



## USTMA: Home of Virginia State Champions

**April 26, 2011—Leesburg, VA** The [United States Taekwondo Martial Arts Academy \(USTMA\)](#) elite [C-Crew team](#) competed in the Virginia State Taekwondo Championship held at Stonewall Jackson High School in Manassas on April 16, 2011. Head Coach [Master John Choi](#) and Assistant Coaches Master James Choi and Sean O'Brien led their athletes to more medals than any other taekwondo school competing in the tournament. Under the guidance of founder and visionary [Grandmaster Eunggil Choi](#) who established USTMA in 1987, the coaching staff consistently led their athletes to the medal stand throughout the 12 hour-long competition day.



*USTMA brought home more gold medals than any other school in Virginia.*

The Virginia State Championship consisted of two event categories: World Taekwondo Federation-approved forms, or poomsae, and contact sparring which is called gyorugi in Korean. Athletes compete in one or two of the events and compete against other athletes within the same age, belt rank and weight. USTMA entered athletes of all ages to compete against the state's best.

The youngest athlete to compete, Seth McCarthy, aged 6 of Lansdowne, set the stage of the day by winning the gold in sparring. Seth, who is a black belt candidate and will test for his USTMA black belt in November 2011 and his Kukkiwon black belt certification in May 2012, wore his opponent down with continuous attacks and deft defensive maneuvers. "We've been focused on improving our offensive game," stated Head Coach Master John Choi, "and Seth executed to perfection."

Chloe Barbosa, aged 7 of Ashburn, is a teammate of Seth's on USTMA's [Super Junior](#) competition team. Without an opponent in her belt category, Chloe opted to compete in the 8-9 year old category and brought home a bronze in sparring. She further helped out the USTMA medal count by winning the gold in forms. Her big brother, Colin, aged 9, who competes with the C-Crew competition team, went on to win gold in both sparring and forms under the coaching of Master James Choi.

Jackson Carawan, aged 7 of Purcellville, and Cort Junker, also 7 and a Leesburg resident, teamed up to take gold-silver in both forms and sparring. Since the final sparring match was between two teammates, tournament rules prohibit the athletes from having a coach and they must spar on their own. Both student athletes showed exceptional sportsmanship and ended their sparring match with mutual back slaps to show their support. "Seeing that level of sportsmanship in such young athletes is what taekwondo is all about," stated Head Coach Master John Choi, "they represented USTMA with pride and showed, by example, how taekwondo teaches respect."

Starting at age 12, state competitors were required to don special socks and chest protectors to utilize the [LaJust](#) electronic scoring system. In the black belt categories, light head contact is allowed and full contact is allowed at ages 16 and above. Christopher Bucsa, aged 12 of Leesburg, battled hard against several competitors to come home with the bronze. Ben Wilson, 13 of Leesburg, fought in the same age bracket but different weight classes and fought valiantly to also bring home a bronze to add to USTMA's count. Nicholas Clarkson, aged 13 of Leesburg, had a phenomenal day in sparring and took his first competitor apart during his first match which turned out to be the hardest match of his climb to win another gold for USTMA. Sean McGarvey, aged 15 of Berryville, rounded out the USTMA boys' team by bringing home gold in sparring.

The men of USTMA did equally well at States. Assistant Coach and top C-Crew athlete, Sean O'Brien, aged 20 of Sterling, faced a tough bracket that included C-Crew teammate, Tony Lo, 19 of Leesburg. The two won their respective matches only to find themselves facing each other in the final round. Showing true USTMA camaraderie, Sean O'Brien opted not to fight the final



round due to an injury from a previous match; the teammates went gold-silver to the approval of their Masters. Chuck Benson, third Dan, fought in the Men's black belt category aged 32 and over and went on to win the gold with ease.

Female athletes also represented USTMA to bring home a string of medals. Super Junior, Chloe Barbosa set the stage for females with her gold and bronze. Katie Lynham, aged 12 from Leesburg, won her sparring match to bring home gold as did Katrina McCarthy, aged 17 of Lansdowne, who faced stiff competition in the girls' 16-17 bracket. Sisters Kellianne Bryson, aged 9 and Hannah-Mae, aged 11 of Berryville, both came home with gold medals for sparring. Kellianne picked up an additional bronze in forms and big sister Hannah-Mae matched her sparring gold with one for forms. Nikki Zuleger of Berryville, aged 16, took bronze in forms and gold in sparring. The golds continued for USTMA Berryville with Lindsay Hunker, aged 13, winning the top spot for sparring in her age bracket and belt class.

At the end of the 12-hour tournament, USTMA walked away decorated with medals. "All of these medals prove one thing," stated Head Coach Master John Choi, "if you put in the work and you keep up the discipline, you achieve your goals. Our teams did great today and they've worked hard to get to this level. Improvement is a continuous process, but for right now, it's time to take a break and celebrate our achievements."

#### **About United States Taekwondo Martial Arts Academy (USTMA)**

[USTMA](#) is the vision of founder Grandmaster Eunggil Choi, 8<sup>th</sup> degree black belt, who established the first Leesburg location in 1987. The Academy focuses on developing a balance between the tae (foot), kwon (fist) and do (strong and right mind) through instruction in traditional Korean World Taekwondo Federation-style taekwondo. Headquartered in Leesburg, the Academy also has locations in Great Falls, Berryville and Winchester. The Academy offers a variety of programs, including black belt programs, competition teams C-Crew and Super Juniors, leadership development training for middle and high school students, and sports conditioning camps.

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