



## **TESTIMONIAL**

### **Training at Bushi Karate**

I am in ready stance, sweat dripping from my relaxed, warmed-up body soaking the heavy Judo Gi I wear. The line drills, that we are 10 minutes into, has put me both in a state of mild fatigue and relaxed anticipation of the next drill.

There is a twitch on my nose that naturally I would take care of, but not now, not in ready stance waiting for the next order from Sensei. When he permits the students to “relax”, then is when I can relieve the uncomfortable feeling on my nose. So I relax myself and refuse to let it bother me or interrupt with my training as I try to perform every exercise and drill as perfect as I can.

The Sensei, whether it's Byrnes, Older, Stankus or Ulmer, works us well, forcing us to use our minds just as much as the basic physical movements needed to perform the appropriate drill. It's in smooth harmony between mind and body that allows the practitioner to perform at his most optimum level, and for the art to succeed in his or her life.

The Shotokan Karate Jitsu taught and practiced in this dojo is a vehicle for both self-preservation and self-perfection (Bujutsu and Budo respectively) in the lives of me and the rest of the students.

Having reached the level of Yellow Belt (Hachi-Kyu/8th Class), I have been impressed with my advanced quickness and cleanliness of technique as I enter into my 8th month with Bushi. As I progress, and learn and move further down the path, I'm obsessed with staying relaxed and fluid. Ever since the first day I came into the dojo to meet Sensei Byrnes and begin the journey, his most emphatic direction and suggestion has been to relax. Strong, perfect technique brings speed which leads to power. Technique, speed, power in that order. So it's been a struggle everyday to remain mindful of the tension level of my muscles. I think of each breath I take, and make them perfect.

As I perform the reverse punch in left side front fighting stance (Zenkutsu-dachi, Gyaku-zuki), I'm mindful of a perfect technique and being quicker than the last repetition, while exploding and erupting in that last split second as my hips, arm, wrist and fist all perform their correct movements in harmony with each other to create and give off that powerful blow. After 10 of these, Sensei allows us to rest up briefly. So I give my instructor his or hers due respect, face the back of the dojo as I make sure my uniform is set and fixed so as not to obstruct my movements, and then re-face the front of the dojo and Sensei as I get back into ready stance waiting for the next drill that will help me become a better martial artist.