

2006 Hall of Fame Competitor & Coach

**TAEKWONDO
TIMES
HONORS**



Grandmaster Joon Pyo Choi

Grandmaster Joon Pyo Choi is known for saying, "From the moment we are born to the moment that we die, we must constantly try to improve. If we don't improve, we die. It is our obligation as human beings." Choi is a man who lives by his own words. There are no areas of life that he has explored where he has not improved—and not succeeded in.

Near the close of WWII, Grandmaster Choi was born in North Korea. After Choi's family escaped to Seoul, South Korea, he began his life-long journey into martial arts at age eleven. He commenced training at the Song Moo Kwan School of Martial Arts under Grandmaster Byung Jik Ro. Today, he holds a ninth-degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do and has mastered many other martial arts as well.

In 1963, Choi became a Tae Kwon Do instructor for the Korean Boy Scouts in Seoul. In 1965, he began studying for two degrees, one in Business Administration from Pusan Su-San University, and another in Acupuncture from Song Hak School. He also trained on a Korean folk instrument and studied many religions and philosophies. While still in college, Choi joined the Korean Navy and won the All-Korean National Championship in 1968 and 1969.

In 1971, Choi moved to the United States and founded the Oriental Martial Arts College, located in Reynoldsburg, Ohio. Since its founding, it has trained over 25,000 students and produced many of the U.S. national and international champions.

From 1977 to 1979, Choi was the Head Coach for the U.S. National Tae Kwon Do Team and won The Coach of the Year Award in 1979. In 1988, he coached both men's and women's Tae Kwon Do Olympic teams at the Seoul Olympics, bringing the U.S. 11 medals.

In 1992, Choi founded the Kimoodo Healing Arts Institute. Kimoodo is a practice founded by Grandmaster Choi that is based on ancient Asian martial arts healing practices. The healing art is designed to harness untapped internal or "life" energies by integrating the mind, the body and the soul. This integration enables the body to decrease injury, to relax, to shorten healing time, and to generally "feel better."

The list of Choi's achievements is monumental. To name a few, he participated in the 1993 International Martial Arts Goodwill Mission and Demonstration that traveled through the countries of Russia, Mexico, Korea, and China. In 1998, he was Chair of the World Martial Arts Expo and Asian Culture Fair held in Columbus, Ohio, and was a U.S. Team delegate for the International Festival of Mexico. In 1999-2000, he was the U.S. Team head for the World Tae Kwon Do Festival. The World United Martial Arts Alliance inducted Choi into its Hall of Fame in 2003. He has been elected president of the United States Tae Kwon Do Alliance and the World Martial Arts Alliance.

Choi's many outstanding martial arts accomplishments are notable, but his achievements do not stop within the confines of Tae Kwon Do. His activism in his local and global community is remarkable. He was awarded the prestigious World Peace Ambassador Medal by the United Nations World Peace Council. He has been active in many local, national and international committees covering all aspects from martial arts and philosophy to business and charities.

Choi now resides in New Albany, Ohio, with his wife and three children. He continues to train and serve his martial arts roots. He is currently trying to establish government accreditation for a martial arts college that would focus students on physical skills, philosophical studies, art, and martial arts. His final goal is to build a martial arts temple where masters could live and students would be able to stay indefinitely to cultivate their minds and bodies to achieve balance in their lives.