

CHARLES GRACIE JIU-JITSU ACADEMY REDDING

I have been involved in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu for over 18 years now. I started training and learning in a time when few people in my hometown even knew what Jiu-Jitsu was. Like many others, I had witnessed the efficiency and effectiveness of the art when I first saw the Ultimate Fighting Championship. I immediately began to seek out instructors that would teach me this kind of Jiu-Jitsu. I was fortunate to meet a man who had studied with the Gracie family in Los Angeles and now lived in my area. Immediately, I was hooked and I set off on what would become a lifelong journey dedicated to Jiu-Jitsu.

After 10 years of training, I opened my own school. I had finished my education, served in the Marine Corps, and was ready to accept the challenge of running a business, namely a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu academy. I soon found that there are many challenges in running a successful school. My own Jiu-Jitsu instructor was a magnificent teacher and technician but, being an airline pilot, he had never run an actual formal academy. I didn't have the support I needed from more experienced teachers and I found myself searching for answers in order to run my academy in the most professional way possible. As the school grew, the challenges were many and I was fortunate to find an organization that matched my academy's culture, goals, and passion for genuine Jiu-Jitsu and strategic teaching methods. I saw that the martial art schools that were growing and succeeding were part of bigger organizations that provided technical, business, and moral support to their growing enterprises.

In the martial arts world, you cannot and should not swim alone. An instructor needs mentors and instructors of his own as this is a lifelong journey and a continuing education process.

I joined the Charles Gracie Team in 2011. As a member of this Association, I have received countless hours of business education and have seen my school grow into a profitable endeavor. With Gracie Jiu-Jitsu being sought after by so many people, I have a direct tie to the founding family of my martial art and a resource from which to draw information and support. Carrying the Gracie Jiu-Jitsu name on my business, I am able to attract new students through a brand that is easily recognizable and reputable in my industry. Being a part of a network of Black Belts, I am able to train, learn, and share information as part of a team of professionals that are dedicated to running the best academies possible.

My students appreciate the level of instruction and the structure of the programs that we run as part of the Charles Gracie Network. The academy is much more organized, and our programs are relevant and conducive to providing the best instruction possible. As a second degree Black Belt, I am able to continue my learning and ensure that all of my students are ranked according to the standards of Gracie Jiu-Jitsu, lending credibility and recognition to my efforts. The price it costs to be part of the Association is minimal when compared to the benefit it provides me and my students. Charles Gracie is an engaged leader who provides a lifetime of experience to me as a younger Black Belt and school owner. I would highly recommend the Charles Gracie Team to anyone looking to propel their business to the next level.

Sincerely,



Carlos Zapata
2nd Degree Black Belt