

USTF Newsletter

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Sereff Taekwon-Do World Camp 2026 Celebrates International Fellowship and Training - Submitted by *Grand Master Sereff, USTF Test Director and USTF Administrator*

The 2026 Sereff Taekwon-Do World Camp, held at YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch, welcomed 117 instructors and students from across the United States, along with participants from Australia, Colombia, Canada, the Czech Republic, and Scotland. The international gathering provided students with a unique opportunity to train alongside some of the world's finest Taekwon-Do instructors while building friendships that crossed borders. This year's camp was directed by **Grand Master Kirk Steadman** and **Grand Master Ricky Todd**, who kept participants engaged from sunrise to sunset with a full schedule of training, activities, and special events.

Serving as team captains were Mrs. **Megan Ciskowski**, Mr. **Ethron Young**, and Mrs. **Cassie Bosse' Pearches**. Their responsibilities included organizing their teams, selecting the 12 competitors for the annual Tag Team Tournament, overseeing Fire Ring activities, and fostering team spirit throughout the week.

The camp opened with a special presentation by Mr. **Scott Sereff**, who shared memories and stories about his father, **Sr. Grand Master Charles E. Sereff**. **Grand Master Stan Martin** taught the opening class, while **Grand Master Mike Winegar** served as the afternoon's special guest instructor.

Monday afternoon featured the USTF Black Belt promotion test. Several international students successfully tested into the USTF, including Mr. **Keith Broom** of Australia, who was promoted to VI Dan; Mr. **Michael Povey** and Mr. **Peter Moore**, who were promoted to V Dan; and Mrs. **Lauren Broom**, who earned the rank of IV Dan. USTF member Mr. **Johannes Schul** was also promoted to IV Dan.

Calendar Dates 2026

Aug 7-9: UCHTA Summer Weekend TKD Camp: East Canyon State Park, Morgan, UT. SM Wadium.

Aug 22: USTF Referee Seminar: La Center, WA. Instructor. GM Steadman. Contact: mountainviewtkd@gmail.com
Flyer information: [Facebook Invite](#)

Sep 1: Black Belt & Color Belt Testing: Bellevue, NE. GM Todd.

Sep 12: USTF Black Belt & Masters Test: Sereff TKD, CO. GM Sereff.

Sep 19: Black Belt Testing: Kirksville, MO. GM Stephenson

Sep 26: Wyoming USTF TKD Tournament. Casper, WY. Promoter: Master Willcox. a2willcox@yahoo.com
Flyer information: [Register](#)

Oct 3: USTF Step Sparring Seminar: Arvada, CO. Instructor: SM Pettijohn. Contact: Maestastkd@maestastkd.com
Flyer information: [StepSparringFlyer](#)

Oct 3: USTF Referee Seminar: Bellevue, NE. Instructor: GM Todd. Contact: axetkd@gmail.com
Flyer information: [Flyer-Register](#)

Nov 7: USTF Referee Seminar: Broomfield, CO. Contact GM Sereff at rsereff@rmi.net. Start time 1030 am.

Dec 1: Black Belt & Color Belt Testing: Bellevue, NE. GM Todd.



Sereff Taekwon-Do World Camp 2026 Celebrates International Fellowship and Training -

Submitted by Grand Master Sereff, USTF Test Director and USTF Administrator (continued)

In addition, three distinguished instructors were promoted to the rank of Grand Master within the USTF: **Grand Master Vicki Winegar** of Colorado, **Grand Master David Mason** of Washington, and **Grand Master Robin Johnson** of Wyoming.

The evening around the Fire Ring showcased the many talents within the Taekwon-Do family. Entertainment included performances by Mr. Scott Sereff, the Pacific Northwest Singers, Mrs. Arlene Slocum of Alaska, the Bettis family from Maestas Taekwon-Do, Big Dog from Michigan, Axe Taekwon-Do's "Name That Tune," Ms. Emily Garth and Mrs. Megan Ciskowski's "Knock Knock" presentation, Bai Rui, and many others. Team members also enjoyed making s'mores while helping maintain and clean up the Fire Ring area that evening.

Class taught by GM Winegar

Participants also enjoyed specialty classes taught by the camp directors, including breaking techniques with Grand Master Todd and the popular "Pick a Pony" patterns class with Grand Master Steadman.

Wednesday began early with a 4:00 a.m. wake-up call for the annual Sunrise Patterns class led by **Sr. Master Denise Moormeier**. Campers then traveled to Grand Lake for a park workout, sack lunch, and the traditional Polar Bear Plunge. The day's activities concluded back at Snow Mountain Ranch with a team-building event suggested by Grand Master Robin Johnson and his student, Mr. Paul Juergens, where participants learned to rope a steer while riding a "horse"- a stick horse, of course.



Class taught by GM Martin



Ms. Taylor with a turning kick



GM Winegar, GM Winegar, V., GM Mason, GM Steadman, GM Sereff, GM Johnson, GM Todd, GM Martin, GM Griffin, and GM Dubbeld



Class taught by Mrs. Ciskowski



Class taught by Mr. Danskin



Group from Australia with GM Sereff, GM Steadman and GM Todd

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Ms. Taylor, Sunrise Patterns



Although Thursday's weather prevented the traditional waterfall hike, participants enjoyed an outstanding day of instruction led by Sr. Master Pettijon, Sr. Master Jim Smith, Master Bowing, Master Sroykum, Master Rose, and Mr. Sean Toppi. Following dinner, campers gathered for the closing ceremony, where certificates were presented and signed by the Masters.

The Williams family from Utah, Jeontong Taekwon-Do



On Friday morning, participants exchanged hugs, handshakes, and farewells as another memorable World Camp came to a close. The 2026 Year of the Horse camp was a tremendous success, filled with exceptional training, lasting friendships, and unforgettable memories. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this one of the best Sereff Taekwon-Do World Camps yet.



Student posing with Karl (the horse), the favorite camper at World Camp, 2026. Karl signed numerous autographs.



Women in Taekwon-Do, with GM Sereff, GM Steadman and GM Todd



Largest school in attendance, Mr. Young—Valley View Taekwon-Do, Longview, WA. with GM Sereff, GM Steadman and GM Todd

Paramilitary vs. Military - Submitted by Grand Master Todd, USTF Director, Region 2

Many students and instructors in Taekwon-Do have served in the military or have family members associated with the military. This article is not intended to single anyone out, but to clarify an important distinction that may occasionally arise during conversations. I base this article on my experience, serving 21 years active duty in the U.S. Air Force, serving 8 years in security policeman field (now security forces) and the remainder in the Judge Advocate field as a paralegal. My entire career was basically dealing with military law.

The founder of Taekwon-Do, General Choi Hong Hi, was a Major General in the Republic of Korea Army. Likewise the founder of the USTF, Sr. Grand Master Sereff was extremely proud of his service in the United States Marine Corps. The USTF also maintains a U.S. Armed Forces Director, reflecting our ongoing appreciation for the military community and the values it represents. I also had the pleasure serving as the USTF Armed Forces Director for many years. Taekwon-Do has strong military roots.

However, it is important to distinguish between **military** and **paramilitary**. A paramilitary organization is a group that is organized and trained similar to a military force but is not part of a nation's official armed forces. The organizations often have military-style ranks, uniforms, training and command structures. Depending on the country, they may serve legitimate government functions, such as border security, or they may operate independently as militias or other armed groups. Because the term is frequently associated with irregular or unofficial armed organizations, it can carry negative connotations.

Taekwon-Do is **not** a paramilitary organization.

Our art draws its heritage from a military foundation. General Choi developed Taekwon-Do while serving in the Republic of Korea Army, primarily around military bases and training centers. While commanding the 29th Infantry Division, he established the Oh Do Kwan near the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). There, he refined the technical system of Taekwon-Do and trained a cadre of instructors who introduced the art throughout the Korean Armed Forces.

We proudly trace our lineage to this military heritage, but we are neither military nor paramilitary. We are a martial arts organization dedicated to developing character, discipline, courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control, and indomitable spirit. We are all tasked with continuing the legacy provided to us by General Choi and Sr. Grand Master Sereff.

In many respects, the discipline, etiquette, and professionalism expected in Taekwon-Do equal and often exceeds what is found in some military units. Our military heritage is reflected in our traditions and standards, but our mission is to develop better martial artists and better citizens, not soldiers, sailors, airmen, or marines. Understanding this distinction helps preserve the integrity of Taekwon-Do while honoring the history from which it came.

USTF Tournament - September 26, Casper, Wyoming

The 25th Annual Wyoming Invitational will be held on September 26 in Casper, Wyoming. The tournament is being promoted by Master Willcox and is expected to draw competitors from across the region for a full day of Taekwon-Do competition. The Wyoming tournament will be the only remaining tournament opportunity for 2026, which makes it an excellent event for students to compete for the end of the year. Competition events will include individual patterns, sparring and team breaking. Students of all ranks are eligible and encouraged to attend. The registration deadline is **September 4, 2026**. Additional event information, registration details, and tournament requirements can be found in the registration flyer: [Casper2026](#). You can also contact Master Willcox at a2willcox@yahoo.com.





USTF Seminars - Looking for a seminar?
Aug 22: USTF Referee Seminar: La Center, WA. The USTF Referee Seminar will be held Aug 22, at the La Center Middle School Cafeteria, La Center, Washington. The seminar will be taught by **Grand Master Steadman**. This qualification course will provide initial or upgrade training that is required by all black belts in the USTF. You can contact the host, Grand Master Mason at mountainviewtkd@gmail.com for further information. Event on Facebook at: [Facebook Invite](#)

Oct 3: USTF Step Sparring Seminar: Arvada, CO. The USTF Step Sparring Seminar will be held Oct 3, at the Apex Center in Arvada, Colorado. The seminar will be taught by **Sr. Master Pettijohn**. This course will provide training for all ranks. Please refer to the flyer for more details and registration. You can contact the host/seminar instructor at: Maestastkd@maestastkd.com The registration flyer is available at: [StepSparringFlyer](#)

Oct 3: USTF Referee Seminar: Bellevue, NE. The USTF Referee Seminar will be held Oct 3, at the Offutt Youth Center, in Bellevue, Nebraska. The seminar will be taught by **Grand Master Todd**. This qualification course will provide initial or upgrade training that is required by all black belts in the USTF. You can contact the host/seminar instructor at axetkd@gmail.com. The registration flyer is available at: [Flyer-Register](#)

Nov 7: USTF Referee Seminar: Broomfield, CO. The USTF Referee Seminar will be held On Nov 7, at Sereff Taekwon-Do, in Broomfield, CO. This qualification course will provide initial or upgrade training that is required by all black belts in the USTF. You can contact the host at rsereff@rmi.net for further information.

Celebrating the Success of Sereff World Camp - Submitted by Grand Master Sereff, USTF Test Director and USTF Administrator

Following another successful Sereff World Camp, I find myself reflecting with great pride and gratitude on the incredible instructors and students who make up the USTF. One of the greatest rewards came from the many compliments we received from the staff at YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch, the community of Grand Lake, including the Chamber of Commerce, and guests staying at the ranch. Their praise for our campers was worth more than gold.

Throughout the camp, our members demonstrated that the tenets of Taekwon-Do extend far beyond the dojang. Their commitment to courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control, and indomitable spirit was evident in every interaction. The respect shown to our senior members as we entered the dining hall drew the attention and admiration of everyone present, highlighting the exceptional manners and character of our instructors and students.

Equally inspiring was the kindness shown from camper to camper and the genuine sense of community that flourished throughout the week. By supporting one another and striving to make the world a more peaceful place, our students embodied the true meaning of Taekwon-Do as a way of life.

On behalf of all of us, thank you to **General Choi** and **Senior Grand Master Sereff** for laying the foundation and providing the vision that continues to guide and inspire generations of practitioners. The success of this year's Sereff World Camp is a testament not only to outstanding martial arts training but also to the remarkable character of everyone who attended. We look forward to carrying these lessons forward and continuing to represent the values of Taekwon-Do in our communities every day.

