

# The Tennessee Tribune

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## Hall of Fame Inducts First African American Female

By Vivian Shipe

They gathered in Gatlinburg TN this past July.

From China, India, even Canada; Grandmasters from around the world for the 2017 International Issin-Ryu competition and banquet. During the banquet, the international organization officially inducted Knoxville Linda Wilson into its Hall of Fame. Sensei Wilson is the first African American female in the organization's 38 year history to receive this honor.

Master Wilson has been involved in the training of youths in Knoxville in the art of Issinryu for over 40 years. A 7th degree black belt, Wilson is dedicated to keeping young people off the streets and going in a positive direction. Wilson has seen many successes, one of which is her student CJ Burnett, now a junior black belt and youth leader, at Karate Five in Knoxville. CJ has won over 200 competitions over the years.

Sensei Linda Wilson says she sees this training as a way of life, something you do until you die. She trains her students to be of strong moral character and integrity, believing how you treat people is most important. The goal is to teach the students that this training is about respect: for self, body, discipline, and your fellow man. Her students are also taught to focus and be accountable and accept responsibility for their actions.

Regarding the Hall of Fame honor, Sensei Linda Wilson feels it is most important that people understand the honor reflects what all females can accomplish regardless of race or physical condition. Her mantra is stay humble and let others speak of your good works.



Sensei Linda Wilson 7th degree black belt



CJ Barnett junior black belt, she has won over 200 competitions



Sensei Linda Wilson (2nd from end, back row right), students and instructors of the Karate Five dojo

Photos by Vivian Shipe