



**RANDOLPH
MARTIAL ARTS
ACADEMY**

ACHIEVE



The Official Newsletter of the Randolph Martial Arts Academy

Issue 4

An Interview with Mr. J. Sackett, Head Instructor, FMAC

Mr. Jonathan Sackett has been studying martial arts in the American Budo Kai since 1985. He's a Rokudan (6th Degree Black Belt), the Head Instructor of our sister school in Parsippany, NJ, the Family Martial Arts Center, and the Sackett family has close, personal ties to the Hopler family for many years. We had a chance to sit down with him and ask him a few questions about karate, his younger years, his family, his goals and his advice for all Kai students.

Achieve: What was the Dojo like when you were practicing in your early years?

Mr. Sackett: I started my training in the old Rockaway Dojo in Miss Irma's dance academy on November 7, 1985. I remember many partitions up to separate us from the dance classes going on. We outgrew that space and moved into the current Rockaway Dojo location on the main Dojo floor side in 1986. A few years later (1994), we expanded into the other side where there used to be a fish market.

Achieve: How did the Family Martial Arts Center get started?

Mr. Sackett: Family Martial Arts Center was always a dream of mine and originally I planned to name the school North Jersey Martial Arts Academy, until I had a talk with Miss Felenczak and she gave me the name. Miss Felenczak offered to her instructors an opportunity to train to be a head instructor & I quickly jumped on that opportunity to take the course. During the process of the course, I started talking with my family about opening a dojo and that is when I approached my brother, Adam, who had been inactive in the dojo, to return to train under Miss Felenczak. I had told him I was hopeful for an opportunity to open a new dojo and he would be able to work with me on that. Here we are almost 7 years later with Family Martial Arts Center being a proud certified member of the American Budo Kai.

Achieve: What is one of your favorite memories from Karate Camp?

Mr. Sackett: I've always loved Karate Camp. I have been very fortunate to be able to attend every year since 1987, only missing 1 camp in 1998, which I was taking summer classes in college. It's hard to pinpoint one exact favorite memory from camp, but a few are right up there. One is my Rokudan promotion at Karate Camp 2014 as my whole family was there, including my mother, at the Camp Shiai. Another is my son Aaron's Junior Black Belt promotion and running the testing in 2017 and my daughter Shaina's promotion at camp 2018. I always will always remember Karate Camp 2001 when we had to stay at a hotel as we shared the camp that year.

Achieve: What's your proudest moment in your karate journey?

Mr. Sackett: My proudest moment was my Shodan promotion on December 5, 1993. I'd worked extremely hard for 7.5 years in the dojo and there were many bumps in the road, but with my parents and siblings there, it was a very proud moment for me.

Achieve: What's it like to have all of your children as students in your Dojo, two of which are Black Belts and staff members?

Mr. Sackett: It's very humbling to have all 4 of my kids as students at Family Martial Arts Center, 2 are junior black belts (Aaron and Shaina), 1 is a Ni-Kyu (Matthew) and 1 is a Blue belt 2 (Jennifer). This year, for the first time, all 4 will be attending Karate Camp! They certainly keep me on my toes and to be able to separate being their Father from being their Sensei is not always easy. I know I am extremely hard on them, but they are the future, they are the ones who will continue to lead Family Martial Arts Center down the road. Aaron and Shaina are both FIST members and have been since they were 11 years old. They do an excellent job and are always coming to me with new teaching ideas that the students really enjoy.

Achieve: Can you speak to some of the differences and similarities in American Budo Kai now from when you were a kid & young teen?

Mr. Sackett: When I was a kid and young teen the highest rank I saw in the dojo was a purple belt. The highest kata I saw was Chinto. Classes were always packed as they still are today. Today there are much higher ranks and many more katas and weapons katas being performed. It's a good thing as there is so much longevity in the dojo today. When I was a youngster, Rockaway Karate Academy was very young, now like me it has a lot more experience and has shown lots of growth.

Achieve: What are some of your long term goals or dreams that you still have for yourself, FMAC, and the Kai?

Mr. Sackett: Some long term goals for myself are to be promoted to Seichidan, to visit Okinawa, and to continue to learn and train with my teacher every week. For Family Martial Arts Center, I would like to open 2 more locations with my brother Adam running one near him in the Scotch Plains area, myself running one, and my children running one. I would like to continue to

grow our student base and elevate more FIST members to Instructor. I am proud that my first ShoDan promotion, Mr Sean Hopler, is also our first Instructor. I would also like to open more classes when the time is right. For the Kai, I would like to see more participation by all Dojos at all Kai events and more students at Karate Camp, like we had when I first started to attend in the late 1980's and in the 1990's. I would also like to see more dojo's being opened.

Achieve: What one piece of advice do you want to give the students of the Kai?

Mr. Sackett: Always set goals! Life moves too quickly to just stand still as it will just pass you by. Here I am, 34 years

being active in the Kai, and I have some regrets over the years, but I continue to move forward. I have dreams and push myself every day, every class and continue to strive to always do my best!!

Achieve: Any final thoughts?

Mr. Sackett: I wanted to thank Mr. Daniel Hopler for this opportunity to give his students and the Kai a little bit about myself. I am forever grateful!!!

Kanpai,

Mr. Jonathan Sackett, #6-011

Words of Wisdom

"Live in such a way that if your children are ever asked for the definition of kindness, integrity, and loyalty, they'll answer "my parents"."

-Ali B. Moe

"There is nothing so brave in the whole wide world as a candle daring to live on in the wind."

-Atticus

CHOCOLATE LASAGNA RECIPE

As requested by popular demand, here's the Chocolate Lasagna recipe made famous at our kanpais. Credit to Centercutcook.com™, as this is a modification of the recipe on their website.

Prep Time: 20 mins

Cook Time: n/a

Total Time: 1 hour, 20 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 package of Oreo™ cookies
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 8 oz. package of cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons of Milk
- 12 oz. tub Cool Whip™
- 2 cups Milk
- 1 tsp Vanilla extract
- 1 cup Chocolate Chips
- 1 pkg Instant Chocolate pudding
- 1/2 cup mini marshmallows

1. Melt butter in a small saucepan. In a food processor, crush Oreos and add melted butter, blend. Grease a 9x14 in. glass baking dish and then smooth Oreo layer evenly in this dish using a fork. Put in refrigerator to cool as you work on the additional layers.
2. Mix the cream cheese with a mixer until fluffy. Add in 2 tablespoons of milk, sugar, and vanilla extract. Mix well. Stir in 1 and 1/4 cups of Cool Whip. Spread this mixture over crust from step 1.
3. In a bowl combine pudding mix with 2 cups of cold milk. Whisk for 4-5 minutes until pudding thickens. Spread pudding evenly over cream cheese mixture and refrigerate for at least 5 mins.
4. Spread the remaining Cool Whip over the Pudding and use a spoon or spatula to even.
5. Sprinkle chocolate chips and mini marshmallows evenly over the top.
6. Refrigerate for 1 hour and then serve.

Dojo News and Achievements

New F.I.S.T.– Congratulations to Kemi Folami, Purple Belt II, assisting in the Thursday Junior class, and Douglas DaSilva, Nikyu, who is working with Mr. Hopler on special teaching projects.

Charity Event– On June 1st, 2019, the Dojo hosted a concert and art show benefiting St. Jude Children's Hospital. The concert was organized and emceed by Douglas DaSilva, Nikyu, and the art show was organized by Estefania Borrero, Sankyu. The event featured many talented students from our Dojo & we were joined by students and staff of the Family Martial Arts Center of Parsippany. We saw works of art, instrumentals, singing, dancing, & a magical appearance by the Amazing Magnifico! The event raised over \$4,700 surpassing last year's total and was a huge success!

Camp Day/ Sleepover– On May 4th, 2019, our Dojo had its 1st Camp Day where students had class and then played games we'd play at Karate Camp including a hula hoop contest and a bubble blowing contest. We then had our 3rd annual sleepover including a special class which included board breaking, we then had dinner, watched a movie, played games, and had an awesome time sleeping over in the Dojo.

Congratulations– Sophia Keoskey, Nikyu, for earning high honor roll this trimester. Her group also received 2nd place in her school's Greek Olympic Trials & she placed with the Mendham Township Middle School symphonic at the "Music in the Parks" orchestra event held at Dorney Park.

Congratulations– Paula Czeisler, White Belt, who started her karate journey on March 5, 2019 as she celebrated her niece's 2nd birthday in January as well as was honored in a special ceremony on April 7th for volunteerism at her Synagogue.

Congratulations– Estefania Borrero, Sankyu, who designed a coat which was chosen from 1,000's of applicants, for an exhibit at the Ellis Island Museum, where over one million people are estimated to see it.

Congratulations– Ryan LaBato, Purple Belt II, who has moved up to Boy Scouts, where he'll continue to explore his passion for camping & camping trips with many new friends who share his passion.

College Bound– Congratulations to the following students who are graduating high school and will be attending college in the fall:

- Michelle (Alvarado) Acosta, Nidan – NYU
- Grace Gentle, Shodan– Villanova University
- Goutham Vijayanand, Sankyu– Rutgers University

Upcoming Event- Douglas DaSilva, Nikyu, presents "Trio + Trio=Greater than the Sum", a performance of jazz & chamber music at the National Opera Center's Scorca Hall, 330 7th Ave. New York, NY on Sunday, Sept. 15, 2019. It will feature the Bateira Trio, Flutist Sandy Hughes, violinist Conway Kuo, and double bassist Satoshi Okamoto who will be performing 6 daring world premieres by living composers. It will also feature the Mark Wade Trio led by award winning, Chester Rokudan & Bassist, Mark Wade, along with pianist Tim Harrison & drummer Scott Neumann. The Mark Wade Trio will be performing original compositions from their internationally acclaimed 2015 album *Event Horizon* & their 2018 album *Moving Day*. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased in advance at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/trio-trio-greater-than-the-sum-bateira-trio-mark-wade-trio-tickets-61449690679?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>.

Save the Date:

5th Anniversary Special Class

Our Dojo is turning 5!

To celebrate this milestone, we'll have a Special Class and Kanpai at the Dojo.

When: Sunday, September 8th, 2019 - 1:00- 5:00 PM

Who's invited: All Randolph Martial Arts Academy students & their families

More information is coming soon...

Black Belt Promotions

Congratulations to the following individuals who were promoted in 2018:

Grace Gentle– Shodan– Camp 2018

Michelle Acosta– Nidan– Camp 2018

These individuals worked very hard over the years and made an extra effort to earn their rank. Excellent job! Kanpai!



Michelle (Alvarado) Acosta has been studying karate since she was 4 years old. She started in the Kenvil Dojo under the Head Instructor, Miss Felenczak, as well as her teacher, Mr. Hopler Sr. and later moved over to the Randolph Martial Arts Academy. She earned her Black Belt in December 2015 and earned her Nidan (2nd degree Black Belt) at Karate Camp 2018. She's the first student that Mr. Hopler promoted to Black Belt. She has a long list of accomplishments including graduating high school this year and will be attending New York University this fall.

Here's what she has to say:

I have been asked the question "Why did you start karate?" countless times in my life. The first part to that story is always the same: a pinky promise. At four years old, a very tiny girl added karate to her endless list of things she wanted to try which already included soccer, dance, gymnastics, and becoming the next Kim Possible. That very hopeful daughter pinky promised her mother that she wouldn't quit until she was at least 18 years old. That day, my mom and I locked pinkies and here I am today, almost 14 years later, writing about the art that has transformed my life.

My karate journey started in the Kenvil Dojo. I recall my days in Kenvil Dojo more vividly than I do most things. It's where I grew up. I remember my routine conversations with Mrs. Mylan before class and Mr. Toscano doing an extended breakfall over me on Saturday morning class because it was my birthday. I remember learning (the hard way) not to yawn in class and struggling to remove "yeah" and "I can't" from my vocabulary. Then 7 years later, I was saying goodbye to the building where it all started. In all honesty, the closure of the Kenvil Dojo hit me hard as I am sure it did many. However, I knew that the dojo, no matter where it is, is where a karateka makes themselves stronger.

I never expected karate to have impacted me as much as it has. As time goes on, you will look back on the things you do and wonder what made you do them. You'll say to yourself "I did this because I was determined", "I did this because I was scared", "I did this because I knew I could" .

And after putting all the pieces together, you will say "Wow." because thanks to your experiences and lessons as a karateka, you challenged yourself and did what it took to accomplish your goals. Personally, this moment happened to me just this year. I was asked to write an article for my yearbook. I wrote about how the lessons I have learned through all my time in karate have contributed to what I have accomplished in high school. I opened a business and started a student-led movement at my school. And while these things may not sound karate-related, the values of a karateka are what enabled me to accomplish such rewarding goals. Karate is the gift that never stops giving; it's also the gift that you have to give to. I want my fellow classmates to realize how important their training is in their lives. Remember that no matter where you are in life, the lessons learned through this beautiful art are enriching and valuable.

Mr. Hopler Sr.—thank you. Thank you for helping me become the young woman I am today. Thank you for putting up with me and embracing my one of a kind character. Thank you for working so hard to open Randolph Martial Arts Academy and for continuing to contribute so much time to teaching this life-changing art. To my dojo family, thank you for all the support and memories. I am forever grateful for American Budo Kai and for the way it has not only impacted me but every single member of the Kai.

Lastly, a huge thank you to my mom for making that pinky promise with me. I love you to the moon and back, I pinky promise.

*Kanpai,
Michelle Acosta
#6-547*