

Achieving Academic Excellence Through Martial Arts Training!

The reason most people never reach their goals is because they don't define them, or ever seriously consider them as believable or achievable. Winners can tell you where they are going, what they plan to do along the way, and who will be sharing the adventure with them.

-- Denis Watley

Is there a connection between being a martial artist and getting excellent grades? Well, let me tell you a story (about a student in another martial arts academy) that might reveal the answer...

Cole, a sixth-grade student, was having a tough time in school. Although he was a bright kid, he just wasn't living up to his potential. Test after test, and subject after subject, his grades fell short. Cole's parents were concerned. Their hearts sank every time Cole brought home his report card and they feared he would eventually be held back. After many meetings with Cole's teachers, they still weren't any closer to a solution. Nothing seemed to help.

Finally, over lunch one day, Cole's Mom shared their struggle with a family friend. The friend suggested enrolling Cole in a local martial arts academy. Cole's Mom was skeptical – while she had heard martial arts can sometimes spark a dramatic turnaround

in a child's grades, she didn't understand how. But she decided to take her friend's advice and enroll Cole in martial arts classes anyway.

The Transformation

From that moment on, Cole was a different student. First, his parents saw a dramatic change in his outlook towards school – he became much more positive and displayed a “can-do” attitude. He participated more in class and his confidence skyrocketed. Cole finally started to believe his hard work would pay off in the form of better grades and he started setting bigger goals for himself.

Soon afterwards, his test scores reflected his improved behavior. His teachers almost didn't believe it was the same kid. The end of the school year rolled around and his parents were shocked: Cole had raised his grades from barely passing to A's and B's. They even called the teacher to verify that they had received the right report card! Yes, it was Cole's report card – and the teacher congratulated them on their son's remarkable turnaround. An amazing transformation had taken place. Chalk up another win for martial arts.

It's no secret that kids in martial arts get better grades than their peers. But what is it exactly about



Ms. Lesley Casey
3rd Degree Black Belt and
Owner

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martial arts that helps kids get better grades? Well, that has always remained a mystery... until now. In the next few minutes, I'm going to reveal why I believe martial arts helps build a foundation for success in school...and how martial arts can prepare YOUR child for the academic challenges they'll face in the future. Let's dig in and talk about the first one:

Teaches Goal-Setting

To improve *any* aspect of your life - grades included - you must first set a goal. And guess what? Goal-setting is one of the cornerstones of martial arts programs. Martial arts training teaches students to set goals by defining their values, writing down what they hope to achieve, visualizing the desired end result (or outcome) and by taking a large goal and breaking it down into a series of smaller steps (or bite-sized "chunks").

Teaches How to Learn

Martial arts also teaches kids how to learn. See, I like to think of martial arts as a "hierarchy of skills". The higher rank forms and techniques build upon the foundation created in the lower ranks. For example, there is no way a white belt can walk in our academy and expect to perform black belt

forms. It's just not possible. Academics works the same way. Take mathematics, for instance. A student can't hope to grasp calculus until they have a solid foundation in algebra, fractions and basic computation.

It's this step-by-step approach that teaches students that the secret of learning something complex is actually easy. All they have to do is master the basics of one skill set before moving on to the next. We do this every single day in our martial arts classes. We challenge students to improve every class through a "building process" – one skill placed on top of the other. Students quickly learn that a series of small steps combine into big achievements. The more a student achieves, the more confident he or she becomes. And in school, greater confidence means a child participates in the classroom more, has greater faith in their own abilities, gets noticed by the teacher and can take the lead more.

Focus and Concentration

Study after study proves martial arts training improves concentration and focus. And I'm sure you'd agree: the ability to focus is critical in school! That's why one of the easiest ways to improve a child's grades is by improving their powers of concentration and focus. But the problem is that many kids can't focus without training. The good news,

however, is that learning how to focus is a skill that can be taught. And the best place to learn focus and concentration? Right here in our academy. Martial arts training teaches children how to calm their minds, relax, shut out distractions and focus on the task at hand. Even kids diagnosed with ADD and ADHD often see a marked improvement after martial arts training. That's why the Mayo Clinic advises, "Children with ADHD often do very well with...martial arts classes, especially karate or Taekwondo".

Improved focus pays off in many ways. First, a child absorbs more in the classroom. Second, their behavior improves (remember attitude towards learning, behavior and classroom participation are often graded). Third, homework becomes easier and tests become less stressful. Yes, focus and concentration are critical skills for academic excellence – and martial arts teaches both.

Performing Under Pressure

The only way to improve in martial arts is to listen to your instructor, leave your ego at the door and accept constructive criticism with an open mind. And this is another way martial arts training improves a child's academics: by teaching kids to perform under pressure and take direction in a positive manner. You see, martial arts students receive constant feedback on their forms, on their self-defense techniques, on their sparring moves and their weapons skills. They're also judged publicly. This helps stay calm in stressful situations. A student who can handle being tested in front of 50 or 100 people can certainly handle a spelling test! This leads to a more secure self, the ability to accept criticism openly and being comfortable in their own "skin". All of these are very important skills for scholastic success.

Perseverance and Hard Work

The idea of "hard work" has fallen out of fashion in some circles. It seems like everything these days is about short-cuts and getting as much as you can for the least amount of effort possible. Not here - and not in martial arts. Like I said earlier, there is no way to "shortcut" your way to becoming a black belt. Martial arts demands the old-world

How Does Martial Arts Training Have a Positive Impact on Academic Performance?

- 1.) Teaches Goal-Setting Skills
- 2.) Teaches Focus and Concentration
- 3.) Teaches Children How to Learn
- 4.) Conditions a Child to Being Tested and Performing Under Pressure
- 5.) Instills the Values of Hard Work, Discipline and Perseverance
- 6.) Reinforces Your Efforts at Home
- 7.) Builds a Child's Confidence
- 8.) Being a Black Belt Opens Doors
- 9.) Teaches Leadership Skills that Last a Lifetime

values of hard work, sacrifice and effort. It also teaches that to reach a goal, you need to stay true to your path. This is the meaning of perseverance. Of course, perseverance pays dividends in the academic world, as well - for example, the ability to face a problem head-on and stick with it until the task is finished.

We Support Your Efforts at Home

One of the biggest goals at our academy is to help your child become a well-rounded individual - somebody who can meet the challenges of life head-on. This encompasses social skills, athletic skills and academic skills. As you'll see in our "Most Improved Report Card Contest" (on page five), a big part of our training reinforces the positive messages you send to your child about schoolwork - for example, the importance of getting good grades in school, listening during class, and doing your best. Here are some of the ways we back up your efforts:

- 1.) We give "stars" for a student's excellent or improved report card
- 2.) We reinforce - in class - who did well in school and we acknowledge students for their academic achievements
- 3.) We impress upon students the importance of paying attention in class, following their teacher's instructions and showing discipline

You couldn't ask for a better support system - we want to see your child win as much as you do!

Being a Black Belt Opens Doors

This is the icing on the cake. What do I mean by "being a black belt opens doors"? Here's a simple example: Let's say you're an admissions officer at a prestigious university. You have a choice between two applicants. Both have equal transcripts, both scored the same on their SAT's and both got the same grades in high school.

But one thing separates one applicant from another: "Applicant A" is a second-degree black belt and "Applicant B" is not.

-- Ms. Casey

Which one would YOU choose? The answer is obvious. Being a black belt makes a big impression on most people - people in college admissions, job interviewers, clients and a lot more. The word black belt conjures up an image of somebody who has sacrificed to achieve something greater than the average person. Yes, the words "black belt" sound very, very good during college interviews. Being a black belt can also make you some money when you're away at college. With over 1,000 ATA schools in the country, chances are you'll find a school nearby that needs help. ATA schools are always looking for high-quality certified instructors. Being a certified instructor is a highly specialized job skill in demand. Which brings me to the next point...

Leadership Training

Finally, let's talk about leadership. This training might make the biggest impact of all on a student's grades and academic achievement. See, to propel your child to the front of the pack and help them really succeed in life, they must become a leader among their peers. One of the first things we teach in our Leadership classes is how to be a good follower and a good student. How to listen. How to respect authority. How to be open and willing to learn. The Leadership training your child receives in our academy could be the "one little thing" that helps them make their mark in this world and sets them up for success throughout their entire life. (If your child is NOT yet enrolled in our Leadership program, please see me and I'll be happy to provide some information about it).

Summary

Goal-setting. Concentration and focus. Learning how to handle tests and performing under pressure. The values of hard work, perseverance and discipline. The special prestige of being a black belt. Leadership skills. In our academy, all of these elements combine to build a solid foundation for your child's success in school and a lasting framework for academic excellence!

April 2009 Calendar of Special Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 CLOSED GOOD FRIDAY MORGANTOWN & BRIDGEPORT	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 ST. JUDE BOARD BREAK- A-THON 11-1
19	20	21	22	23 BRIDGEPORT CLOSED	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Summer Camp Announcements – Please Read!

SUMMER CAMP DATES

SATURDAY, JUNE 13TH
TINY TIGER JHANG BONG CAMP
9am– 1pm

SATURDAY, JULY 25TH
WEAPONS CAMP
K4K & ADULT
9am – 1pm

MONDAY AUG. 3 – 7
9am – NOON
ADVANCED TRAINING CAMP
(learn one form in a week)

SATURDAY AUGUST 8TH
SUMMER PICNIC – BOTH ACADEMIES

FRIDAY, AUG 14TH
6pm – 9 pm
GLOW IN THE DARK SJB (Bridgeport)

SATURDAY, AUG 15TH
6pm – 9pm
GLOW IN THE DARK SJB (Morgantown)

April 2009 Student of the Month!

Thomas Ayoob!

Achieving Great Things at the Academy!



Thomas Ayoob
April 2009 Student
of the Month

This month, with our focus on goals — I want to acknowledge a student who has really **improved his leadership qualities and goal setting** over the last few months. His name is Thomas Ayoob and he is currently a yellow belt here in our academy. He is our pick for student of the month for April 2009!

Here is a little back-story on Mr. Ayoob and why I chose him for Student of the Month for April:

- 1.) He is an excellent Tiny Tiger
- 2.) Always answers with a “Yes, Sir or Yes, Ma’am
- 3.) Leads by example

4.) Shows perseverance and trains hard

5.) Has excellent self- control

6.) Always willing to help his class mates

Let’s all congratulate Mr. Ayoob on being chosen as Casey’s ATA Black Belt Academy Student of the Month for April 2009!

Student Birthdays at Casey’s ATA Black Belt Academy!

4/1	James Turner	4/13	Alex Andrews
4/3	Makayla Miller	4/14	Steve Kaczmarek
4/3	David Walker	4/15	Saidey Fahey
4/3	Chris Young	4/17	Hailey Daft
4/4	Seth Huy	4/17	Cadien Johnson
4/4	Mr. Banks	4/18	Emma Myers
4/4	Eli Veshnesky	4/19	Rabbi Feder
4/6	Noah Yohn	4/19	Beth Durst
4/6	Stephanie Frisbee	4/20	Margaret Yanchak
4/8	CeCe LaBastida	4/22	Sydney Foster
4/8	Adien Aggarwal	4/24	Sam Zeni
4/9	Debi Lewis	4/24	Garrett Ham
4/10	Jaden Bowen	4/24	Tyler Wilfong
4/10	James LaRosa	4/28	Steven Nowak
4/11	Chase Walls		

Improve Your Report Card and Win!

Join Our Contest for the Most-Improved Report Card and You Could Win \$10, \$15 or even \$25!

Between now and the end of the school year, we're having a contest and YOU are invited to participate! Since this month's life skill is "Goals for Education", I thought this special contest would be perfect! Here's how it works:

With your parent's permission, bring in your most recent report card (or grades). Then write down which subjects you want to improve by the end of the year. Would you like to improve your reading scores? Your math grades? Social studies? Spelling? Pick three subjects at the most. (Remember: improving isn't a giant overhaul, but instead a series of small improvements).

Then, at the end of the school year when you receive your final report card, we'll see how you did. The student with the most-improved report card wins! There will be three winners: a Grand Prize Winner, a Runner-Up and a Special Mention. The prizes are as follows:

- 1.) Grand Prize Winner - \$25 in Casey's Cash
- 2.) Runner-Up - \$15 in Casey's Cash
- 3.) Special Mention - \$10 in Casey's Cash

In addition, all three winners will have their pictures (along with improved grades) posted in this newsletter!

So start thinking to yourself:

What subjects do I want to improve the most? What goals do I need to set right now to raise my grades? What specific steps do I need to take to reach my goals? For example: Do I need to read one more book a week? Do I need to devote an extra half-hour every night to my math homework?

We still have a couple of months before the school year is over, so there is still plenty of time to improve your grades. Every day counts. I want everybody to participate and make our academy a shining example of how we martial arts students can focus, work hard and achieve some amazing academic goals! You can do it! See me to get started right away!

*PLEASE NOTE: This isn't about who has the BEST report card - it's about who has improved the most since last time. If you're already an "A" student, great! Your job is to maintain that A average. What's more, you can offer to help some of the students who need to improve – that's being a leader and making a positive impact on your peers!

It's time for... **TAEKWONDO TRIVIA**
Test Your Martial Arts Knowledge...and Win!

Student Name _____

According to the main article:

QUESTION #1: Martial arts teaches students to set goals by...

- ___ a.) Defining their values
- ___ b.) Writing down what they hope to achieve
- ___ c.) Visualizing the end result
- ___ d.) Breaking large goals into a series of smaller steps
- ___ e.) All of the above

QUESTION #2: Martial arts is a "hierarchy of skills". This means...

- ___ a.) Higher ranks always perform the best
- ___ b.) One skill builds on another
- ___ c.) There are more white belts than black belts
- ___ d.) You stand on the "shoulders of giants"
- ___ e.) None of the above

QUESTION #3: One of the easiest ways to raise a child's grades is by...

- ___ a.) Talking to the teacher
- ___ b.) Improving the child's respect for authority
- ___ c.) Improving the child's focus and concentration

___ d.) Building a child's sense of "cognitive dissonance"

QUESTION #4: We support your efforts at home by:

- ___ a.) Acknowledging students who do well in school
- ___ b.) Impressing upon students the importance of getting good grades
- ___ c.) Giving stars for excellent or improved report cards
- ___ d.) All of the above

QUESTION #5: Leadership training...

- ___ a.) Teaches kids to become a leader in sports
- ___ b.) Is always taught by fourth-degrees
- ___ c.) Could set your child up for lifelong success
- ___ d.) Earns you an extra stripe on your pants leg
- ___ e.) None of the above

Don't forget! Any student who answers all the questions correctly (without help from an adult) wins a \$5 Karate Dollar towards their next testing, something from the pro shop or tuition! (Note: one Karate dollar per purchase, please).

I Need YOUR Help!

I'd like to thank those of you who have participated in the Student Referral Program! Marketing for new students costs us tons of time, money and energy. Like any business, we need new students to stay in business. Over the years we have found that looking for new students takes away from the time we would rather be spending with you and for you and teaching other students!

If I've already helped you or your child with martial arts instruction, then you know how well I serve my students. When you refer your friends and relatives to us, everybody benefits. We can serve you and your kids better. You receive a nice gift. And we assure that we'll take the very best care of any friends or family that you refer our way! For more information about our referral reward program, just give us a call at: (304) 282-1664. It's a

great program where, as our way of saying "thanks", we send you a token of our appreciation for recommending us!

Also: If you would like any of your friends, coworkers, relatives, business acquaintances, etc. to receive a FREE subscription to this newsletter, please call me at the same number: (304) 282-1664. We'll also send them a note with their first issue telling them that you suggested they receive this newsletter, and to contact us if they would like it to stop at any time. If you enjoy this newsletter, share it with people you know, with no hassle for you!

April 2009 Special Contest! Beat Your Last Report Card and You Might WIN!

Most-Improved Report Card Contest!

Join Our Contest for the Most-Improved Report Card and You Could Win \$10, \$15 or even \$25!

Hey, students! With your parent's permission, bring in your most recent report card (or grades for each subject). Then pick three subjects you'd like to improve by the end of the school year. Work hard over the next couple of months and at the end of the year, we'll look back and see how much you improved. The top three students with the most-improved report cards win the contest!

The Grand Prize Winner wins \$25 in Casey's Cash, the Runner-Up wins \$15 and the Special Mention wins \$10! Please read page five for full details and see me with any questions you have! There is still time left to improve your grades – let's show the community what we can accomplish!

April 2009 Special Contest! Beat Your Last Report Card and You Might WIN!

Casey's ATA Black Belt Academy

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