

Brief History of Tai Chi Youth

Tai Chi Youth developed from the "Tai Chi Kids," "Kung Fu Kids," and "Shaolin Kids" programs of Shaolin Chi Mantis. SCM was founded by Richard Del Connor in 1992 when he was contracted by the Governor of Utah to teach Tai Chi in a maximum security prison.

The "Tai Chi Kids," and "Kung Fu Kids," programs were created at the Salt Lake City YWCA in 1994 where Richard taught a variety of Kung Fu classes.

Tai Chi Youth nonprofit was created because Richard, then known as "Master Zhen," could not afford to build a school and wanted to be able to provide more classes more days per week. Now, in 2011, we have started building an online internet Tai Chi school. Kids will be able to access our classes online as downloads, or in "real time" classes from our TCY Internet School.

In 1994, Shaolin Chi Mantis launched the first annual Push Hands tournament in Utah. Since Tai Chi Youth was founded in 1996, these tournaments have been a focal point of fundraising and student appreciation. These tournaments also bring other martial artists and Kung Fu masters to our event who perform and interact with our students.

In 1994, the Shaolin Chi Mantis DEMO TEAM was establishing itself in Utah at tournaments, government events, state fairs, Asian festivals, and Chinese New Year celebrations. This torch was passed to the TCY DEMO TEAM in 1996.

In 2008, Richard Del Connor, now known as "Buddha Zhen," launched his third Kung Fu school system, Buddha Kung Fu. The Buddha Kung Fu Demo Team performed in the Tujunga, LaCrescenta, Sun Valley, and Montrose schools and festivals. Most recently, during the summer of 2011, the Buddha Kung Fu Demo Team included in their opening introduction to the audience at 2-Strike Park, "We are the Buddha Kung Fu and Tai Chi Youth demo team. We are going to perform for you..."

We are looking forward to developing a larger TCY Demo Team by having a larger national pool of students to draw from. With adequate funding, we hope to combine students from different states to create the best demo teams we've ever had.

In 2011, the Los Angeles County Parks & Recreation have committed their facilities to Tai Chi Youth and will provide grant support for those grants that require resources not possessed by TCY such as "Gang Prevention Programs," and school locations. The YMCA programs currently taught by Buddha Zhen are comprised mostly of seniors. The Crescenta Valley Park programs are 1/2 youth and 1/2 adult with only a couple of seniors.

Tai Chi Youth nonprofit education corporation