

Walt Disney Imagineer Gordon Levin named Boys & Girls Clubs Central Florida Volunteer of the Year

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. - March 23, 2016 - In the Chito-ryu Karate style, there is a saying: "You earn your first five black belt degrees by demonstrating what you've gotten out of karate. You earn your next five by demonstrating what you've given back to karate."

Every Monday and Wednesday evening at the Parramore Teen Extension of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Florida (BGCCF), Walt Disney Imagineer Gordon Levin can be found giving back to karate by teaching what he knows to youth who one day may carry on the Japanese martial art.

"I get a sense of fulfillment every time I see a kid learn something [he or she] said was too hard a few weeks prior," he said.

For the time and diligence he has invested to teach Orlando youth, and instill discipline, focus, self-confidence, work ethic and performance excellence, Levin was nominated by Tasha Robinson-Banks and Marquette Carmichael to be the clubs' 2015 Volunteer of the Year.

Levin, who is an engineer by day, started volunteering with the Boys & Girls Clubs in 2013 after learning it was eligible for Disney EARS To You grants directed by Cast Members. He decided to train and teach karate to the kids, a great win-win.

"We are very proud of Gordon," said Carmichael, Teen director at the BGCCF Parramore Teen Extension location. "Not only is he a sensei, but he's also a mentor. He takes time out of his busy schedule to come provide service to children who would not have the opportunity to have these classes."

Levin, a 4th degree black belt in Chito-ryu, was surprised and humbled upon receiving the award last month.

"When you honor me, you honor my teacher," he said. "... My teacher was dedicated to his teacher his entire life and always shared [that] saying with us."

Disney's support of and relationship with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America can be traced back nearly 70 years to Walt Disney.

"The impact that a VolunTEAR like Gordon Levin has on children from the Boys & Girls Clubs is immeasurable," said Angie Sola, Community Relations manager for Walt Disney World Corporate Citizenship. "Because of his constant presence and dedication, kids develop confidence in themselves and learn to trust others. These are skills that will help them accomplish many things that they may not have thought were possible."

In 2015, Disney VolunTEARS provided assistance to the community by donating more than 200,000 hours of

service, valued at more than \$4.5 million. Whether donating millions of school supplies to local students or serving more than 9,000 meals to the homeless, our Cast Members enthusiastically support a variety of nonprofits and community groups throughout Central Florida.