

Student builds confidence at Lincoln Karate Clinic

by Anne Blankenbiller / for Star City Sports

Josiah Christensen admits that it wasn't his idea to start karate classes at Lincoln Karate Clinic when he was four years old — it was his parents doing the pushing.

Today it is a different story. Christensen is 13 years old, and he is the one driven to continue taking classes and achieving higher honors.

A positive outlet

As a young boy, Christensen said, he had some issues dealing with his anger, and his parents felt that taking karate classes could help him in this area.

After starting classes, Christensen and his parents both noticed a difference.

Christensen's father Roy says that karate has been a good physical release for his son. "When he doesn't go, we notice his anxiety and frustration levels go up," says Roy.

Josiah says karate class is a great stress reliever and has helped increase his self-confidence.

The Christensens appreciate the impact Lincoln Karate Clinic founder Scott Walls has had on Josiah. Not only has Walls developed him as a student of karate, but he provides the added dimension of being a trained counselor.

The path to black belt

During his nine years at Lincoln Karate Clinic, Christensen has progressed through the classes and earned his black belt the summer before his sixth grade year.

Earning the black belt was no easy task. In addition to mastering detailed patterns of karate moves (known as "kata"), he was also required to complete a project for the karate school, write a book report, and pass a physical test including sit-ups, push-ups and a timed wall sit.

His next goal is to earn a second-degree black belt.

Leadership, responsibility

Christensen plans to continue taking karate through his high school years. As students progress through the various Lincoln Karate Clinic programs, Sensei Scott Walls gives them more responsibilities and opportunities for leadership in the school.

Christensen currently helps with younger students' classes, and he is responsible for vacuuming the mats after class.

As an older student, he is enjoying learning techniques at a deeper level. He also looks forward to doing more weapons training.

Sensei Walls says that Christensen's skill and devotion to the Lincoln Karate Clinic, as well as his accomplishment as a black belt, set him apart as a leader. "We are proud of Josiah because of his dedication and contributions to karate," says Sensei Walls.

In addition to karate, Christensen participates in band and basketball at Lux Middle School and he is active in Boy Scouts.