

1ST RECOMMENDED BLACK BELT ESSAY FOR JOSEPH BURKETT

Hello everyone. My name is Joseph Burkett and today I will be testing for my 1st Recommended Black Belt.

My Tae Kwon Do journey began when I was 4 years old. My parents brought me to my first Panther Class. They weren't even sure I would make it through the class without being disruptive, but any place I could come to and run, kick, scream and hit things without getting into trouble was **GREAT** for me! Mr. and Mrs. Farrell made me feel welcomed and special...I was always a winner!

I remember seeing the higher belts and especially the black belts do their forms. They kind of scared me. **MAN**, they were fast... AND loud! I remember when Mrs. Farrell asked me if I wanted to be a Black Belt some day, I said, "No thank you". I didn't want to be like that!

As time went by I finally made it to my solid belts but I still wasn't sure of the whole picture of Tae Kwon Do. It was hard waiting for each test but I started to understand that Tae Kwon Do is much more than running around, kicking and screaming. We have our Code of Ethics that has our Aims to Achieve, the Tae Kwon Do Pledge and our Principles of AImAA. These are things I try to put into my life everyday. They help make me a better person and a better student. It's not always easy to remember everything, but I try.

I've had the honor and privilege of meeting and training with Grand Master Cho several times. Grand Master is very strong in body, but very strong in mind as well. His inner strength is something I truly admire. He's really awesome! Grand Master loves and cares for us and wants us all to succeed.

Mr. and Mrs. Farrell are the **best** Tae Kwon Do instructors you will ever meet. They have helped me not only learn Tae Kwon Do but to learn things about life. The examples they set through their standards and beliefs are very high. Because of them, I am able to set goals for myself. They are wonderful role models for me. I thank them for helping and guiding me in my journey. I love and respect you. You are not like my family, you **ARE** my family!

I'd like to thank my Mom and Dad for supporting me and helping me in my journey. Thank you for letting me start Tae Kwon Do lessons and for always making sure I'm here for them. Thanks for all the help with my Literary Knowledge, too! I love you both.

Thank you, J, for supporting me in Tae Kwon Do and for always cheering me on. You're the best big sister anyone could have and I love you, too!

I would like to thank all the Black Belts for their assistance. You are always willing to help me whenever I need it. I hope as a Black Belt, I'm able to show others the care, concern and support you have shown me. You're all the best!

Mr. Lewis thanks a ton for taking me to the back of class and helping me with my techniques.

Michael Deprest, I thank you, too, for helping me in the back before class starts and for helping me stay out of trouble when I'm back there!

You both mean a lot to me.

A journey begins with a single step. My Tae Kwon Do journey began the day I walked into this studio. I've come this far but there is still so much to do. I look forward to the future and I can't wait to see what's next! Thank You.

