

How the First *Karate Kid* Influenced Me

By Paul Schroder

Read about how the original *Karate Kid* movie made one man the martial artist that he is.



Paul Schroder with wife Veronica

The original *Karate Kid* movie starring Ralph Macchio and Pat Morita could not have come at a more pivotal time in my life. I was 11 years old, had been relocated by my mother from New York to California, and had just recently lost my stepfather in a car accident. My mother was left to raise her two boys alone. I felt lost, and without a positive male role model. My confidence level was low, I was being bullied in school, and my sense of self worth was virtually nonexistent.

When my mother took me to see the movie in 1984, I was moved by the main character and the message. The relationship between Mr. Miyagi and Daniel struck me and I knew that I had to get involved in the martial arts. I was truly inspired.

Within a year, my mom had re-married, and I had become a martial arts fanatic, even though I was not taking any classes. I read and re-read Bruce Lee's "Tao of Jeet Kun Do" multiple times, hung a makeshift punching bag on the tree outside, and began copying moves I had seen in magazines and in movies on my own. Often times, I would wake up an hour before I had to get ready for school to do push-ups, hit the bag, and practice what little I was able to pick up. My stepfather at the time told my mother: "If we don't enroll

that boy in some kind of martial arts, he's going to go crazy." So, he took me down to the local Kung Fu San Soo school and signed me up. From that day forward, my life has never been the same. I began to develop a new sense of confidence, and the bullying stopped. My body began to change. I was more fit, and I had a discipline to passionately devote myself to.

Today, 26 years later, my life continues to be transformed by the martial arts. I own and operate a school with over 300

students. I'm surrounded by a fantastic staff, and I am living out a dream that I began to have in high school. Not only have I been mentored by great men and wonderful instructors like Master Dave Hopkins, I have also had the opportunity to see many young men and women come through my doors looking for the kind of confidence that only martial arts can offer. I am honored to show them this way to a better life.

We as leaders in the martial

arts industry have yet another opportunity to reach a whole new generation of kids and adults with the values and life skills that the arts afford us. With the release of the new *Karate Kid* movie, there will be many inspired young people out there who will be looking for the guidance we can offer as instructors and school owners. Let us rise to the occasion, and remember the magic that we first felt when we were young in the martial arts!



A Massive Karate Kid Promotion

Irrespective of whether you are doing some kind of promotion during the release of Karate Kid or not, we thought you might like to know what was different and special about Canadian client Claude Bergernon's Karate Kid promotion. You can keep this in mind for future martial arts movie releases.

Claude Bergernon of Bergeron Karate in Ottawa, Ontario has not only managed to arrange for a promotional event for his school at the local theatre during the release of Karate Kid, but will also have the theatre staff wear his school uniforms during the event. He says he was able to do this by being in touch with the theatre manager and forming a relationship with her during the release of Kung Fu Panda, when he had first

made the offer about the uniform. It didn't work out back then, but when he got in touch with the manager again about Karate Kid, she brought up the subject of the uniforms, and agreed to her staff wearing them.

During the release of Karate Kid, Bergeron Karate will set up a booth with a prize wheel and will also do three demos, one in the morning and two in the afternoon. In addition, VIP passes for the school will be handed out with each ticket to movie watchers. The pass includes an offer for one free month of lessons. At the booth, the Bergeron Karate staff will work hard toward getting contact info from parents, so that they can later call and email them with invitations for Bully Buster or Stranger Danger classes.