

## MARTIAL ARTIST MASTER OTT INSPIRES

Tae Kwon Do proves that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger

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Master Robert Ott's first time coming to this school on September 24th was like a bad field trip. His driver mistakenly drove all the way to Bay Center. "I just had a field trip of whole western Washington. Next time we come I'm going to be the one driving," said Master Ott laughing. This line received a big laugh from the audience because Master Ott has been blind for 20 years.

Master Ott told his story to SBHS students while he demonstrated Tae Kwon Do moves with this two students, who were also masters. To be called a master of Tae Kwon Do, one must achieve 4th degree black belt; Ott has achieved 8th degree, or Chief Master.

At the age of five or six Master Ott was already planning what he wanted to be when he grew up. "When I was little I wanted to be Burt or Ernie, or even maybe the Cookie Monster," he said laughing. "I wanted to be an archeologist. If I never had the opportunity to do martial arts, I would have been collecting dinosaur bones right now."

Master Ott now teaches a Korean martial art called Kidokwan, which translates to "The family with the way of power." He selected this name because it's based in the reality that if it weren't for his family, fellow martial artists, and good friends, he would not be alive today.

From all the training he has done, you think that he should be done by now. It took Master Ott 41 years to be where he is right now, and surprisingly, he's still in the middle of this martial arts training.

At the age of 21, Master Ott was shot after a fight with a drunk man. After, the man came back and pointed a gun at Master Ott and pulled the trigger. The bullet entered the left part of Master Ott's skull, traveled through his left temporal lobe (damaging his optic nerve), and then it blew up his right eye. The bullet left Master Ott unable to taste, smell, or see. The trauma was so intense that he was in the hospital for over two months. Nobody knew if he was going to make it, but Ott knew and believed that he would. "The reasons why I lived was, one, I have martial arts belief; two, I have my family; and three, I had a nurse that didn't give up on me and her name is Fran Orth."

Master Ott believed in himself because his nurse didn't want to give up on him. "That's when I decided not to die," he said with a smile. "If I had known that that was going to be my last day to see, I would have put on a pair of shorts and start running and not stop running, until my body gave up on me. But, it just wasn't my time."

The other types of martial arts the Master Ott has also studied, besides Tae Kwon Do are Tae So Do, Chung Do Kwan, WTF Tae Kwon Do, ITF Tae Kwon Do, Kuk Sool Won, Mun Moo Kwun, Sun Moo Kwun, Hapkido, Sin Moo Hapkido, and Han Min Jok Hapkido.

