher rank. If you are facing a lower rank, don’t get relaxed; and if you’re facing a higher rank, don’t get nervous. Master Funakoshi is saying to keep your mind the same in all situations. It doesn’t make a difference, higher or lower rank, practice or real. Treat an opponent’s hands and feet like knives. To help focus your attention, just imagine in your mind that your opponent is holding a sharp knife or a sword. If you can achieve this mindset, you know you’re really serious.

Often, when black belts face white belts, they start to relax. Of course, higher ranks may be faster…but white belts are sometimes completely innocent. What I mean is that they don’t have any mind, any intention, just a karate technique. And with that kind of mindset, if you’re not prepared, they can get you. Remember, with a knife or sword, just a touch can hurt you.

Respect a white belt the same as a black belt. Master Funakoshi always told us, “When the opponent attacks, always think about the weapon. Never think about rank.” If your ego gets in the way—or, as I often say, if “you get a big head”—there is no way you can get better. Then there is no way you can really win. Humility is the surest way to a clear mind. And it is only with a clear mind that you can develop yourself mentally and physically. Any opponent can help you bring up your level if you really concentrate.

Of course, once you develop this mindset for your training, don’t leave this attitude in the dojo. You should be just as serious in your schoolwork, business, or your personal life. Don’t underestimate people; always respect them. When you deal with people, be aware of attitudes as well as actions. And be aware of possibilities. If it is a business negotiation you are dealing with, be ready for anything…what you want, what they want…and maintain at all times a feeling of respect.

When you are practicing kata, concentrate from the very beginning. Take the time to create opponents in your mind. Make them real, so you can actually see their attacks and see their responses to your attacks. Develop this step by step and see how much you can create the mindset, “Today they have sharp knives…today they attack with sticks…kicking, punching, grabbing. Today, someone is coming with a gun.” Then you will naturally start to ask yourself the important question, “How do I protect myself?”

You should approach your everyday life in the same way. Words can also be like swords. There are many ways to hurt. You must think about this, too. You make life better with small actions. That is why we train in karate: To become better people; to make a better world. Even when you do the smallest things, be serious. Be careful. Every moment is preparation for the rest of your life. USANKF
Strive Valiantly!

This year is my 20th year anniversary of being an official. It has been a long journey of learning and experience. I have seen many changes in the rules of competition over these 20 years, from when I was competing in mid 90s until now, and always as I focused on teaching students at our dojo. This anniversary year is a good time to thank all of those who mentored me and helped me to become a better official. The list is too long to include in its entirety, but I must mention my dear husband, Cyrus Madani, and Sensei Tsutsui as my very first teachers. I will be always thankful to them and to all of you in our karate family.

Occasionally while having a conversation with some of my colleagues, we remind each other of old rules and consider how many have been modified over the years. The reason for changes—individually and collectively—has been to provide an environment in which all athletes enjoy a fair playing field while competing!

As an example, a few years ago, the rules were changed to distribute some of the power of the center referee among the referee panel. Some in our community were not very happy with that change, but this rule change, too, was about a fair playing field. The reality was that many in favor of the old rules underestimated the responsibility of each member of the referee panel. It’s human nature to sometimes feel that we have to be in charge of everything because we know better! But nothing will be as powerful and fair as true teamwork and that is what this rule change was all about.

Now most of us agree that this particular rule change was a good one, but we are facing other challenges to our sport, many of which originate in our athletes’ performances. That is, the biggest challenge we face today is the lack of action in the ring, especially at the beginning of kumite matches. We have made adjustments to the rules to try to motivate more action and excitement, but we are not seeing much positive impact in the ring.

For example, when Senshu was added to the rules, we noticed a positive change that was, unfortunately, short-lived. For a while, athletes were more active and enthusiastic at the beginning of matches, and the number of passivity calls were reduced to a minimum. However, now that we are facing the rankings and selection for the Olympics, athletes have begun to play it safe again and do not engage vigorously until the last part of the match. It’s almost like there is a secret agreement between them to play it safe!

But the truth is this: playing it safe might represent a short-term benefit for an individual athlete. But as a long-term strategy, it’s dangerous. Playing it safe makes our sport a boring one that no one wants to watch. It makes it hard for us to recruit new athletes to the sport. Even for us as karate practitioners, it’s nonsense. The WKF is looking for another motivational tool to change this boring, bouncing footwork into something more exciting, to motivate athletes to engage from the beginning of the match and for its duration, but it seems that we are running short of ideas.

Instead, I am turning to athletes and coaches for help. They are the key to turning our sport into an interesting, exciting one to watch. We will not ever see karate to get in to another Olympics if we have to continue watching two people dressed in a white uniform bouncing on their feet for 3 minutes. I wish it was at least as pretty as watching a dance, but it’s not! Regretfully, no one, not even karate practitioners want to see that. Can you imagine that ordinary television viewers would want to either? Telling TV stations that we are a combat sport and then selling them 3 minutes of bouncing without any exchange of techniques until the final seconds of a match means we won’t be able to get anyone to tune in a second time! Who are we trying to fool except ourselves?

We need to think hard about what kind of image we want to show the world. What kind of message are we sending to the Olympics decision-makers if our athletes do not engage in the fight as they are supposed to? If we do not change immediately, I know they will see the contradiction between our assertion that we are an exciting combat sport and the reality of our matches and they will not agree that we deserve another shot at participating in any Olympics after 2020. We are still suffering from the results of the Youth Olympics in Argentina and we need to work together so that history doesn’t repeat itself.

So please change your tactics and strategy to make matches exciting, to fulfill the intent and potential of our sport. Help karate be a sport that people line up to watch, not one taking place in front of empty bleachers or ones filled only with other competitors and their families. Please show the world that we are a combat sport worthy of inclusion in the Olympics, not just in 2020, but beyond.
The Dojo: A Place Where All Are Welcome

Difficulty with social interactions, difficulty with looking people in the eye, difficulty with reciprocal speech, doesn't connect with his/her peers, lasting relationships are challenged at best, but more often than not they are non-existent. The list goes on and on. Do you know someone who fits these markers for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

Some 2018 statistics say that 1 in 59 children are diagnosed on the Autism spectrum and that boys are four times more likely to be diagnosed with autism than girls. And this statistic (from Science News, from a study done at Johns Hopkins University) represents a 15% increase over a two year period.

One in 59 kids. How many kids are in your dojo? More than that? The likelihood is that we all have students with ASD in our programs. And this number will only increase over the next few years, I suspect. Certainly, there are many different forms and characteristics of ASD and no two individuals are exactly the same, but we have seen a few patterns over the years. Some are more social than others, some possess amazing skills in terms of memorization, and some are more or less verbal than others. It is, after all, a spectrum, as they call it.

Personally, as a dojo that specializes in para-karate athletes, we have dozens and dozens of kids on the autism spectrum doing karate. And you know what? They are amazing, valuable, hardworking members of our community. They are able to isolate techniques, attack movements and participate in repetitive drills in a way that can often surpass their typical peers.

The local dojo can be a place of hard work, accomplishment, discipline and dedication. It can be a place that kids love to go and sometimes complain about going to. All kids, that is, with and without disabilities.

But one of the best and most important things, in my opinion, is the sense of community, family and friendship/team building that we can offer. A child with autism often does not connect with their classmates. They can be seen alone at lunchtime or in the schoolyard, preferring to not engage with others. But in the dojo, “where everybody knows your name and they’re always glad you came” (as the song goes), they are greeted. They are included. They are valued. This feeling of team or family or community, is something that ALL kids benefit from, but our athletes with ASD even more than others.

Many times, when asked a direct question like “How are you?”, students will say simply “I’m good” or “great” and that’s all. You can look at them, waiting patiently all day for them to ask about you and they most likely will not do so. But, when prompted every single time upon entering the dojo, and asked “how are you?”, and then we follow up with “And… are you going to ask me?” eventually they can start doing it out of habit. We’ve seen it work! And if it works here in the dojo, it may, just maybe, happen out in the schoolyard. Social connections can be increased.

As I tell the parents of the kids in my dojo, karate is a way of life. A life style and life-long commitment. A place where we should be able to see ALL students thrive and grow to their full potential. USANKF
The purpose of the USA Karate Coaches Education Course (CEC) is to facilitate state of the art coaches’ education by creating an interactive platform that supports both academic and applied resources. Since the sport of Karate has such a diverse pool of athletes, it is vital that we provide the viable coaching resources that range from recreational athletes to Olympic levels.

The goal of the USA Karate Coaches Committee is to facilitate the necessary resources assisting the development and progress of our national team athletes in international competitions. By working with both Junior and Senior teams, we create a long-term development of high performance athletes.

All resources and references will come from National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA), American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), The American Psychological Association (APA) Division 47, Association of Applied Sports Psychology (AASP), and United State Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC).

**Coaches Education Course**

USA Karate Coaches Committee models its current Coaches program to work in conjunction with the standards of the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee Coach Accelerator program (CAP). Given our busy schedules at our signature events such as the USA Karate National/USA Open Championships the USA Karate Coaches Committee (CC) presents its course work in 4-coaches education levels. In addition, a diploma of completion will be issued by the CC.

**Level 1:**
- Introduction to coaching
- Quality of coaching
- High performance
- Coaching Philosophy
- Reflection

**Level 2:**
- Coaching in every season
- Experimental learning
- Interpersonal communication and break out sessions

**Level 3:**
- Does Coaching = Teaching?
- Reflection: Mastery
- Development planning for continuous improvement

**Level 4:**
- High performance
- High performance planning
- Coaching Managing Behaviors
- AASP/USOC Sport Psychology
- Brain Targeting Teaching
Skills Workshop

In addition, to the Coaches Education Course (CEC) the Coaches Committee offers continuing education skills workshops. All workshops will be done in two blocks with a time frame of 90 minutes. All workshops will be offered at USA Karate signature events such as USA Open and USA National Championships.

Topics (example):

• Mental skills-AASP guidelines presenter must be a Certified Mental Performance Consultant (CMPC) with Association of Applied Sport Psychology.

• Tactics and strategy-Current WKF Certified Kumite Coach or WKF Certified Karate Coach who is an expert in their field of study.

• Training methodology-WKF/PKF Certified coach with a background in Education/Kinesiology or CAP certified by USOPC.

• Athlete development-WKF/PKF Certified coach with a background in Education/Kinesiology or CAP certified by USOPC.

• Para-athlete programs-Current Paralympic/Parapan Coach or WKF/PKF Para-Karate commission.

• Strength and Conditioning-ACSM/NSCS guidelines Certified Strength and Conditioning specialist (CSCS) or a Nationally Certified Personal Trainer with 4-year degree preferred.

• Etc.

Conclusion

The current CEC platform gives the coaches committee a direct interaction with Coaches from all levels. Working in conjunction with the USOPC and the guidelines of the CAP program gives a chance to current coaches who attend these signature events a chance to stay current through active learning. The USA Karate Coaches Committee would like to see you a part of our current program.

Akira Fukuda CMPC is the Chairman of the USA KARATE Coaches Committee and Certified Mental Performance Consultant with the Association of Applied Sport Psychology (CMPC).
WHEN YOU MEET BRIAN IRR YOU WILL FEEL NOTHING LESS THAN THE ENERGY OF SOMEONE SERIOUSLY DEVOTED TO THE STUDY OF SPORT KARATE.ALTHOUGH HE STARTED HIS TRAINING AT A VERY EARLY AGE, HE IS EXTREMELY UNDERSTANDING AND APPROACHABLE... HIS LONG YEARS OF EXPERIENCE HAVE ALLOWED HIM TO INTERNALIZE THE IMPORTANT MORAL ASPECTS OF KARATE AND USE THEM IN HIS DAILY LIFE HE RECENTLY MOVED TO DALLAS, TEXAS, TO CONTINUE HIS PREPARATION AND TRAINING FOR THE 2019 PAN AM GAMES IN LIMA, PERU AND THE TOKYO 2020 OLYMPICS. DURING ONE OF HIS PRACTICE BREAKS “USA KARATE MAGAZINE” WANTED TO ASK HIM A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT MOVING TO TEXAS AND THE GOALS AHEAD.
How long have you been training in Dallas and what made you move there?
I didn’t start training in Dallas until November of 2017. Prior to that, I spent my entire life training at my home dojo in Lockport, NY. That dojo eventually closed down in June of 2014, and for the next 3 years I just trained casually with some friends at my house and at a local gym. In 2016, when karate was inducted as an Olympic sport for 2020, I knew it was something that I wanted to pursue. I also knew that my current training situation was not going to be sufficient if I wanted to be competitive at such high caliber events as the Premier League. That is when I made the decision to move to pursue my training.

How has having other athletes from the US National Team training alongside you influenced your practice and preparation for competition?
My training partners here in Dallas are one of the primary factors that I took into consideration when moving to Dallas. I wanted a core of strong teammates to challenge me. I have known several of my teammates in Dallas for many years so I knew we could successfully work together to push each other to be our best. Whether we are at home training at the dojo, or on the road at a competition, we challenge each other to perform to the best of our abilities every day.

What are the most important points in your current training methods?
“Train smarter, not harder.” Of course when we train, we work very hard. However, always working harder does not necessarily mean improvement. There needs to be a well thought out plan behind the training regimen. It is very important to find the correct balance of work and recovery, skills training and physical conditioning, serious focus and playful fun. Without this balance, the athlete risks injury, physical deficiencies, or burnout. I’m very thankful to my coaches over the years for understanding this and administering my training program accordingly.

How has your understanding and perception of karate developed over the years?
Growing up, karate to me was an enjoyable hobby, a unique sport to play, and a fun challenge. And to this day, none of that has changed for me. But as I’ve gotten older, I’ve noticed how much of an impact karate has had on not just my athletic improvement, but more importantly, my development as a whole person. My social interactions, passion to teach and help others, interest in travel and other cultures, and spiritual development have all been influenced through karate.

“It is very important to find the correct balance of work and recovery, skills training and physical conditioning, serious focus and playful fun.”
Are there any mental exercises you would recommend to strengthen the mind for strategy and creativity in karate?

Always try to be one step ahead. In Kumite, that means being aware of your opponent’s strengths and weaknesses and using that to your advantage. Have a game plan prepared in advance for specific scenarios that are likely to occur. Drill those scenarios in training so that the strategy can be implemented effectively during competition.

What has been your biggest challenge as a competitive athlete?

Balancing the schedule of my athlete life with my personal life is a real struggle. So much time and priority is placed on the training and travelling schedules that sacrifices need to be made in other areas simply because I cannot be in two places at the same time. Over the years I’ve missed out on countless social functions, birthdays, weddings, holidays, job opportunities, vacations, etc due to commitments as an athlete. Although sacrifices are made, it’s still important for me to not neglect the value of my relationships with my friends, family, and God.

How have your coaches helped to improve your overall game including karate tactics and conditioning?

My coaches have helped me in so many ways. The conditioning program that my strength and conditioning coach plans is specifically designed to help me peak for critical events. My karate coach plays the critical role of establishing [for me] a “playbook” of various strategies and tactics to utilize depending on which oppo-
ment I am facing. Rather than going into a match and just punching and kicking and hoping for the best, there is always a plan in place to help me maximize my scoring potential.

**Could you explain the most thrilling moment you’ve experienced?**

My most thrilling karate competition experience was definitely the Pan American Games in Toronto 2015. From walking in the opening and closing ceremonies with 600+ other Team USA athletes from all the various sports, to standing on the podium, and everything in between, that competition was amazing. It was just such an exhilarating experience from start to finish. Because of this, I am very much looking forward to returning to the Pan American Games for Lima 2019.

**What do you feel was your biggest loss, and what did you learn from it?**

I don’t consider any one loss to be greater than any of the others. Losing always hurts, but it never does any good to dwell on past defeats. Win or lose, I can always learn something from any of my matches. Taking a negative moment and finding some amount of positive value in it is the key to being successful in the long run, both in and out of the ring.

**In a few weeks you’ll be traveling to Lima for the Pan Am Games. How’s your preparation for this unique opportunity?**

The K1 competition schedule this year is very busy with everyone trying to earn as many Olympic points as possible before Tokyo 2020. There is no real off-season. I need to be prepared to perform my best at each of those events just as much as I need to be prepared for Lima 2019. Because of this, the general training regimen does not change too much for Lima 2019. However, Lima 2019 will be unique in the sense that I already know who each of my 7 opponents will be. This allows for plenty of time to prepare a specific game plan for each of those 7 potential opponents that I may face.

**Karate seems to be out of the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. What is your opinion about it and how do you think this decision will impact the sport for the future?**

This news was, of course, a gut punch to hear. I was most disappointed because the decision was made so early, before karate even got an opportunity to prove itself during its Olympic debut. Nevertheless, I am grateful for the opportunity that I do have to pursue the Olympic dream with Tokyo 2020. I know there are plenty of people out there in the karate world who are not pleased with this decision. We are all passionate about this sport. Even if karate is not reinstated for Paris 2024, I know the fight will continue for karate to be once again recognized as an Olympic sport in future years. USANKF
I have had the pleasure of getting to know USA Team member Jamie Druhan Green (“Druh”) pretty well at the 2018 World Championships in Madrid, Spain, as well as at the 2019 PKF Championships in Panama. She is FANTASTIC! I asked her to share some of her story with us here.

“My name is Jamie Druhan Green. I am 32 years old and live in West Chester, Ohio just outside Cincinnati. I have a brother and two sisters so I am a little sister once and am big sister twice. I went to Lakota East High School in Liberty Township Ohio and I attended Miami University Middletown, Ohio where I took about 15 hours of college classes. I was 18 years old when I started Karate. I began my karate training 13 years ago in 2006 at Buckner Martial Arts Dojo in West Chester, Ohio. I am still at the Buckner Martial Arts where I train under Renshi Stephanie Buckner-Combs. My style is Hayashi ha Shito-Ryu.”

I asked Druh if she was willing to share some of the details of her specific situation.

“Yes, I am a para-karate athlete competing in the intellectually impaired division. I was born with a rare genetic disorder called Rubinstein Taybi Syndrome which may be caused by a mutation I have on the EP300 gene. I also have Autism. This means I learn and process things differently and communication presents challenge. It also means people sometimes underestimate my abilities or treat me differently. For instance throughout my early school days and in high school I was unable to communicate well so people sometimes thought I was too different. I was often bullied or teased or excluded. I sometimes felt frustrated, sad, or insecure and sometimes even threatened or unsafe. The great news is I never let any of this deter me and I have a wonderful group of friends and family who support me including my dojo brothers and sisters.”
Why did you start doing karate? Was it your idea to try or did someone invite you? And did you like it right away? What are your favorite things about it?

“I started karate to build up confidence and I wanted to feel safer. I had a friend who would stand up for me in school but I wanted the ability to stand up for myself. Another friend who took karate told me about it. It sounded like it would be fun and would help me with my confidence. I was a smidge shy at first but overtime I started to feel confident and I enjoyed the challenge karate presents. With years of hard work and good instruction I was excited to earn my Shodan Black Belt in
2017 and I am working toward my next Dan. I train in the dojo three days a week; I assist with the tots class four days a week; and I practice every day. I compete in kata, but I also love to do kumite and weapons in my dojo.”

**In addition to karate, what other activities or hobbies do you have?**

**Favorite fun facts about yourself?**

“Because I have RTS and autism, people are surprised by some of the things I am into. Here’s two fun facts about me that people don’t know right off hand. First is that I sing. Second, I am a certified advanced and rescue SCUBA diver. I do underwater photography/videography and travel yearly to Florida to do manatee conservation work. I dive five days a week at the Newport Aquarium as well as the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden. I support the Hippo team and the Manatee Springs team.”

**In your opinion, what is the most important aspect of karate?**

“So of all the things karate offers, discipline and friendship are huge benefits to your life. Karate is good exercise, it teaches you discipline and it’s a great way to let off steam when pressure becomes too much. I have learned to win with grace but lose with dignity and try again. I have learned to support my teammates and have made some amazing friends. Being a member of Team USA has been super exciting and full of new people and new places. It’s packed with fun, a bit nerve racking, and sometimes scary all at the same. When Renshi Stephanie suggested being on a competition team would help me up my game, I decided to follow her advice and I aimed really high for Nationals and Worlds. As the old saying goes…. Go BIG or GO home!

I was caught completely by surprise when I won the National Championship last year and was honored to make Team USA. Then came the World Championship in Madrid where it was adrenaline pumping being on the world stage for the first time…. So big, so bright, so loud, SOOOO COOL! I didn’t medal at Worlds but I learned a lot. The best part of this experience was getting to know my teammates and coach who are amazing people, amazing athletes, amazing friends who all have taught me so much.

I have two goals for my future. One is to return to the world championship and medal hopefully bringing home the gold. The other goal is to complete a documentary I started about manatee conservation with messages about individuals with developmental disabilities doing things that people don’t typically expect of them.

If I had the chance to quickly say one thing about having a disability to a whole bunch of people, it would be to encourage everyone to remove the DIS and just see ABILITY and to THANK EVERYONE in my life who has done this for me or will do for me in the future. GO Team USA Karate! Never give up! Never give in! Never lose faith in your dreams!”
Sensei Tanaka is one of the most well-known martial arts leaders in America and a pioneer of Japanese karate in the West. But more than that he is a remarkable martial artist and a true icon in the world of karate-do.

Sensei Tanaka was born and raised in Japan and learned his art the hard way – a way that can only be found in the Orient. Although deeply involved in the USA National Karate-do Federation as a Chairman of the Technical Committee, Tanaka’s views are a return to the traditional values of the martial arts. “The sport aspect of karate is very important nowadays, but we can still maintain the traditional roots and moral values of budo. Both worlds can live together – they are not the opposite of each other. It’s up to the teachers to preserve the ethical principles of karate-do for future generations, and at the same time keep it an interesting sporting activity.” Residing in Alaska since his first visit to America, Sensei Tanaka has taught martial arts to thousand of students from all over the world. He still teaches his daily classes and sticks to the two most important principles of karate – hard work and inner spirit. He is truly a master of the old ways.
Q: When did you start training martial arts?

A: My first experience was at the age of 14. My brother came home one day and found me kicking at some decorative beads hanging from the ceiling. “Hey!” my brother yelped. “Do you want to learn karate?” I shrugged my shoulders and said: “I don’t know.” “Come on, then,” he said. “Let’s find out.” He took me to a karate school in the city where my brother’s friend was an instructor. When we arrived, we found that there was a guest from one of the university karate teams in central Japan – and he was really tough! One by one, he fought all of the school’s black belts. Not one of them could go the distance against him in a two-minute match. He was too awesome. Knees, elbows, head butts – everything. He was crazy.

Q: What was your impression?

A: I was terrified. That was not something I wanted to study. I went home and tried to put the incident out of my mind. But the memory haunted me. I was forced to consider my reaction more profoundly. “I know I’m scared,” I thought to myself. “And I don’t want to go back. But if I don’t, I might do the same thing with everything in life. I don’t want to go, therefore I must.”

Q: Did you immediately enroll in the dojo?

A: Yes, soon after I began my karate lessons. And, of course, the karate supplemented the judo and kendo classes which were a required part of junior high school physical education in Japan. Yet being a student following a college prep curriculum, I did not have much time to devote to serious study of the art. Then in 1965 I joined the new karate team at Nagoya-Gakuin University, where I was studying for a Bachelor’s degree in Economics. The karate team practiced three-to-four hours a day, six days a week. I submerged myself in the training. The art I practiced at the university was seidokai, a sort of cross between shotokan karate
and Japanese kempo, but with a lot of boxing-like footwork. However, I soon grew dissatisfied with the karate team, and especially with the team seniors. A karate team at a Japanese university is much like a football team at an American university. Personal pride and school spirit are invested in the team’s performance. But Nagoya-Gakuin’s team was still inexperienced and not very successful.

Q: What do you mean by that?

A: When the team showed up at major tournaments, the other university teams would laugh at us. The team seniors were often chastised and mistreated. I really took the insults personally. I wanted my seniors to stand-up to the abuse, physically. They did not. They lacked the mental component of the art — the self-confidence and determination. I felt that I had to do something. I wanted to silence the laughter and restore respect for the name “Nagoya-Gakuin.” So one member of the team and I approached our seniors with a proposition: “Please. Treat us rougher! Make us do the things we must to become winners.” The seniors listened but they did not act. They seemed almost afraid of our fervor.

Q: What happened then? Didn’t they react to your words?

A: Not really — and in free-sparring practice, on occasion, I would defeat one of the seniors. Several months passed and I progressed to the point where I consistently defeated my seniors. As a freshman I was inexperienced compared to the polished technique of the seniors — but spirit-wise I was superior. Unfortunately, as my skills became more improved, my seniors grew more removed. Once again, I called the seniors aside and said, “Look. Even though my friend and I can beat you in free-fighting, we still respect you. You are our seniors. So go ahead and give us orders. Tell us what we must do to become winners.” It was there when I really began to wonder if my seniors even knew how to train champions.

Q: How did that affect the way the team performed in competition?

A: Soon afterwards, the seniors entered Nagoya-Gakuin in the team competition at the Central Japan Karate Championships. Team competition in Japan is conducted much like the team competitions in America. One squad of fighters faces another one-on-one, utilizing the point system of scoring. The team that scored the most points at the conclusion of the last match was declared the winner. However, the nature of the fighting in Japan was radically different from that in the West. The competition was more blood and guts. There was no safety equipment. Broken bones, knockouts, and an assortment of other injuries were commonplace. The Japanese style of fighting was based on stability. They charged straight ahead, never backed up, and never quit. Back-fists were rarely scored as points, and the hit-and-run tactics of the mobile fighters were never seen.

Q: Do you have some special memories of your competition days?

A: Yes, I remember that in the first round of the team competition, my school had to confront our closest rival, the team from Nagoya Commercial College. The rival school’s team was anchored by one of the most feared fighters in all of Japan, a man called “Monster.” He stood five-foot-ten inches tall, was built like Joe Frazier, and liked to knock people out. Nagoya Commercial College sent out Monster — and we sent out our own giant, a friend of mine who stood six foot three. Monster

“"The competition was more blood and guts. There was no safety equipment. Broken bones, knockouts, and an assortment of other injuries were commonplace."
laughed when he saw him. Yet once underway, it was the giant who launched the opening attack. Whap! A front kick found Monster’s belly. Monster grabbed the leg and cradled it against his side, like a football. Then he looked the Giant square in the eyes, screamed, and charged forward and deposited the giant on the floor in the next ring. Monster turned around and slowly walked back to the starting position. The match was over. Monster’s teammates howled with laughter.

Q: **What happened then?**

A: Our team fought back in the later matches, and after the last fight the two teams were tied. The captains of each team met in the ring with the referee to decide who would fight to break the tie. When the captains began to return to the sidelines, Monster assumed his position in center ring. I turned to our giant and said, “Who’s going to fight that beast for us?” Over the loudspeaker came a sudden announcement: “Representing the NagoyaGakuin karate team is Katsutaka Tanaka!” I was surprised and I protested, but the Giant just slapped me on the back. “Well,” he said, “you wanted to do anything to be a winner.” I shook my head and gulped deeply. “This is going to be your last match ever kid,” yelled one of Monster’s teammates. I gulped again and thought to myself: “This is the man to beat. If I can stop him, I can stop anybody. I am not going to back up.” I defeated Monster that day and went on to finish second in the tournament.

Q: **Was it then that you were elected captain of the university team?**

A: Yes, and from then on everything changed. I made the practice sessions tougher - much tougher. I trained the team not to back up and not to quit. If they got hit once, they were to hit back twice. Punishment training was emphasized. No one was to get knocked-out in a tournament. The team needed leadership and discipline, and I was determined to set an example. Most everyone thought I was a little crazy because of the kamikaze attitude that I had about fighting - but they did respect my intensity and my results - and that was exactly what I was after. I figured I had three more years to spend at the university, and was going to get as much out of it as I possibly could. The first thing I did was develop a one-year plan, sort of a crash course to get us on par with the rest of the universities. I started a schedule of very hard training and kept pushing them until they fell. Even then, we poured water on them and kicked them until they got up again. They realized they had to push themselves beyond being tired or hurt because I wouldn’t accept anything less. We hit them, kicked them, and we made them get used to getting hurt so they wouldn’t care anymore. It really worked. We became the roughest university team in central Japan within that first year - not the most technically sound but the roughest. You can’t imagine what an intimidating influence that can have on an opponent. They just didn’t know what to expect from us because we got a reputation for being a bunch of crazy fighters. This, in turn, pumped-up the whole team and gave them the confidence that they could win anything. I wanted my team to be the best in Japan, and in 1968 I took his team to the Central Japan Karate Championships and came away with the first place trophy. My dream had come true.

Q: **When did you came to the United States?**

A: After graduation, I went to the Alaska Methodist University, which had an exchange program with Nagoya-Gakuin University. I started teaching karate during the day as part of the university’s physical education program, and at nighttime I taught a women’s self-defense class. When I arrived at AMU, I started teaching the way I was taught in Japan. I had 40 students when we started and two months later I didn’t have any. No one came back because I hit them and I kicked them.
− and if their stance was no good, I tripped them. I was finally told by the head of the P.E. department that I couldn’t do that. And I told him, “Don’t tell me what to do. This is the way it should be done.” He explained that he was getting a little bit scared, and thought we were going to get sued! So I decided not to hit students anymore. I’m getting very Americanized (laughs). But I still believe in the traditional ways − martial arts should be very strict.

Q: So you had to modify the traditional Japanese teaching methods to Western culture?

A: When I first came to Alaska I was still gung-ho and quite convinced that my training methods would be effective and well-received. But I quickly realized that I was no longer in Japan and that I couldn’t treat American people like Japanese people. I tried to take it easy and I really thought I had successfully tailored a program that would be acceptable to everyone. I was wrong. I had one student who refused to listen to my comments on the narrowness of his stance. I came up from behind him and swept him to the floor with relative ease. He stood-up glaring at me and asked why I tripped him. I told him his stance was too narrow and to try again. Again his stance was too narrow and again I swept him to the floor − this time very hard and very fast. Admittedly, I made him look like a fool. The next day he came to class acting really tough, saying that he wanted me to know that he had a gun and that I’d better watch out. I knew that if I showed fear I’d have a difficult time controlling him. When he finally showed me the gun I grabbed it and emptied the bullets. It was then that I realized that I didn’t want to have to contend with this type of behavior for the rest of my life, and that many people take the discipline in the classroom as a personal affront. I’ve since found a number of ways to accomplish the same end by alternative means. It’s still rough and it’s still intense but I don’t find it necessary to pummel a student to get his attention. I’ve been told my classes are not unlike Marine Corps Boot Camp. That’s not so bad.

Q: After settling in the United States, did you go back to Japan to update your training?

A: Yes, I did. In 1972 I returned to Japan briefly. I found that seidokai stylists were then turning to kickboxing, a move that I could not support. I began to search Japan for a new style to serve as my foundation art. I looked at shotokan, kyokushinkai and gojuryu, but finally settled on shitoryu. I don’t believe that one system is good enough − none of them. No single one is fully adequate. Each system has good points. So what I teach combines everything. My fighting technique comes from my days with the university karate team.

Q: How can a karate practitioner develop a fighting instinct to survive a real threat situation?

A: It’s a rather simple concept, but it’s very difficult to teach. What it boils down to is a person’s ability to refuse to be beaten. Injury and pain must be accepted as minor obstacles. The ultimate concern is to prevail and to convince yourself that nothing else matters. To the layman, this might sound a bit extreme, but fighting must be viewed in its own separate context. I agree with those who say that fighting should only be a last resort to any altercation. But there are going to be times when there is no other alternative. When that time comes, there can only be one thing in your mind − get in, do as much damage as possible, and get out. Resign yourself to the fact that you’re going to get hurt. Accept it. But be confident in the fact that your opponent is going to get hurt a lot more than you.
Q: What about the idea of pushing yourself beyond your physical limits?

A: Again, the concept is simple but the execution is difficult. The human body has the ability to go beyond conventional limits of strength. When you feel like you can’t go on anymore, that’s when you really learn, that is when you really make progress. When you’re really tired and you are able to push yourself past the point of exhaustion, you suddenly forget about being tired. You are past that point and you no longer have to think about what you are doing. You have passed all points and your mind is free of your body so you’re ready to do anything.

Q: Do you follow the strict shito-ryu method?

A: I earned my black belt in the shito-ryu, and yes, I follow that style as far as foundation and kata training goes. But 90 percent of what I teach is actually a highly stylized combination of many styles – at least in principles and concepts of technical functionality. I think that a majority of instructors will tell you how to do a technique without telling you why it is going to be useful. I shun soft, flowing techniques and concentrate on hard kicks and punches – particularly punches. The main thing that I want my students to learn is to punch well, because in terms of self-defense, how many people on the street jump up and kick you in the head? They just grab and punch. For that type of situation, you’ve got to have good, dependable hands – where you’re confident that if you hit your attacker he won’t be getting up for a while. If you have good hands you feel more secure and will be calmer. You’ll see the situation better and maybe try to talk your way out of a fight altogether. I tell my students to avoid trouble as much as they can. My master in Japan said that the highest skill in karate is not winning 100 fights out of 100, but avoiding 100 out of 100 fights. But in order to avoid these 100 fights you must be very smart – you must have good self-control, be calm, and clearly evaluate how the situation is developing. But if they are pushed to the point of fighting, I encourage them to go all the way. Either you fight all out, or you don’t fight at all. There is no halfway in self-defense.

Q: So for self-defense, you advocate having powerful and definitive techniques?

A: Definitely. This is the main reason why I concentrate on what you can be described as “hard” techniques. I stress hard punches and kicks to vital points on the body. If you’re fighting someone who is big and muscular, so what? Kick the groin and pull him down. The groin, throat, nose, eyes and neck are basically the only areas that I want my students to attack. Don’t even bother with joint locks and throws. Throwing a guy is not going to put him away, it will just get him more enraged. So before you throw him, knock him out – and fast. I want my students to know exactly what’s going to work for them and why. This is a bit of a departure from the traditional Oriental approach, where if you have a question about something you are told to practice until you find the answer. I don’t agree with this and that’s probably why I had so much trouble in school – I always wanted to know “why.” When my instructor told me to do a technique I would ask why it was a good technique. In many cases, I don’t think they really knew why. They would just say, “That’s the way it’s always been done, so do it.” I think that my questioning attitude brought me to where I am today. I understand now, though, what my instructors were trying to say – most answers in life come through self-realization. They say that studying martial arts is like walking on a stony road. It’s very painful – nothing but pain. But that’s how you learn the answers of life. The real truths come from fighting with yourself. No matter how good anything seems on the surface, you must be convinced – you have to convince yourself. That is the answer.
Q: How important do you think the study of kata is in the art of karate-do?

A: It is very important. The more I study kata, the more I can see how important they are for fighting. To fight better than your opponent, you must make him move as you want – with proper spirit, and well-balanced techniques. Your technique has power when your body moves as a single unit. Kata helps you learn that unity. In Japan, maybe we put too much weight on fighting and not enough on kata. I mean, when you think about it, so many masters have practiced this art. Maybe for one master to develop a kata, it took him a lifetime. He thought about a lot of things. You know, if my opponent does this, what can I do? So the katas are the result of all his training and experience. And the more time you spend exploring a kata, the deeper will be your understanding of the art of karate and its uses. You have to go deeper and deeper into the study of the kata. You just can’t stop on the surface and simply try to master the physical and external appearance of the kata.

Q: What is your teaching philosophy for the budo arts?

A: I truly believe the old ways are the best and still work. Perfection in the martial arts is to make the mind and body work together. That’s the final goal. I try to teach my students how to perfect themselves. That’s the true way – the way of budo. USANKF

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1) Ariel Torres performing kata “Anan Dai”. 2) Brandi Robinson watching her opponent. 3) Noah Frisvold during his first match.
1) Alex Jinesta exchanging blows with his opponent. 2) Coach Chinen ready for the match. 3) Coach Baldi giving instructions during the match. 4) Noah Frisvold scoring a Jodan Tsuki. 5) Ashley Hill waiting for the right moment.
1 & 2) Ashley Hill waiting to start two of her matches. 3 & 4) Cirrus Lingl scoring points with a Jodan Ura Mawashi and a Jodan Tsuki.
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RABAT K1
SHANGHAI K1

Photos Courtesy Kphotos.net
1 – 2 & 5) Sakura Kokumai performing in the elimination rounds. 3 & 4) Jessica Kwong during her performances of kata “Anan” and “Anan Dai”.
1) & 3) Shannon Nishi–Patton in action during her first match.  2) Tyler Hudson attacking with a roundhouse kick.
1) & 2) Brian Ramrup pressuring his opponents. 3 & 4) Brandi Robinson checking her opponent and taking the initiative.
1) & 2) Tom Scott attacking his opponent during his first match. 3) Ariel Torres performing kata "Suparimpei". 4 & 5) Jared Smith checking his opponent and throwing a roundhouse kick.
1) Ariel Torres performing an excellent kata “Suparimpei”. (2, 3 & 4) Gakuji Tozaki performing “Suparimpei”.
1) & 3) Elisa Au during her first two matches. 2) & 5) Cheryl Murphy in action! 4) Maya Wasowicz after scoring a Chudan Tsuki.
1) Maya Wasowicz waiting for the "kill"!
1) Coach Baldis observing the match. 2) Maya Wasowicz avoids the attack and scores with Chudan Tsuki. 3) Brian Irr throwing a Jodan Ura Mawashi Geri.
1-2-3-4) Maya Wasowicz in four moments of her first match in Shangai.
1 & 2) Sakura Kokumai performing her first kata. 3 & 4) Ariel Torres performs kata “Kusanku”.

Photos Courtesy of KPhotos.net
1) Ariel Torres performs his kata in the first round.  2) Tom Scott attacking with a Mawashi Geri.  3) Shannon Nishi-Patton checking her opponent…  4) Jessica Kwong ready to start her kata.
1) Shannon Nishi-Patton attacking her opponent with a roundhouse kick to the midsection. 2 & 3) Tom Scott scores with a Chudan Mawashi Geri.
1) Tom Scott scoring with a perfect Jodan Gyaku Tsuki. 2) Jessica Kwong performing kata “Anan”. 3) Sakura Kokumai, next to Coach Fukuda, waiting for her turn in Kata competition.
1) Brandi Robinson checking the distance during her first match. 2 & 3) Gakuji Tozaki performing his kata. 4) Brian Ramrup falling short in his punch.
1) Brian Ramrup falling short with his kick. 2) Brandi Robinson looking for the right moment to attack. 3) Ariel Torres on his way to the bronze medal match.
1 – 3 & 4) Tom Scott in different moments of his matches in the Premier League of Shangai. 2) Tom Scott with Coach Mantilla waiting for his next match.
2019 SENIOR PAN AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Photos: Kphotos.Net

1) Ariel Torres. 2) Cheryl Murphy. 3) Jamie Druhan Green. 4) USA TEAM. Number One two years in a row!
1) Tom Scott. 2) Brian Irr 3) USA KARATE President, Mr. John DiPasquale watching the action. 4) Cheryl Murphy on the way to the finals! 5) Kamran Madani ready to attack.
1, 2 & 3) Brian Irr, Shannon Nishi-Patton and Elvis Ramic waiting for the right opportunity to attack. 4) Maya Wasowicz happy after moving to the next rounds. 5) Brian Hilliard in two moments of his participation in the 2019 Pan American Championships.
1) Brian Hillard waiting to attack. 2) President Mr. DiPasquale following the matches. 3) Brian Hillard celebrating the final point. 4) USA Kumite Team with Coaches Baldis and Burns.
1) Brian Hillard celebrates with Coach Baldis the Team victory. 2) Hillard with Kumite Coach Brody Burns. 3) Cheryl Murphy with Coach Dustin Baldis. 4) Maya Wasowicz made it to the top!
1) Cheryl Murphy throws a roundhouse kick. 2) John Klatt performing his kata. 3) Jamie Druhan Green performing kata “Seipai”. 4) Sabahudin Tricic during his first round kata. 5) USA Team Manager Jose M. Fraguas, National Office Manager Elizabeth Sottile and USA Karate CEO, Phil Hampel following the event. 6) Ryan Rogers ready to perform kats “Nipaiop”. }
1 & 2) Jessica Kwong performing kata “Papuren”. 3) Tom Scott misses his Jodan Tsuki. 3) & 5) Sakura Kokumai on her way to bronze medal matches. 4) Ariel Torres performing “Anan”.
1) Ariel Torres performing kata on his way to the bronze medal matches.
2) Sabahudin Tricic posing with Para-Karate Head Coach, Mr. Jeff Khon.
3) Coaches Mantilla and Fukuda sharing opinions. 4) Coach Chinen congratulates Jessica Kwong.
1) Joseph Martinez during his first kata round. 2) Ariel Torres celebrates the Gold Medal victory! 3& 4) Sakura Kokumai during her performance of kata “Suparimpei” in the final match.
1 – 4) Ariel Torres took Gold against the legendary Antonio Diaz in the kata final.
Respect: Where Sportsmanship Begins

**Athletes, coaches, and parents agree: good sportsmanship begins with respect.** And maybe you’ve heard the old saying that respect is a two-way street. That sounds pretty good at first; but if you stop to think about it, that metaphor doesn’t begin to capture the reality. If you want to be a good sport, then respect has to move in a lot more than two directions.

For one, respect has to include your opponent. It can express itself in obvious ways, like complimenting an opponent for their efforts during a match. That’s a positive thing to do; but the things you don’t do might be every bit as meaningful. For example: competition can get intense, and sometimes there are official calls you might disagree with. If you respond to those calls in ways that might invite penalties, you’re showing disrespect for your opponent and the match itself.

Of course, it’s also important to respect your parents and coaches. That’s easy when you agree with their decisions. It’s less easy when the coach decides to take you out of a competition. If you react negatively, you’re not only showing disrespect to your coach – you’re helping to create a negative atmosphere that can erode morale.

**RESPECT IS**

**TOPS**

- **Teammates**
  - Praise positive contributions...
  - don’t blame or shame

- **Opponents**
  - Be gracious when you win...
  - and when you lose

- **Parents/Coaches**
  - Show respect always... even when you disagree

- **Self**
  - When you respect others,
  - you respect yourself

Think of respect as an intersection – an ongoing exchange of respect given and respect earned. Respect for teammates, opponents, parents and coaches, ...and yourself.

It can be challenging to teach young athletes how to practice good sportsmanship at times, but TrueSport is built around hands-on activities and other innovative learning techniques. For example, we know that big concepts like ‘respect’ can be hard to wrap your head around. But if you bring it down to the level of everyday personal relationships, it’s easier to understand and to put into action. Use the word **TOPS** – **Teammates, Opponents, Parents/Coaches, and Self** to help your athletes remember that Respect has to include all of them!

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This series of TrueTalk features is inspired by the values and principles of TrueSport – an initiative powered by USADA, the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency.

We Value Champions. **We Champion Values.**

Want to learn more? Visit TrueSport.org
LAUNCH, LOCATION & GOVERNANCE
The U.S. Center for SafeSport is a national nonprofit organization providing education, resources and training to promote respect and prevent abuse in sport. The Center is located in Denver, Colorado, and opened in March 2017.

The Center is governed by a nine-member board of directors, which includes subject-matter experts in the areas of abuse prevention and investigation, ethics compliance and sport administration.

MISSION, PURPOSE & VISION
Mission
To cultivate and steward a culture of dignity and respect in sport.

Purpose
Enable every athlete to thrive by fostering a national sport culture of respect and safety, on and off the field of play.

Vision
Every athlete is safe, supported and strengthened through sport.

- **Safe.** Athletes are protected from emotional, physical and sexual abuse.
- **Supported.** Athletes enjoy welcome, respectful environments, and diversity is actively embraced.
- **Strengthened.** Athletes use the skills they’ve learned in sport to contribute to the well-being of their communities.
SERVICES

Education and Outreach Office
The Center's Education and Outreach Office will administer prevention programming, raise issue awareness, and provide resources and training to promote respect and prevent misconduct, such as bullying, hazing, harassment and abuse. The Center will:

- Provide education materials, including talking points, fact sheets, brochures and training materials
- Centralize best practices, provide self-evaluation tools and offer specialized resources
- Offer sport organizations easy access to educational opportunities for their coaches, staff, volunteers, parents and athletes

Response and Resolution Office
The Center's Response and Resolution Office will investigate and resolve alleged policy violations for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movements' 47 member National Governing Bodies, including the USA National Karate-do Federation.

- As a member organization of the U.S. Olympic Committee, the USANKF has agreed to adhere to the Center's policies and procedures, including the SafeSport Code, which identifies prohibited conduct and serves as the benchmark by which the Center determines whether or not a policy violation has occurred. These policies and procedures also outline:
  - Center jurisdiction and authority
  - Sanctioning guidelines
  - Reporting and confidentiality
  - Resolution procedures, including investigation and arbitration
- Aggregate data from Center investigations will be used to identify trends and patterns across sport, strengthening national prevention efforts.
JURISDICTION & AUTHORITY
The Center has jurisdiction over Covered Individuals. These are persons:

- Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of the USANKF
- The USANKF or the USOC authorizes, approves or appoints to a position of authority over athletes or who will have frequent contact with athletes
- Identified by the USANKF as being within the Center's jurisdiction

The Center will have the exclusive authority to investigate and resolve alleged SafeSport Code violations involving sexual misconduct. The USANKF will retain the authority to investigate and resolve alleged SafeSport Code violations that are non-sexual in nature. Although, at the USANKF's request, the Center may exercise the discretionary authority to take on cases of this nature.

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<th>Exclusive Authority</th>
<th>Discretionary Authority</th>
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<td>All forms of sexual misconduct.</td>
<td>Other policy violations, including physical misconduct, emotional misconduct, bullying, hazing and harassment.</td>
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REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR SAFESPORT CODE VIOLATIONS
All individuals, regardless of membership with the USANKF, are encouraged to report suspected violations of the SafeSport Code. Covered Individuals who are over the age of 18 are required to report suspected SafeSport Code violations related to or accompanying sexual misconduct. Covered Individuals who fail to report SafeSport Code violations may be subject to disciplinary action.

How to Report
Individuals should report suspected SafeSport Code violations directly to the Center.

Reporting to the Center:
- Online: https://safesport.org/response-resolution/report
- Phone: (720) 524-5640

Confidentiality
Although the Center cannot guarantee confidentiality, it will, to the greatest extent possible, maintain the privacy of all individuals involved in the investigation and resolution of alleged SafeSport Code violations.

Anonymous Reporting
Anonymous reporting is permitted.

Legally Mandated Reporting
Reporting alleged criminal conduct to the USANKF or the Center will not satisfy any individual mandatory reporting requirements under state or federal law. Visit https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/state/ to view state-by-state mandatory reporting laws to determine your reporting obligations and options.
THE INVESTIGATION & RESOLUTION PROCESS

In response to an alleged SafeSport Code violation, the Center may:

- Initiate an informal resolution
- Conduct a full investigation
- Conclude the alleged violation is out of scope and refer the matter to the USANKF or the U.S. Olympic Committee

Informal Resolution
The Center may conduct an informal inquiry to collect preliminary facts to determine if the matter should be resolved informally, investigated further or not investigated at this time.

Full Investigation
At the start of a full investigation, the Center will provide notice to both involved parties. Each will be given the opportunity to present supporting evidence and provide contact information for potential witnesses.

Investigator’s Report
After reviewing the evidence in the case and interviewing relevant witnesses, an investigator will prepare a written report detailing:

- The facts of the case based on the available evidence
- Whether or not, based on a preponderance of the evidence, the investigator believes a violation of the SafeSport Code has occurred
- Recommended sanctions, if any

Director’s Decision
The Center’s director of investigations will issue a decision based on the available evidence. If the director determines the individual in question has violated the SafeSport Code, he or she may seek arbitration.
SANCTIONS
The disciplinary process is designed to protect all USANKF athletes, members and participants from future misconduct. With this in mind, all recommended sanctions will be reasonable and proportionate to the violation committed and will emphasize education to ensure that minor misconduct does not escalate into a major violation.

Imposing Sanctions
In response to the Center’s determination that a SafeSport Code violation has occurred, the USANKF will impose any sanctions recommended by the Center. Potential sanctions include, among others, any combination of the following:

- Warning
- Loss of privileges
- Education
- Probation
- Eligibility or participation restrictions

In determining appropriate sanctions, the Center will consider a range of factors, including but not limited to:

- The seriousness of the violation
- The ages of the individuals involved
- Whether or not the alleged policy violator poses an ongoing threat to the safety of others

Implementation Across the Olympic and Paralympic Movement
Participation restrictions imposed by a USOC-member NGB will be upheld across the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement.

Visit www.safesport.org to learn more or to view the Center’s policies and procedures to determine your responsibilities under the SafeSport Code. The Center’s policies and procedures are subject to change. Should the policies and procedures vary from the information contained herein, the policies and procedures will govern. Visit safesport.usankf.org to review the USANKF Participant Safety Handbook.
Some changes have recently occurred as part of the SafeSport initiatives which we partner with the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee and the U.S. Center for SafeSport to develop. As a result of these changes some changes have been implemented in our SafeSport Program. Latest Information on the program, the Safe Sport Code and Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies can be found on our website at SafeSport.usankf.org and the U.S. Center for SafeSport website at SafeSport.org

Highlights of our SafeSport Program

1. The following individuals are covered under U.S. Center for SafeSport’s Disciplinary Jurisdiction (the most current list of participants can be found at SafeSport.usankf.org):
   - Board of Directors
   - Staff (employee, contractor or volunteer)
   - Interns
   - Contractors with access to athletes
   - Operational and Governance Committee Members
   - Volunteer Event Staff
   - Event and National Team Medical Staff and Trainers
   - Photographers and Videographers with access to competition floor
   - Senior and Junior National Team Athletes over 18 yrs of age
   - Coach members
   - Official members
   - Athletes over 18 yrs of age
   - Volunteers over 18 yrs of age

2. SafeSport Training is required annually. Policies around training can be found in the USA-NKF Minor Athletes and Officials Abuse Prevention Policy and Participant Safety Handbook. Training is available at no charge to participants 18 years of age and older. Individuals under 18 years of age can take the course with a signed approval from their parents. The SafeSport Training is available at SafeSport.org and the course consists of the following topics:
   1. Mandatory Reporting
   2. Sexual Misconduct Awareness Education
   3. Emotional and Physical Misconduct
To obtain the code to create a login and have the results connected to USA Karate you can login to your membership account at usakaratemembership.com or contact the national office at natoffice@usankf.org. The course is also available to individuals not affiliated with the NGB for a small fee at AthleteSafety.org.

Training and resources for minor members have been developed. Youth toolkit is available on the resources page of the safesport.org website and training resources that are age specific for minors will be available soon at athletesafety.org.

3. Background checks will be completed every 2 years with our vendor NCSI rechecking annually.

The cost of the background screening is approximately $30 depending on your state. To complete the background check, you will simply need to do the following:
1. Visit www.ncsisafe.com and click on Background Screening Self Registration
2. Enter Self Registration Number 26244495
3. Enter Your Information as Requested

4. We have updated the Participant Safety Handbook which defines the SafeSport Policies for USA Karate. You should review these policies. The Handbook includes:
   • Training and Education
   • Criminal Background Check Policy
   • Athlete Protection Policy
   • Physical Contact with Athletes Policy
   • Electronic and Social Media Policy
   • Travel Policy
   • Reporting Policy
   • Disciplinary Rules and Procedures

5. We have added the USA-NKF Minor Athletes and Officials Abuse Prevention Policies in compliance with the requirements from the U.S. Center for SafeSport’s Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy to cover both our minor athletes and minor regional officials. You should review these policies. The Policy includes:
   • Training and Education Policy
   • One on One Interactions Policy
   • Massages and Rubdown/Athletic Training Modalities Policy
   • Locker Rooms and Changing Areas Policy
   • Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy
   • Local Travel Policy
   • Team Travel Policy
6. Training and resources for parents have been developed. Parent toolkit is available on the resources page of the safesport.org website and training resources are available at athletesafety.org

7. Reporting
If you know of or suspect a violation of any of the SafeSport Policies or Procedures you are required to report the incident. Reports can be made at:

Sexual Misconduct involving a minor:
• U.S. Center for SafeSport – SafeSport.org or 720-531-0340
• USA Karate Ethics website usakarateethics.com or 844-598-1865
• You should also report Sexual misconduct involving a minor to local law enforcement

All other violations:
• USA Karate Ethics website usakarateethics.com or 844-598-1865
Report directly to the CEO or Ethics Committee Chairperson
• CEO Contact Phil Hampel – phampel@usankf.org 719-309-6030
• Ethics Committee Chairperson Contact Sasha Gerritson – sgerritson@usankf.org

USA Karate is concerned about the safety of all our members and has worked diligently to comply with the standards established by the U.S. Center for SafeSport, United States Olympic Committee and federal law. If you have questions on the policies please contact me. If you believe there is a violation to the policies or you have a concern please report that concern. Ways to make a report including anonymous reports can be found at SafeSport.usankf.org
THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF USA KARATE

Where Olympic Journeys Begin