



Rose Myers shows the inside of her belt Oct. 31, 2021, at Pilsung Martial Arts in Greenwood. (Photos by Jacob Musselman)

2021 ICON OF THE YEAR: Rose Myers

Local taekwondo instructor makes an impact

By Jacob Musselman

Rose Myers, master instructor at Pilsung ATA Martial Arts, has been selected as the 2021 ICON of the Year. The ICON of the Year is something that we think long and hard about. The ICON should be somebody who exemplifies what it means to be a great person, both in the community and in their professional lives. Myers leads a staff of four instructors ranging from third degree black belts up to sixth degree, where she is. Myers continually makes positive impacts and teaches life lessons to her students.

Not many people are involved in so many lives as she is. At Pilsung ATA Martial Arts, Myers and her staff do more than teach kids how to punch and kick and defend themselves. Don't get it twisted, self defense is a big part of martial arts, but Myers says there's more to it.

"Our life skill curriculum includes bully prevention, not just how to protect yourself against bullying, but how to help other people. The biggest problem that the kids have is not that they don't want to help, but it's that they are painfully aware that helping in the way that is trying to interfere makes them a target, and they don't want to do that," Myers said. "But they don't know any other way to help somebody and rescue them out of a situation. And that's exactly what we teach."

She said martial arts gets a bad reputation because of how it's glorified in movies and on television, but at Pilsung, the self defense aspect is still important, but learning life skills and discipline is something she hopes her students take beyond the classroom.

"We teach the things that are applicable



Rose Myers, owner and head instructor at Pilsung ATA Martial arts, high kicks in her studio Oct. 28, 2021, in Greenwood.

at every age, and every stage that will stay with them for the rest of their lives," she said.

During a class, the student makes two promises to the instructor, one as they enter the mat and one as they leave. The promise they make as they enter the class is reflective of how you will behave in class and that you will "practice in the spirit of taekwondo with courtesy for fellow students, loyalty for my instructors and respect for my juniors and seniors." As they leave class, the promise for how they will

behave outside of class, "I shall live with perseverance in the spirit of taekwondo, having honor with others, integrities in myself and self control of my actions."

Myers said teaching her students about respect, honor and integrity are life skills they can and should take beyond the mat. "Martial arts is a physical skill. So when you stop training and a physical skill, eventually that goes away. But the life skills, the confidence and the encouragement of others is what we do as well."

In her studio, you'll never hear the word

"wrong" because, as she says, it's an immediate brain recognition to shut off.

"As soon as you say I'm doing something wrong, I don't want to listen to you anymore," she explained.

Instead, she tries to teach her students what they are doing incorrectly and how to do it right, without degrading them.

"Friends are like elevators, and if you surround yourself with good people, they'll bring you up if you surround yourself with bad people, they'll pull you down," she finished with.