

Manna's Martial Arts Operations During the Pandemic

I have participated in martial arts since I was young and truly believe in its benefits of bringing both spiritual and physical health together. When my kids, Colin and Mabel, started elementary school, I started to search for a martial arts studio. I want them to grow up in a loving and caring environment that can bring out the best of them. I also want them to develop leadership and communication skills. After several years in training at Manna's, my kids fell in love with the studio and have never looked back. My family became lifetime members and believers in the studio's mission.

The vision and resiliency of the studio may not be apparent in normal times. The COVID-19 lockdown changed the dynamics of our society. Similarly to businesses around the world, the participation of the studio plummeted. However, the grandmaster, masters, and the core students remain steady in their belief that training is beneficial to both individuals and society. It is important to implant a seed one person at a time and help them grow. That one person will influence the next and the next. The positive spiral is much needed especially in the current COVID-19 environment. Hope is key to the survival of the human race especially during the darkest time when our country is hit by the pandemic and divisive force.

However, surviving in COVID-19 can't be just dream and hope. Actions are needed, and flexibility to adjust is vital. Upon the lock down, Manna's immediately adjusted to virtual training and continues to operate in a safe environment. Homemade face shields were created to make in-person participation safe when the personal protection gears were in short supply at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis. Partitions were developed to ensure the kids in daycare can still be together in a safe learning environment so their parents, many of them front line workers, can continue to work. Virtual/remote operation equipment was installed and tried out. Lessons are being adjusted to fit the necessary hybrid, in-studio/online training. Business and loans are being negotiated to deal with the unimaginable financial hardship. Laws and regulations are carefully examined to ensure the operation remains compliant with the constant and rapid changes of state and local orders. Fundraising measures are in place. In fact, the 2020 virtual gala event brought in more funding than ever is a testament to the importance of the cause.

The resilience of the studio is refreshing since it brings the communities together. It shows the students, both young and old, that our future is strong even with the pandemic. One pertinent phrase from a Manna's martial arts camp T-shirt said it best "Tempered in the present forged for the future."

Join me to support the studio, the students, the communities, and the masters. The master's vision and resiliency have a positive impact on my family. My kids and I were able to apply what we learned in the studio to our daily life. Colin and Mabel are sought after because of their knowledge and more importantly, their character. They are active in martial arts, robotics, and art. They have traveled to Africa and South America to teach and share. They have worked with the homeless, autistic, and underprivileged kids in the local communities to bring them joys and inspiration. They are the world champion competing against top universities in robotics. They are engineering interns with Northrop Grumman, an American global aerospace and defense technology company. They even dabbled in business entrepreneur's competition and became finalists at the global competition. They have presented in professional engineering conferences. They have inspired many around the world. However, they won't be where they are without the training at Manna's. What they learned in the studio will benefit their lifetime.

Come join the studio and experience it yourself. You can join in person or online. Try how simple martial arts training can change your perspective. The training is more than martial arts; it is a positive life journey that will impact not only yourself but the world.

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Tang Soo!
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