

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWEST JUNIOR BLACK BELTS! XAVIER LECONTE & AARON PERSAUD

December always marks another Junior Black Belt exam and this one was truly a memorable one! Congratulations to both Xavier Leconte and Aaron Persaud on this extraordinary achievement. We are so proud of both of them and how far they have come since they started here at PMA.

Xavier started at PMA in 2016 at the age of 7 years old. It's been almost 8 years and we have watched him grow into an amazing young man who demonstrates not only great martial arts ability but more importantly the Black Belt characteristics of humility, leadership, hard work and dedication. He began his martial arts journey when he was in kindergarten and took a karate class at his school. He immediately loved it. And when he moved to Queens in the first grade, his mom knew that martial arts would be an important way for him to find a community to help him adjust and she found PMA.

He's always been super athletic and able to pick up techniques quickly but watching him develop a Black Belt mindset has really been a pleasure to watch. Since Xavier started high school, he has been balancing his martial arts, school work, volunteering and extracurricular activities but he made it a priority to get his junior black belt. And his test really demonstrated his will to finish. When he read his essay out loud, it was apparent what an emotional journey it has been. He wrote:

*"After the COVID shutdown, I came back to PMA with an urge to not only try to be the best this time but to build myself to be the best me."* His transformation was apparent in his daily martial arts practice and finally in the phenomenal test he performed.

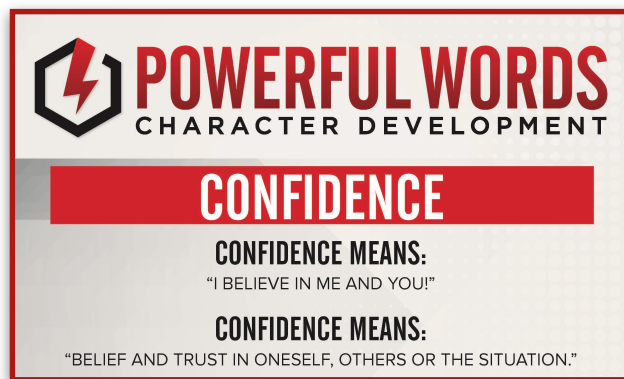
Aaron started at PMA a little over 6 years ago at the age of 11. His journey in martial arts and at PMA began during a time of trouble for him as he was going through a difficult time in middle school. It became the solution to the multitude of problems he was facing. And we have watched him weather so many conflicts and transitions in his life only to come out victorious and stronger. We are grateful to be part of his story.

Despite the COVID shutdown, Aaron logged in every week for class and maintained his commitment to training and when we reopened he returned to join the Black Belt Club. He was always willing to give it all in class and worked hard each and every time. When he reached the Phase 3 level, he realized what martial arts was truly giving him. He writes in his essay, *"I realized that not only was I learning martial arts but I was adopting principles of Discipline, Self-Control, Responsibility, Attentiveness and more things. With these principles, I applied them to my life and it changed even more."* He's definitely done so and we can see the lightness in his being and the self-confidence it was given him.



We are so proud of both of these young men and their achievement of Junior Black Belt. We can't wait to see their bright futures and hear about all the other things they are going to accomplish!

JANUARY'S  
POWERFUL WORD  
OF THE MONTH:  
**CONFIDENCE**



## JANUARY PERFECT ATTENDANCE CHALLENGE HOT CHOCOLATE BOMB AWARD



We have a challenge for the month of January!  
Come to all your scheduled classes for the month and you will receive a **Hot Chocolate Bomb Award** for your perfect attendance.

## INDOOR SNOWBALL FIGHT

*Starting to feel the Winter Blues???*

It's time to work it out at our Indoor Snowball Fight! Come in and participate in PMA's Indoor Snowball Tournament for our students (Ages 7-15).

**Date:** Saturday, Jan 27th  
**Time:** 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
**Fee:** Non-BBC: \$15  
BBC Members: \$10  
Bring a Friend and you go for **FREE!**

Sign up on our Mobile APP!

