

## **Japan Ways Rank System and Promotion Policy**

### **Promotion Policy**

First and foremost, students need to keep in mind that promotions are based on individual ability and progress, NOT length of enrollment. An individual student is promoted based on his ability to perform the rank requirements and his personal improvement since the last test. The rank requirements are based on the Shotokan Karate -Do International Federation (SKIF) standards as well as additional requirements developed by Japan Ways. These requirements are available at the dojo and on the website. Rank tests are typically held every third month on a Saturday afternoon, and those eligible to test will receive a written recommendation, which will include the time and date of the test, the rank being tested for and the rank test fee. The rank test fee includes the cost of the belt and the SKIF stamp. In order to receive a recommendation, a student must have attended class regularly and have been reviewed and recommended by a Japan Ways black belt. If you think you may be ready to test, it is perfectly acceptable to ask one of our black belts to review your requirements. Note that black belt ranks are only awarded by Kancho Kanazawa or Hanshi Kwok. Students testing for any dan rank will be "pre-tested" at Japan Ways and, if they pass, will be recommended to Kancho Kanazawa for dan grade testing.

At a student's first rank test at Japan Ways, he will be required to purchase a SKIF Rank Passport, into which, stamps for each rank earned will be placed. This passport is the record of rank history for that student and is recognized by all SKIF schools throughout the world. This passport will hold the entire history of that student's rank. Students must wear a clean white gi complete with a Shotokan Karate-Do International United States Federation (SKIF-USF) patch to the examination.

Students should keep in mind that rank requirements are cumulative. In order to be promoted to the next rank, the student needs to not only be proficient in the techniques and kata listed for that rank but in all the previous rank requirements as well. In addition, an improvement in the maturity of techniques is also expected. A student testing for purple belt would be expected to demonstrate a better front kick (for example) than he did when he tested for orange belt.

### **Ranking System**

Japan Ways follows the SKIF kyu ranking system, which is a traditional Japanese Karate rank system. Ranks below black belt are "kyu" ranks, starting at 10<sup>th</sup> kyu (yellow belt) and ending with 1<sup>st</sup> kyu (3<sup>rd</sup> brown). Ranks should be viewed as stepping stones or markers that indicate the progress a student has made as an individual. Black belt rank tests will be evaluated by Kancho Kanazawa or the SKIF-USF head instructor Sensei Jonathan Kwok, Hanshi.