

Levi Sweeney
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Black Belt Paper

I am Levi Allan Sweeney. I am fifteen years old, and I live in Skyway. I am a neat and exact person, which explains in part why my technique is so crisp.

It happens that Lee's Martial Arts- Renton, is just down the street from my dad's print-shop. It was my sister's interest in Tae-Kwon-Do that led to me becoming involved. About five years ago, my sister joined, and my mom decided to throw me in with her. I wasn't too happy about this at first, as I didn't have any interest in practicing martial arts at the time. But I eventually warmed up to it.

In all of the time I have spent at LMA, studying "the way of the foot and fist," nothing is altogether distinguished. My whole experience here has been one big special moment. Every kick- every word of instruction- every board broken- was special. Though I will make one exception. When I received my bodan, monogrammed with my name, and the day I received it- that was *just a little* extra special. I can remember the stiffness of the belt as it was tied around my waist for the first time. That was nothing short thrilling, and I could only think one thought: *Cool*.

My studies at Lee's Martial Arts have yielded many results. When I joined, I was out of shape, undisciplined, and was always starring at the floor. Now, thanks to an excellent exercise regime instituted by Instructor Driver, I have *visible* muscles, and am noticeably stronger. I always answer "yes sir" or "no sir," or "yes ma'am" or "no ma'am" to older adults. This is one of the earliest principles taught during my training, and I have never forgotten it. I became more polite and obedient, both in and outside the dojang. And I am a *little* more self confident (Still working on that), but I'm without a doubt more sure in my abilities thanks to the encouragement and training of my friends at LMA. And I have indeed made many friends here.

In closing, I would like to address my thanks to the persons who have contributed most to my training. Firstly to my sister, who's interest in learning martial arts eventually got me roped into it, and I

am glad now that I was. And to my parents, my dad for agreeing to pay for my lessons, and my mom for shuttling me to the school a minimum of twice a week. I also wish to thank Instructor Geoffrey Driver, my most consistent and hardworking teacher, who been there to guide me every step of the way, and without whom I'd have never made it past Orange Belt. I would also like to thank the Maureen Jordan, Robert Morrison and Micah Graves.