

Jigna Award Winners



Brittany; 8th Grade; Black Belt

Brittany used Mental Karate to help her process personal struggles and overcome disappointment. As part of earning her white belt, she determined to take initiative in building a relationship with her father. “To prove how bad I wanted my father to be around, I continued it through with my yellow belt. I reached out to him by writing a letter, and calling him regularly but after doing so much, and talking to [my teacher], I finally laid off and accepted the facts as they are, and moved on with my green belt which was contribution.” Brittany was able to see past the disappointment she felt when her father ignored her, and looked for someone around her who might need encouragement. “For one of my contributions I decided to help out and check up on my neighbor; who is elderly, lives by herself, and doesn’t have any kids. I chose to take out her garbage for her, help straighten up her house, and anything else I felt like she shouldn’t do by herself. To this day I still help her out and I plan on doing so in the future.”



Nino; 7th Grade; Black Belt

Through his Mental Karate journey, Nino learned to resist bullies who picked on him, founded a chess club at his school, and improved his grades. While earning his white belt, one act of initiative Nino made was working to improve his math grade from a “D” to a “B.” When he got to his yellow belt, Nino decided he wanted to use the challenge of discipline to bump up his now “B” grade in math to an “A.” “First of all, I did a lot of extra credit. I stayed after school so my teacher could explain things to me. I paid a lot of attention to my notes and asked to give examples if I didn’t understand something. I always asked her for help if I couldn’t do something.” Because Nino’s dedication, he experienced the satisfaction of reaching his goal. “The most important action I did during my Mental Karate journey was getting an A in Math. I was so excited because that was my first A in Math my whole life. I always got C’s before. My family was so proud of me.”



Kyle; 10th Grade; Black Belt

When Kyle was introduced to Mental Karate, he was living in a Children’s Home and his mother was in jail. Kyle described how discouraging these circumstances were for him. “The way I interacted with people faded and the relationship with my family broke.” As Kyle earned his belts, he set measurable goals for himself to make honor roll, save the money he earned from his job, and learn better time management skills. Seeing himself succeed in these areas gave Kyle the courage to face larger matters in his life. Kyle took the green belt challenge to contribute to others by assisting the staff with duties around the Home. “At first I thought the Home was the worst place of my life but I later found that the staff members there dedicated their lives to the kids that lived there. I didn’t hesitate to participate in the Green Belt. I simply loved the way that this belt actually gave me the chance to give back to the people that gave to me.” But Kyle didn’t stop there. Mental Karate helped him look at situations from other people’s perspective. “One day I thought to myself, ‘How hard is this on my mom?’” He decided to take steps to strengthen his relationship with his mother. He wrote her in jail about how Mental Karate was helping him set goals and overcome discouragement. Kyle was elated when, “She wrote back a few weeks later explaining how much she loved it and how she could apply it to her situation now.”