

## 2008 AAU Karate National Championships – a Great Success!



Anyone who attended the Amateur Athletic Union Karate National Championships last month knows what an overwhelming success the event was for the city of Albany and AC-TKO. For five days, from July 2 through July 5, the SEFCU Arena at the University at Albany was alive with energy and world-class karate competition as participants from around the United States went for the gold.

For AC-TKO, the celebration began early. The Albany Recreation Department treated us to a pep rally at the Hoffman Park Community Center, complete with a barbeque, and handed out backpacks and t-shirts to help us show off our team spirit. And spirit was plentiful that evening. After speeches from Mayor Jennings, Commissioner D'Antonio and Shihan Butler, the enthusiasm was almost impossible to contain!

The energy from that evening carried us through to the opening ceremonies the following Wednesday morning. We assembled early and marched in to the SEFCU Arena with well over 100 athletes as we rounded out the parade of 2,100 competitors. All were greeted by Mayor Jennings, President Philip of the University at Albany, Sensei Mirza of TKO and many others. Sensei Faust and his akido team treated the crowd to an exciting demonstration which kept everyone captivated by its power, technique and artistry.

Among the highlights of the opening ceremony were the singing of the national anthem by AIJK's very own Jazmine Pica and the presentation of the top twenty clubs with the most participation. Top honors were given to AIJK for being the largest AAU club in the United States!

Competition began shortly thereafter and continued at a steady pace through Saturday. AC-TKO produced medal winning performances in kata, kumite and kubodo, across all age groups, and in individual and team events. Final official results from the AAU will be posted on the AC-TKO web site as soon as they become available.

We were particularly proud to have two of our athletes, Kristen Dawson and Brandon Abdullah, make it to the finals on Saturday, participating in both kata and kumite events. Congratulations to both of them on a job well done!

And special thanks go out to all the coaches, parents, family members and friends who brought their enthusiasm to the venue each and every day; and to Shihan Butler, Joe Sorce and the organizing committee for their hard work and dedication.

Next year, the AAU Karate National Championships will be farther away from home in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. As our team prepares for them, we can all look back at a very successful 2008!

## **AAU Dues – Due for 2009**



It's August again, which means Amateur Athletic Union dues need to be paid for 2009. AAU dues provide the vital insurance coverage needed for our athletes to participate in AC-TKO classes and AAU sanctioned competition.

This year, the youth price is \$25.00 while the adult price is \$30.00. You can pay either with cash or by check at the front desk. Please do so as soon as possible!

## **Check Out Our Improved Web Site**



The AC-TKO web site has been undergoing a facelift. If you visit [www.actko.org](http://www.actko.org), you will notice some new features which allow the site to be more informational and user-friendly. The goal is to make it an up-to-date, dynamic resource for all AC-TKO members and families.

Improvements will be ongoing. Keep returning to the web site to see what is new!