

Welcome to Abbott's Taekwondo America,

My name is Sean Abbott and I am the Chief Instructor of BOTH the Blacksburg school and the Roanoke Taekwondo America schools. Our system is unique in that it allows me to travel between the 2 schools and teach at both the school I started {Blacksburg} and the school that I started Taekwondo in over 20 years ago {Roanoke}. My instructor Master Robby Lacy founded Taekwondo America back in 1991 in Roanoke and it is now a nationwide group of Taekwondo schools working together to promote and enhance this traditional martial art form. This introduction is meant to be brief, but as you get to know me you will realize I can usually never be brief. Sorry in advance.

In November of 2003 my wife Teresa and I opened the school in Blacksburg with our 2 year old son William {now 8}. Since then our school has grown considerably and we are the only fulltime family martial arts school in Blacksburg. We have also since added our daughter Emily {now 5} to our family. You will see these children from time to time running around like they own the place. Please feel free to correct them if you catch them doing something that they obviously shouldn't. In March of 2010 I had the opportunity to purchase the very school where I started training. My instructor Master Lacy wished to semi-retire to Dallas and he asked me to take over as the owner of the Roanoke location. I agreed happily and nervously. This decision was based in part to sentimentality, but I also saw a great opportunity for all the students involved. We now have close to 300 students under the Abbott's Banner and we train as a team. You will see scheduled testings, parties, and prep classes where both schools come together. These events happen on average once a month and help to promote the skills and camaraderie of our students. With so many students involved it's impossible not to make friends in class. The instructors benefit as well because this allows them to travel between the schools and learn from each other about new training ideas, class designs, etc. This also means that you and your family have membership at both locations. Make sure to check the website for class schedules.

Being new to the school you will have many questions. Ask away, but please take a moment to read the other materials included in this welcome pack. It helps explain a lot of our rules and policies as well as detail some of our events that we schedule. The managers of the 2 schools are more than capable of handling most of your questions but always feel free to contact me directly. The best time is during the day before classes start. Just call the school and the phones always forward to me. Or you can simply email me at the contact info on the website. The manager of the Blacksburg school is Mr. Alex Griffin who I have been training in the martial arts since I opened in Blacksburg. Mr. Griffin is a 2<sup>nd</sup> degree Sr. black belt and Sr. Certified Instructor. And the Manager of the Roanoke school is Mr. Frederico Tonete. Mr. Tonete I have known since he was 8 years old and he began training under Mr. Lacy at that time while I was an assistant instructor in Roanoke. Now 26 he is a 4<sup>th</sup> degree black belt Sr. Certified Instructor. Both of these outstanding young men are supported by an army of Sr. Certified, Jr. Certified, Certified, and Instructor Trainees. We are a teaching school. This means that even the instructors must go through a training process on "How to Teach". You will witness this at times and may think, "Why is that guy/girl teaching? Where's the one from yesterday?" Fear not. As you look around the room you should find a Sr. Certified nearby. The standard class will always have either Tonete, Griffin, or me in charge, but we will step back from time to time and let some of our less experienced instructors take the helm and guide them on how to structure a class.

This brings me to the end of my introduction. I want to congratulate you on your choice to become involved in the martial arts and if there is anything you need or want clarified please don't hesitate to ask. If there is ever a problem or concern please take it DIRECTLY to me, Mrs. Abbott, Mr. Tonete, or Mr. Griffin. We are the ones best equipped to answer and/or resolve any issue at the school.

Sincerely,+

Sean Abbott

Chief Instructor / 4<sup>th</sup> Degree Sr. Black Belt / Senior Certified Instructor / Husband / Father / Janitor

## WELCOME

**As a student at Abbott's Taekwondo America (Abbott's) , you are also a member of Taekwondo America (TA). Abbott's works to provide a professional environment, where students and their families feel welcome. So although you may be the only one taking class as a student, you and your family are all considered members of Abbott's. As members, you are all subject to the rules and regulations while in the school, or at any Abbott's/TA event. Many aspects of a quality martial arts program can only be learned in time, and we understand that this will be a learning process for both you and your family. This letter will help answer some of your questions. Please don't hesitate to ask about things not covered or any other concerns that may arise.**

### **How many times a week should my child or I come to class?**

Students should attend a minimum of 2 classes a week (3 is best). Setting a schedule and being consistent is important. It is better to do 2 classes every week than missing a week and then trying to make it up the next week. Additionally, students that do not come to class consistently often feel out of place and then do not want to come to class. However, students that do come on a consistent basis feel better and actually look forward to coming to class.

### **What are the Uniform requirements?**

**All students are required to wear either their full uniform or their uniform pants, an Abbott's or Taekwondo America T-Shirt, and belt.** Female students should wear a plain white t-shirt under their uniform jacket when in full uniform. Uniforms should be clean and free of holes, t-shirts should be tucked in, and students should be able to tie their belt by themselves.

### **Should students practice at home?**

Practicing at home is not required provided that students attend 2 or more classes per week. However, if students wish to practice at home, it should be done in an approved area with plenty of space. Board breaking should not be done until the student is taught how to do it in class. Parents can help by holding a target, referencing curriculum DVDs and manuals, and asking questions. ***But please, don't try to teach.*** That will actually create confusion.

### **How do I find out what is happening in the school?**

We have a two month Calendar printed, website and the Instructor announces upcoming events at the end of class. We also have a list serve that we would encourage each of you to sign up for. Our website is [Abbottstkd.com](http://Abbottstkd.com).

### **What if my child uses Taekwondo at home or at school?**

Tell us IMMEDIATELY. While we understand that students can be a little over anxious to share and show off, this can be dangerous. Please inform us as soon as possible so that we can take steps to correct the situation.

### **What do the instructors expect from the students?**

We expect our students to give their best effort. Technique at the early stages of training is not as important as a positive attitude. If a student tries hard and has a good attitude, they will develop better technique over time because they are listening and learning.

### **How do the students earn “stripes” in class?**

Each stripe is earned in class for achieving a short term goal that breaks up the requirements for advancement from one belt to the next. Students will have the opportunity to test for stripes during their class times throughout the testing cycle, and should have all their stripes by testing. When a student has all their stripes, they are ready to test for their next belt. ***The student is responsible for knowing their rank requirements, and should refer to the rank and stripe charts in order to prepare properly.***

### **What is testing?**

Testing is a process where we evaluate the skills of the student to determine whether they are ready to progress to the next level of training. What is expected of students depends on the rank, age, and physical ability of the student. What is required to pass testing increases dramatically as a student advances in rank. ***Each student is encouraged to train consistently in order to learn their material and test when they are eligible, but testing is optional.*** Testing color belts happens every two months. Should a student not pass testing, the student does not have to pay for the next testing provided that the student continues to test in an attempt to obtain that rank.

### **How long does it take to become a black belt?**

It is mathematically possible to become a black belt in 2.5 years. However, it takes most people longer than that to attain that rank. A black belt is simply a master of the basics. Although it is a new beginning to serious training, it is definitely not the end.

**Who are the staff members?**

**Mr. Sean Abbott is the Chief Instructor** and owner of Abbott's Taekwondo America for both Roanoke and Blacksburg locations. He makes all the final decisions regarding students, their ranks, and school policies. **Mrs. Teresa Abbott is a Certified Instructor.** She assists Mr. Abbott on the floor and at the counter, and is very capable of answering your questions and concerns.

**Mr. Frederico Tonete is a Sr. Certified Instructor/ Roanoke Manager** and **Mr. Alex Griffin is a Sr. Certified Instructor/ Blacksburg Manager.**

All of our instructors are **NATIONALLY CERTIFIED** to teach, as well as first aid and CPR Certified.



## Understanding the Martial Arts:

We are teaching an art form that's roots can be traced back thousands of years. The martial arts have an all encompassing background that touches on combat, art, exercise, philosophy, dance, and cultural history. *It is an honor to be allowed to train in the martial arts, not a right.* Please understand that this is how we see it. You will notice in your membership agreements that we have the right to terminate a membership at any time for any reason. We have in the past run into VERY few cases where that was ever necessary, but it has happened. It occurs when a student or parent doesn't fully grasp what we are teaching. What I teach could hurt someone. If the student doesn't show the proper control or respect for what he or she is learning then morally I have to stop teaching them. I expect horseplay, overzealousness, excitement, etc. That's fine...to a degree. I want this to be fun for them and that's important for us to be successful. I just want the parents to be aware and help us to reinforce the idea that this is not Soccer or Baseball. I and the other instructors are not their school teachers. We are martial arts instructors and the behavior in class needs to reflect that mindset.

There are days where the instructor may have a lighter demeanor in class and the ideas for that day's lesson will revolve around having a bit more fun than normal. On other days the goals of the instructor can and will be more focused and strict. The instructor will usually announce what the goals of class are during the warm up or during class. All we ask of the students is a positive attitude and the proper respect for **ALL** those around them. All we ask of the parents is to reinforce this at home. All of the kids have their favorite instructor at the schools. Super!! But they MUST show the same level of enthusiasm and respect for all the other ones as well. You may explain it to them like this, "I know you hoped Ms. Lanzara was going to be there today. But let's make sure that Mr. Griffin tells her how awesome you were today!"

You Honor Your Instructors By Simply Doing Your Best!! That's all it takes. We will be there every step of the way to help you achieve your goals.

Respectfully,

Sean Abbott



## *How to RENEW*

When your trial period is over, you will need to renew your membership. It will take effect as soon as your trial special is over. Simply talk to someone at the counter, and they will get you set up.

The **standard membership is for a year**, and you will pay by the month. Like your current trial period, you can continue to come as much as you'd like. The **method of payment is auto-withdrawal** from either your CHECK CARD or CREDIT CARD. The rates for you and your family are listed below, as well as the options you have with your membership.

**Individual Person: \$79/month**

**Family: \$130/month**

**Year in Advance option:**

**(Individual- \$850)**

**(Family- \$1500)**

**Lifetime Membership: See Mr. Abbott**

Should you decide to cancel your membership (or drop a member from your membership), you must give us **60 days notice** along with the payment for that final month.

If you need to take some *time off* (due to another sport, family illness/emergency, or extended vacation), you can **put your membership/payments on hold**. This must be for a period of at least one month, and **can not be longer than three months**. We reserve the right to revoke this privilege, should it be abused or overused.

# **Abbott's Taekwondo America Rules and Regulations:**

- Students must wear an official Taekwondo America uniform to all formal events, with all the appropriate patches sewn on. **Approved** T-shirts and colored pants may be worn to class only.
- Students must have clean bodies, trimmed nails and well groomed hair.
- Long hair should be pulled back out of the face of the student into a pony tail.
- For your safety, and the safety of others, jewelry is not to be worn in class.
- Only bare feet in the practice area. Shoes should NEVER be on the mats.
- Students should have respect for fellow students and should always answer to each other accordingly using "Sir" or "Ma'am."
- Instructors are always to be called "Sir" or Ma'am"; Instructors should be called Mr., Mrs., or Miss, then their surnames.
- All students should follow instructions given by Instructors or Senior Students in class. When given an instruction, the student should recognize that he/she understands that instruction by firmly stating "Yes Sir" or "Yes Ma'am!".
- Colored belts and non-instructor black belts should not instruct except on direct orders from the Chief Instructor.
- Never interrupt an instructor working with a student or teaching class. No Side Coaching Please.
- While on the workout floor, always walk around an instructor and his group. Never walk through a group.
- Members should not be in the school if they are under the influence of alcohol.
- Students and Instructors are not permitted to use illegal drugs.
- Members or parents are not permitted to smoke cigarettes in or around the school.
- Instructors are not permitted to smoke cigarettes at all.
- Please take home all items brought into the school. We are not responsible for gear, shoes, etc. left at the center.
- Students should not kick, punch or horseplay while waiting for their class.
- Members and guests of students should not disturb class. The waiting area should remain quiet.
- Children should not remain unsupervised in or on the premises at any time.
- Students should be dropped off and picked up in a timely fashion, and must wait inside the school.
- Students may only wear sparring gear or other safety equipment approved by the Chief Instructor. TA co-branded Red Century gear is the ONLY gear allowed/approved by Taekwondo America

At all times students should live their lives by the Tenets and Student Oath.

## **Tenets of Taekwondo**

*Courtesy*  
*Integrity*  
*Perseverance*  
*Self Control*  
*Indomitable Spirit*

## **Student Oath**

*I shall observe the tenants of Taekwondo*  
*I shall respect instructors and senior students.*  
*I shall never misuse Taekwondo.*  
*I will be a champion of freedom and justice.*  
*I will build a more peaceful world.*



# *Just so you know!*

We make every effort to make your experience at Abbott's Taekwondo as pleasant as possible. That is why we give all of our students a trial special so that you can make sure that you want to be here. During that time, please ask us any questions that you may have. Some of the most common questions we get are about how much things in the school cost, what is expected, and what is optional. As with any sport or activity, there are some costs people need to be aware of. Here is a basic guide.

## **Plan on these expenses:**

**Testing** - Promotional testing occurs every two months and we expect all students, that are ready, to test. When a student does not test, they often become frustrated or bored. Remember, testing for rank is our **Game Day** and a reward for all of their hard work. Students are only required to pay for a testing one time. **Should a student not pass that testing, the next testing is free.** Additionally, the third family member (or more) test at half price. White – Senior Blue is \$45. Brown-Red is \$50. Red Senior – 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Decided Black Belt is \$65. Once you are a 2<sup>nd</sup> degree Sr. Black Belt you must test Nationally.



**Sparring Gear** – At **Orange Belt**, Sparring Gear is required for use during class. A complete set of gear costs approximately \$165.00 plus tax. This includes foot gear, hand gear, elbow pads, head gear, shin pads, mouthpiece and groin protection for the men/boys, gear bag, & mouth piece holder. For safety reasons, **we only allow Red Century (TA co-branded) sparring gear at our events.** With proper care, the gear lasts for a long time. Should a piece of gear wear out, each individual piece can be replaced separately.

**Patches** – A student should have all the appropriate patches on their uniform by their second testing in the school. The TA and School patch each cost \$10.00 and the Eagle Patch costs \$15-\$18 {Depending on size}. Your first TA patch is given to you when you successfully test for Yellow Belt.

**Tournaments** – While **never mandatory**, most of our students love to compete in tournaments. There are four tournaments a year and they can be held all over the country. Tournaments cost \$60-\$70 (Nationals are more expensive) and there is usually an option to buy a souvenir T-shirt (\$20-\$25). Tournament T-shirts may be worn to class. Very few “tournament rats” go to all the tournaments. Most people attend our regional tournaments that are within 2 hours driving time. It is recommended to attend at least one national event a year.

**Wood** - Once a student gets to blue belt, they should practice breaking wood. Whether real or re-breakable, wood does not have to be purchased from the school (number 2 pine cut to the appropriate size). However, we will not exchange wood purchased or cut elsewhere. Parents may purchase wood from Abbott's Taekwondo America if they wish.

## **Parking-**

**Blacksburg** - Abbott's Taekwondo members are to park on the Right hand side of the parking lot. Please do not park to the left side of the lot. That area is marked and warns of towing. Mr. Frith has been nice but some people are still ignoring his signs. Also, the Companion Animal Clinic will allow you to park in their lot **AFTER HOURS**. They have also been very forgiving but it has gotten out of control. Please do not double park or park on the grass. If you have any questions please ask.

**Roanoke**- Abbott's Taekwondo must use its own lot for parking. The hair salon next door, **Blades** does not hesitate to tow your car. Even when they are closed they tow. They have a towing service that monitors the lot 24 hours a day. Let me say it again, "Don't park there...ever...not even for a second." The drycleaner next door has never said anything to us about overflow parking. He is a very nice man. Take him all your dry cleaning, we like him.