

## Changing lives through martial arts

*Fifth-degree black belt celebrates 20 years in tae kwon do*

BY JACQUELYN WALSH ('09)

While a JMU freshman, **Andrew Gause ('02)** considered the academic paths he could pursue to reach his long-term career goal. He weighed the pros and cons of a degree in business, kinesiology and finance before settling on a B.B.A. in marketing. To reach his goal of owning his own martial arts studio, "marketing seemed like a natural fit," explains Gause.

Gause, a fifth-degree black belt, has been training in tae kwon do since 1989. Throughout his childhood he practiced at Mountain Kim Martial Arts near his Falls Church home. Now, Gause owns a Mountain Kim satellite studio where he uses his experience in multiple martial arts styles to teach 300 students. Gause is a first-degree black belt in Haidong Gumdo, a martial art using swords. He also has practiced judo, hap-

kido, aikido, kung fu, kickboxing and kobudo. **Aaron Gause ('05)**, Andrew's brother, became a tae kwon do instructor at Mountain Kim after spending a year on the West Coast as a freelance musician. "Much like the industry itself, which is constantly evolving, Andrew's curriculum breathes a fresh air yet maintains an integrity that is often lost among other schools," he says.

Although Andrew Gause's original intention was to start a martial arts school from scratch, his former instructor and mentor owned two studios, the smaller of which was opened in 2001. When Gause took over the satellite school in 2004 it had 115 stu-

dents. Now, five years later, it has nearly doubled in size – quite a feat for Gause, considering the close proximity of other martial arts schools that train more than 500 students. Gause knew that, demographically, there were enough people in the northern Virginia area

to accommodate his school.

As a JMU student, Gause served as treasurer of Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity and spent summers working as a martial arts instructor at Mountain Kim. Gause says that leadership roles in Pi Kappa Alpha helped him develop social skills that allow him to "develop rapport easily with everyone from students and their families, to other business owners and vendors."

Gause's martial arts school has received multiple awards for excellence and has been ranked in the top 5 percent in the nation. "My experiences at JMU

allowed me to grow as a person in many ways," he says. "I expanded my view of the world, developed a greater appreciation of education, and my College of Business professors taught me how to think like a business person."

Gause's Mountain Kim Martial Arts studio teaches martial arts classes for all ages. The afterschool program engages children in tae kwon do and then provides structured "downtime" for homework and quiet activities. These programs help children "gain the benefits of discipline, respect and confidence," says Gause. "My martial arts school allows me to help change people's lives, and I feel like I am passing on what was given to me." ❧



With 20 years experience in tae kwon do, Andrew Gause ('02) teaches martial arts at Mountain Kim Martial Arts.

**01** Julie Dennis Babcock works as a retirement plan consultant at Lockton Investment Advisors in Washington, D.C. \* **Justin Kittredge** of Boston, Mass., set a new world record for "the most unassisted free throws made in two minutes" after hitting 64 free throws in 120 seconds at Reebok International Headquarters in Canton on May 14. Kittredge founded the nonprofit Shooting Touch organization, where volunteers mentor children in private basketball clinics. \* **Noel Molinelli** of Bronx, N.Y., portrayed 15 characters in the musical comedy *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change!* during Westside Theatre Upstairs' 2009 season. The musical is the longest-running off-Broadway hit according to Broadway.com. In July, Molinelli told BroadwayTheaterBlog.com that she "expected to grow up and be a scientist like my parents," but after landing a role in *Guys and Dolls* in her high-school drama program she was "addicted" to theater. She also told the blog site, "I went to a great state school, James Madison University. I majored in musical theater, but had a rich, well-rounded academic experience including a Semester Abroad in [Florence,] Italy." \* **Nicholas Schmidle** published *To Live or to Perish Forever: Two Tumultuous Years in Pakistan*, which received a favorable review from *The Economist*. As a fellow at the Institute of Current World Affairs, Schmidle lived in and reported on Pakistan for two years. He is now a fellow at the New America Foundation. Schmidle is married to **Rikki Bohan Schmidle ('02)**.

**02** Newlywed **Jada Beazer** says that she met her husband, Teon Saunders, a 2007 West Virginia University graduate, at JMU. "We met at JMU when I was his resident adviser in Bell Hall. He transferred to West Virginia University in 2003." \* **Catherine Kitts** earned a Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Texas at Austin in 2007. Her first post-doctoral position was at National