

Five years ago, for the first time in Seido history, [Kaicho T. Nakamura](#) and [Nidaime A. Nakamura](#) promoted five senior women karateka to the rank of Sei Shihan (6th Dan).



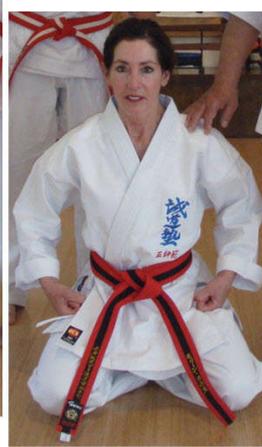
Sei Shihan Sandi



Sei Shihan Michelle



Sei Shihan Judy



Sei Shihan Maureen



Sei Shihan Nancy

In honor of Women's History Month, we are putting a spotlight on those incredible women who helped paved the way for future Seido female karatekas.

Each week in March you can read about one of these females, where they began, and their incredible karate journey thus far.

Meet Sei Shihan Sandi Carter. She runs the Adirondacks Seido branch with Shuseki Shihan Don Carter, and was the first of the female Seido Sei Shihans.

When and why did you join Seido?

I started my training in 1976. My husband (Shuseki Shihan Don Carter) was training 5 days a week at Seido Karate in Troy, NY. I had recently given birth to my second child and spent many evenings with my children while Don trained. I mentioned to him that I would like to try karate and thought it would be a good way for us to see more of each other. What happened is that I so enjoyed karate that I began training 3-4 nights a week and Don ended up staying home with the kids. My intent for joining was primarily to see him and we ended up training on different nights. LOL.

Favorite Seido memory?

My favorite Seido memory was when I tested for Shodan. It started off on a bad note when I was diagnosed with Strep Throat three days before my final day of testing. My one hope was that I wouldn't have to do Sanchin Kata. Guess what kata we did. Sore throat and all I was so excited I didn't even think about it. We did every technique we were taught and I felt so good that I didn't mess up. Of course, there was the final part of kumite. Honbu was just starting to use gear but back then and we (Troy dojo) did not wear safety equipment. When it was time to spar Kaicho asked me about my gear. I told him I did not have any. Shihan Oliver was standing close by and he offered me his gear and said he hoped it would bring me good luck. It did! It was the most amazing day!

Funniest memory?

When I tested for Jun Shihan it was an overnight promotion. At the conclusion of promotion and receiving our new belts, Nidaime and a few others started to prepare a nice breakfast for us. I was in charge of making the coffee. I bought a special Arabica coffee that I heard Kaicho liked. I brought him

his coffee and put the milk and sugar on the table. What I did not know was that the sugar bowl I placed on the table was not sugar, but salt!

Kaicho took a sip of his coffee, made a face and just looked at me with that charming face and said that I failed promotion. I was so embarrassed my face turned beat red, but everyone laughed. Ugh...

How has your training changed since you began and what are you up to now?

When I first joined Seido Karate, it was to see my husband. I just went to be there. The physical exercise and my goal to lose weight after just having a baby. I didn't think about the philosophy of Seido but over time I came to realize how important Seido was to me. Making black belt was a priority. Now being a 6th dan, rank isn't that important. We started our own dojo when I was a 3rd dan. Teaching others the philosophy of Seido is more important. Watching kids train and then see them test for black belt. Watching them grow into beautiful adults with strong values and love for each other has been more satisfying. To that end, we will be celebrating our 30th Anniversary of Adirondack Seido Karate. We are in the planning stages but hope to have a celebration this summer.

Advice for any new female karatekas?

Training for women certainly has changed over the years. In the beginning the women could only train, then go home. Teaching was not allowed. Over time I was able to persuade my instructor to let me teach a kata class on Saturday afternoon (after regular classes were over). The class was so popular with 20+ students in each class. Women today have been given many opportunities. They should enjoy the journey. Train hard.

