

## Tony Partlow

Tony Partlow is the Chief Instructor at the Shogen-Ryu Minamoto Shibu Dojo. His father had studied Matsubayashi-Ryu Karate-Do back in the early 60's and provided a strong self-defense and fighting foundation for his young son. Tony's official karate training began in 1987 at the age of 14. In late 1986, his father was reacquainted with an old friend, Sensei James Hartley. Sensei Hartley, who had begun karate in 1964, was now a Godan. Tony, his father and younger brother all became students of Sensei Hartley and his partner, Sensei Jack McPeck, Godan.

Tony received his Shodan in 1991 from the World Shorin-Ryu Karate-Do Federation (WSKF) headed by Sensei Frank Grant, Nanadan. He received his Nidan in 1993, also from the WSKF and his Sandan as a member of the World Matsubayashi-Ryu Karate-Do Association (WMKA) headed by Takayoshi Nagamine Sensei.

Shortly after receiving his Sandan, Tony became tired of the politics associated with Matsubayashi-Ryu and disassociated himself with all organizations for about seven years. During that time, he continued Karate training under his teacher, Sensei Hartley and studied other arts to explore the relationship they had to Okinawan Karate. In 2002, Tony rejoined the WMKA and was later promoted to Yondan by Sensei Hartley, now a Rokudan.

In 2003, Tony discovered the Okinawan Shogen-Ryu Karate-Do Association and contacted the communications director for Shogen-Ryu in North America. After several conversations with some of the North American Shogen-Ryu members, Tony decided that Shogen-Ryu had the "family" feel that he missed and that Kensei Taba Sensei best represented the karate that Tony had practiced and wanted to continue learning.

In 2004, Tony had the opportunity to go to Canada and train with Taba Sensei and a few others from Okinawa. The experience was incredible and Tony knew he had found the Master that could teach him **TRUE** Okinawan Karate-Do. In March of 2006, he was able to bring Taba Sensei to the U.S. for the Arnold Classic, a very large fitness and martial arts event held every year in Columbus, Ohio. Although some poor planning and organization by the event staff caused a less than desired turnout, those in attendance received some excellent instruction and were very pleased. During Taba Sensei's stay, Tony was tested and promoted to Godan. Meetings were also held in the U.S. and Canada to provide some additional organization to the growing Shogen-Ryu system. The Association was restructured and Tony was appointed the position of U.S. Director.

Tony hosted another, much larger seminar for Taba Sensei in March of 2007 and in December of 2007 he traveled to Okinawa to train with Taba Sensei at the honbu dojo. On June 1, 2008, Tony opened the Minamoto Dojo as a not-for-profit corporation in a small building in Dayton, Ohio, aided by his senior most and longest training student, Brad Earich. In October of 2008, Tony made his second trip to Okinawa taking his wife and oldest daughter, Riley, giving her the opportunity at age 10 to visit and train in the birthplace of Karate-Do.

During September of 2009, Tony made a third trip to Okinawa. He was only able to make a brief visit consisting of only five full days on the island, but the time was well spent. Tony was given the responsibility of teaching visiting blackbelts from Australia for a couple of hours each day followed by several more hours of training led by Taba Sensei. A wealth of knowledge was gained by Tony and at the end of his time training in Okinawa, he was informed he would be tested. Taba Sensei, Hanshi, Judan and Maeda Sensei, Hanshi, Kudan evaluated Tony on a broad range of kata and technique and afterwards Tony was awarded the rank of Rokudan. In addition, Taba Sensei awarded Tony the teaching title of Renshi due to his demonstrated ability teaching at his own dojo in the United States and at the honbu dojo during his time there.

In June of 2012, Tony and his wife made the decision to move their family to the Houston, Texas area. Tony turned his class over to his senior student, Brad Earich, and after settling in in Cypress, Texas, met David Galdamez, owner and chief instructor of the Wadokan Dojo / Tomball Aikido. Sensei Galdamez wanted to add other traditional martial arts to the programs at his dojo, so Tony started teaching Shogen-Ryu Karate-Do at Tomball Aikido.

On July 7, 2012, Tony's teacher, Taba Sensei, passed away in Okinawa. While not able to travel to Okinawa on such short notice, Tony was able to speak with several family members of Taba Sensei, including his wife and daughter, and convey his condolences to them in addition to the telegram that was sent in accordance with tradition. Due to communication issues, Tony had been in contact with many of the former senior members of the Okinawa Shogen-Ryu Karate-Do Association that had formed a new association, but he was not able to get back in touch with the Okinawa Shogen-Ryu Karate-Do Association and its new president, Kiyomasa Maeda, Hanshi, Judan, until 2016 when the Taba family worked to reunite them and strengthen the original organization.

In addition to his Martial Arts training, Tony Partlow is a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) having received his Master of Physical Therapy (MPT) from the University of Cincinnati and completing the transitional doctorate program through the University of Michigan – Flint. He also has a Bachelor of Science degree (BS) in Exercise Science and a Master of Science degree (MS) in Anatomy from Wright State University. He is a licensed Physical Therapist, a Master Certified Manual Therapist (MCMT), and a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) with the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA), the only nationally recognized fitness authority. Tony works as a physical therapist and clinic director in Cypress, Texas. He has worked as an adjunct instructor teaching anatomy and biomechanics at various institutions of higher education in Ohio and will do so in the future in Texas.