



World Hwa Rang Do® Association

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End of Year Message from Grandmaster Taejoon Lee



In the beginning of the new decade the World received a wakeup call, a reality check in the form of an unseen enemy that would alter the course of history and our lives will never be the same. During the last two years of the so-called pandemic of the Coronavirus, it revealed many aspects of our true human nature as individuals as well as the collective, of governments and our leaders, of mass media and conglomerates, of the super wealthy and the powermongers.

Inside this Issue

Cover...KSN End of Year Message

Page 4. KJN 2021 Year in Review

Page 6. TLK 2021 Program Highlights

Continued...

There have been many negative consequences as well as troubling social, economic, and political ramifications as a result of the pandemic, which I am not going to get into here. However, I want to share with you some important values, which we as humanity have realized globally because of this unfortunate circumstance.

The lockdowns were self-induced house arrest, being forced to stay home from work and school, not being able to get out of the house and socialize as prisoners in our own homes. It limited the distractions and disrupted our daily habitual behavior as automatons. Although many of our social liberties were taken away, it forced us to reexamine what is important in our lives. It made us spend more time with our families, take time to reflect and examine our lives and our goals. It made us question why we go to work in the first place. The daily activities, the mundane interactions, and ordinary relationships that we all took for granted were now all taken away and had to be readdressed.

We were faced with change, sudden erratic change that no one was prepared for. And, not only that, but we were also faced with the uncertainty of our future with glimpses of the apocalypse. Fear engulfed our lives and it manifested itself in very dark ugly ways. It ruined and destroyed many lives, not only the lives that were taken directly by the virus, but more so by the indirect consequences of fear, panic, isolation, and the confronting of our repressed demons. Many lost their battles, leaving them devoid of hope, they turned to self-destruction and lashing out toward others with violence and nihilism.

There is really no one to blame, except for our own human nature. Covid-19 was not the problem, but the dark side of our human selves. Covid was just the spark that ignited the fuel of indignity, malice, destruction, selfishness, cowardice, and hatred, burning away the fortification of reason, compassion, selflessness, and courage. It also unleashed all the vulturous stalkers who prey on the weak, feasting on the dead, callous to misery, and fattened the profiteers of suffering and misfortune.

However, amidst the flames of despair and chaos, those who were not turned to ashes rose with enlightened wisdom. They learned the value of relationships, of family, and that life was short. Life is long and arduous without loved ones and without purpose, but with others whom you love and love in return, life is too short and even a second cannot be wasted. This realization made millions of people quit their jobs, reevaluate their goals, start their own businesses from home, be content with less, minimized frivolous activities and invest more into their relationships.

Additionally, this crisis has tested our human spirit and created heroes out of ordinary men and women. As intellectuals, politicians, and billionaires hide in their ivory towers, the men and women on the frontlines as first-responders have risked and sacrificed their lives so that others may live. Their endeavors are pure as they are not motivated by money, fame, or popularity as politicians, CEOs, and billionaires, but they are just doing their jobs as best they can. Credit belongs to these men and women who have acted without selfish motives as well as the good Samaritans, the good neighbors who did not close their doors, point fingers to blame, turned on their neighbors, and shunned or rebuked others.

It was as though God gave us a slap in the face to wake up from our hysteria of greed, vanity, and narcissism, falling ever deeply into a dystopian nightmare. Of course, this is just a mild slap and only those who are ready to be awakened will see and hear the message. For many, this pandemic will only accentuate all that was self-serving, delusions of grandeur, hoarding of power and money, ramping up their vain quest for immortality.

This pandemic has been the definer and the accentuator to reveal the core of our individual pursuits as well as the ones in power, of institutions, governments, nations, and globalist powermongers. It is evident that we are living in an era where the liberty and well-being of the individual is no longer held in high regard, but instead for whatever best serves the globalist agenda.



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Our Hwa Rang Do® community throughout the world has also been impacted and have faced enormous challenges since the pandemic. I am proud to see that our students, instructors, and masters have remained resolute, unshaken, and united in solidarity during these critical times. I want to remind you all that we are dedicated to enhancing, bettering, maximizing, and empowering the individual so that we may be of greater service to others, strengthening our bonds of family and friendships. We must not create division, but exercise compassion and understanding while remaining firm in our convictions to our beliefs, to our creed, always honoring God.

Never succumb to the fear of death, as we will all die, and no one can control how we die but only God; worry about how you live and focus on living well. If you have lived right and live in the Truth, then there's nothing to be afraid. There are many fears, and it is impossible to be completely fearless, but there's one fear that will conquer all fears, the fear of God.

During the Winter Holidays, cultivate, enhance, and strengthen your relationships with family and friends by sharing yourself for they are your true treasures on Earth. Then, with the renewed strength of love and purpose, charge ahead in the New Year with the renewed elevated goal of maintaining and nurturing your treasures.

Hwarang forever and God Bless,

Grandmaster Taejoon Lee



2021 Year in Review

Staying focused on the forward march along the path is always the best direction to head toward. Of course we all know that the world has gone topsy turvy, yet it is essential to always remember that despite our individual inability to control the outside world, we do have the capacity to control our responses to it.

Hwa Rang Do® students, instructors, and schools have continued to walk the path of self-betterment throughout 2021. In fact, it is clear to see that the most active and consistent people have done the best in terms of maintaining productivity and health despite the adversity of our times. While so many people are experiencing challenges (especially children) with the copious amount of fear and restrictions placed on natural human activity, Hwa Rang Do® training keeps the body strong, emotions balanced, stress reduced, and camaraderie maintained.

The pursuit of physical, mental, and emotional balance is a never-ending journey. This year started off with many people finally being able to return to in-person training at their Academies & Clubs. There have still been some government restrictions in various regions around the world, however, getting back on the mats has made a tremendous positive difference, and it has also become clearly apparent that transmission of COVID is not occurring in any more significant manner at the dojangs. Common sense cleaning, proper hygiene, and the abstinence from in-person training of symptomatic people have kept people safe and the class experience available to everyone else.

DIGITAL TOURNAMENT

The progress of skills was also put on display for our first ever digital tournament. The opportunity to perform always sharpens the skills, and with non-edited video presentations students of all levels were able to show their merit. The events included Open Hand Forms, Weapon Forms, Self-Defense, & Creative Demonstration divisions. There were some great performances from all locations, however, this year the Genoa Academy won the outstanding spirit award with best performances and most competitors.

Another special component of the digital tournament this year was that all performances were personally evaluated by Grandmaster Taejoon Lee. Not only were the presentations scored for the events, but each person received personal feedback on how to improve directly from Kuksanim. These comments and insights surely helped everyone gain a greater perspective about proper execution of technique as well as deeper purpose of each division event's goals.

ONLINE SEMINARS

Since travel and other large group restrictions were still in place this year, we were still able to gather for a global online event via zoom that included special training with Dojoonim & Kuksanim. The training sessions were thorough and covered in-depth concepts of HRD's unique healing aspects and also the finer details of striking. Everyone was able to improve their skills and also re-connect with our art's leaders and fellow global practitioners.

ITALY'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

This year marked the special milestone of when Chief Instructor Marco Mattiucci first started teaching Hwa Rang Do® in Italy. Through his leadership and the enthusiastic work of all the Italian instructors since, the country has become the heartland of HRD with many clubs all over the peninsula. The dedication of the students is unparalleled and everyone is constantly training hard. Congratulations to everyone involved in making these past 20 years exceptional!

THE HWA RANG DO ONLINE GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

This year also brought forth another compelling training vehicle online. Through the hwarangdo.org website there is now weekly training available to everyone directly with Grandmaster Taejoon Lee.

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Along with the live interactive sessions via zoom each weekend (classes are Tae Soo Do®, Weapon Fighting, and Instructor sessions), there is also a growing library archive of the classes available to all members of the program. This is a tremendous repository of high-quality instruction right from the source of the art. Definitely a must for all serious practitioners to stay on point!

The HRD Online Global University (HOGU) also brings forth an opportunity for people located far away from an in-person Academy or Club the ability to now train. There are many from all over the world that are taking the steps to embrace the training lifestyle, and this is also opening doors for those individuals looking to become professional instructors a way to train directly with Grandmaster Lee.

NEWS

We hope that you have also enjoyed the regular news about Hwa Rang Do® that is now available online and via newsletters. The feed will continue to provide announcements, articles, and highlights from around the world. There is always a lot happening related to training and we will also continue to keep you up-to-date to all that is a buzz.

WHRDA NON-PROFIT UPDATES

We are grateful to everyone who donated this past year and have helped us provide additional outreach to our communities! Our many volunteers have helped make a positive difference in the lives of students and also through community outreach on numerous occasions.


For the next year, we will be establishing a formal scholarship program for students and for future instructors. We see the benefits of training everyday on the mat, and we want to do all that we can to assist in helping more people participate in the empowering methods of the art.

Stay on the path and keep training hard everyone!


Hwarang!

Master Dylan Sirny

VP-WHRDA



**Hwa Rang Do:
A Legacy of Loyalty.
Relentlessly,
Seeking Truth – Empowering Lives – Serving Humanity**



TOMORROW'S LEADING KNIGHTS 2021 Year End Review

By Stazi Godin

2021 continued to be a year of navigating changes, problem solving with creative solutions and witnessing the importance of community. Looking back, the 2020-21 school year was an innovative year! The Tomorrows Leading Knight's (TLK) Afterschool Program at the Minneapolis Hwa Rang Do® Academy expanded to incorporate a distance learning program that was held at our very own dojang. Students were able to participate in their online education while having a small pod of peers working beside them. The kids completed their schoolwork while maintaining friendships, getting outdoors for free time, and continuing their in-person martial arts training. As the 2020-21 school year came to a close, there was a shift in energy; the mask mandate was lifted, summer was approaching, and the Minneapolis public school district began re-imagining school for future years.



Summer, and the transition to summer camps came as fast and furious as ever! We offered 6 different week-long summer camp sessions with fun, and engaging themes such as: Robotics Week, Around the World, Pharaohs of the Dojang, Sustainability Camp, Ninja Warrior Week and Production, Stunts and Choreography Camp. We had many current students attend all 6 sessions and there was a welcoming of new students each week, many of which are now current students today! Though the themes of the summer camp were all widely different, the focus of our camps stayed steady. Our goal was threefold:



1. **Physical activity** through martial arts training and game play
2. **Hands on learning** through experiments, crafts and fieldtrips
3. **Playing together in** small groups, staff led games and water-day activities

Some of the triumphs I witnessed this summer were kids completing a mile run (and for some of them two miles!), facing the Warped Wall at a local Ninja Warrior Course, getting their hands dirty at an urban farm, creating their very own mini-movie, and building their confidence within their Tae So Do® practice and within themselves. As the hot Minnesota summer wrapped up there were certainly tears, tons of memories and children who became confident, young people right before our very eyes.

The welcoming of a new school year, 2021-22 came with a set of new challenges; and again, creative problem solving was required. Due to the shift in school times, our afterschool program was forced to change, *yet again*. With many schools releasing kids before 3:30pm and even more schools releasing kids after 3:30pm our program shifted to accommodate what we now call the "early" and "late" schools. Our afterschool program has kids coming to the dojang anytime between 2:30 and 4:30pm. Which means that we constantly have students either arriving, in training, taking part in a club activity or leaving. I fondly refer to this as organized chaos. Rest assured, everyone here knows what they are doing and when, but it might not always appear that way to an outsider looking in.

To bring assurance to the level of organization maintained here, there are monthly themes with bi-weekly clubs that the children can choose from, which correlate to the theme. For example, in November our theme was Harvest Gratitude with clubs called: Friendsgiving, Sign Language Club, and Harvest Club. The kids also have free time to unwind from their school days, connect and play with friends and of course participate in their Tae So Do® training. December brings a new theme, A Season of Lights, and will draw 2021 to a close.

It is truly amazing to look back and reflect on all the obstacles, triumphs, changes, and the perseverance of not only the team, but the community we serve. With our sights already set on 2022, we are more optimistic than ever on expanding our program to better fulfill our mission: ***Tomorrow's Leading Knights are here to provide an after-school program to educate, train, and inspire; in an effort to empower our world, one child at a time.***