



# NWMAF January 2021

## Newsletter

**News for Our Members, Friends, and Supporters**

*“Empowering women and girls to achieve personal and collective strength, safety, and well being through martial arts, healing arts, and self-defense education”*

## From the Chair

*By Lisette Delgado-Fitzgerald, NWMAF Board Chair*

This is a hard letter to write, so bear with me.

Hi everyone!

Please, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Liz Fitzgerald, and, as you might have guessed from the positioning of this letter within the newsletter, I have been honored with the responsibility of being your new Board Chair. This is a daunting task.

Firstly, how do you follow someone like Cathy Chapaty? The tireless work that she has done over her years in this position have pushed the organization forward by leaps and bounds. Her kindness and accessibility have served as an ideal model to follow and support to launch forward from. Her honesty and candid nature promoted a transparency and acceptance that few people could have created. And her welcoming smile and sense of humor brought lightness to every person she touched.

As I know she has no equal, I can only promise to work to honor her legacy and that of every person that came before her, as Board Chairs, as Board Members, and as the heart of NWMAF: you, its members.

Secondly, how do we continue our growth and progress as we look to cement the NWMAF as a leader in the Martial Arts, Empowerment Self Defense, and Healing Arts worlds and beyond? Of course, being new to the position I am full of ideas – some will be great, some will be terrible, some may even be controversial, but they will all have one thing in common: the best interest of the NWMAF membership now and moving into the new decade.

I am a firm believer that everyone in our fields, at the very least, needs to know who we are; that we need to open up to strategic partnerships with schools and providers around the country, making membership to the NWMAF available and accessible as an integral part of each student's training and path to personal growth. I believe that every one of our members has a world of knowledge and wisdom to share and need only a platform from which to be heard. I

know that this organization can set a new, healthy standard for and be a role model to all of the other Federations out there that have so often overlooked us as individuals.

We have all of the tools. Now, and thanks to all of the amazing members that came before us, we get to build a bigger stage and show our stuff.

However, none of this happens without You! I want to hear your thoughts, your experiences, highs and lows. I want to know how you can help make it all happen. I want to know that, just as your hard working Board has rolled up their sleeves and put in the work, that you are ready to do some of the heavy lifting and help all of us rise. We are going to do this together.

So, get ready!

In health,

Liz

## Events Update

*By Natalie DeMaioribus, NWMAF Events Coordinator*

We are planning to decide in February what format in which to offer this summer's conference. It will either be 100% virtual or a hybrid virtual/in-person event. What do you think? What are your concerns? [Fill out our poll by February 6](#) to let us know.

We have started evaluating class proposals, but the application is still open for the time being. We are still counting on you to help recruit a diverse slate of stellar trainers! Please send them to [nwmaf.org/applytoteach](http://nwmaf.org/applytoteach).

In the meantime, I am working on making **volunteer roles for the conference** more organized and specific... even if our needs this year are a little different! I'll share specific roles we're looking for once we decide what we're doing this July, but you can always [check out the volunteer roles posted on our website](#).

## Member Spotlight: Brigit McCallum



*This month, we're shining a spotlight on member Brigit McCallum, part of the team at Prevention. Action. Change. in Portland, Maine. The following is a personal essay about her journey from peace activist to Empowerment Self-Defense instructor.*

**NWMAF Wonder Women: Origin Stories**

I have been a teacher, from pre-k to PhD, and a coach of a variety of sports during my lifetime. I have had some exposure to self-defense techniques over the years, from short-session aikido and tai chi classes, to a women's self-defense program in Central Square Cambridge, all during grad school years.

This expanded into what I would now call Bystander Training along with the verbal and self-defense physical skills we received in the late 80's Boston-Area Peace Movement as many of us were prepared to engage in civil disobedience during non-violent protests against US interventions in Central America. We trained for confrontations with opposition protesters as well as horse-mounted police in the streets and the recruiting centers of Boston and Cambridge. Thirteen of us later put this all into practice in a CD Action connected to the Atlantic Life Community at the US Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, in September 1987, spending three days in jail there and appearing in hearings with both Honduran military and US Embassy officials before being deported. That was intense.

It was thirty years later, in the fall of 2018, as the Brett Kavanaugh Supreme Court hearings were blasting us from every direction, that I had an entirely different kind of intense experience, and this time it came from within. A past I had buried deep exploded into awareness with my realization of the similarity of the accusations Christine Blasey Ford leveled at Kavanaugh and my own experience as a young adult.

I knew I needed help to deal with the immensity of the newly unearthed and unprocessed trauma I found myself swimming in. My first thought was to find a self-defense class to help me find some power in my life to balance the unbearable sense of vulnerability and powerlessness I felt. I searched for classes in southern Maine where I live and all I could find were various schools of martial arts and the RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) Program offered at the Portland Police Department. I felt much too fragile to show up at a dojo where I knew no one and nothing about the different traditions, and as the daughter of a sometimes-violent police officer, the police station and possible male instructors did not inspire confidence in me.

The experience I was seeking to heal from was rape, by someone I knew, and who I had believed cared about me. This had occurred well before the concept of date rape was known, and I had sealed it all away deep inside me for more than 50 years. So I decided to call the Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine (SARSSM) for assistance and they immediately put me in touch with Clara Porter and Prevention. Action. Change.

Clara and her co-facilitator had just begun a multi-session Healing through Empowerment Class, and thankfully allowed me to join the group that had already completed their first session. It was quickly apparent to me that I was somewhere in the neighborhood of 25 years older than everyone else there, but I lost any sense of awkwardness about that by the end of the first session; this because each of us, no matter our age, was bravely working to confront injustices and violence we had

experienced. Week by week, I began to remember who I was, and recover strengths that both the trauma I had buried and my own internalized ageism had replaced with a sense of powerlessness and lack of purpose.

Learning more about the work that PAC did, I then jumped into Empowerment Self-Defense and Bystander Training classes, and quickly realized, “I want to do this work!” I’ve been training and teaching with Clara for over two years now and she made possible the incredible opportunity for me to attend the 2019 NWMAF Special Training where I met so many inspiring people who I now consider part of my wider community, (and where I got *one honest strike* on Champ Heather Turnbull in my first-ever Escrima sparring match!)

While I know everyone can benefit from the carefully crafted tools of awareness, verbal skills, physical skills and healing that Empowerment Self-Defense offers, I have a particular interest in working with other older adults who desire to live the fullest lives we can. As we continue to grow as we age, we can all use the skills of ESD to stand up against whatever additional burden ageism, our own internalized and that thrown at us by others, adds to the other ways we may have had to stand up against marginalization in the past. As I stand on the cusp of 80, this and other ESD work is in my future!

## Healing Arts Coordinator: Janis Freeman

*We have wonderful news: our Healing Arts Coordinator board position has finally been filled! Member Janis Freeman of Amsterdam, New York, stepped up to fill the vacancy, and the board unanimously voted to appoint her to the position during our December meeting. Be sure to find her at the conference in July and introduce yourself!*



**Photo credit:** © Sara Baldwin at Saratography

Janis is fairly new to NWMAF but excited to be a part of this enthusiastic and talented group of women.

Janis practices Judo (shodan) and Jiu Jitsu (blue belt). She started Judo as a child and practiced through about age 20, achieving the rank of Ikkyu.

After many years away, she eventually found her way back to the mats and reconnected with her childhood sensei, assisting him in teaching an after school Judo program for children in grades 1-8.

Janis was promoted to shodan in December 2018. She started training Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in 2017 and currently holds the rank of blue belt.

Off the mat, Janis works as a Family Nurse Practitioner in a primary care practice. She was recently board certified in Lifestyle Medicine (through the American College of Lifestyle Medicine) and has begun designing programs to help people improve the quality of their lives and prevent (and in some cases reverse chronic illness) with lifestyle change.

She meditates daily, has practiced yoga for over 20 years, and took advantage of the "down time" and schedule changes of 2020 to finally complete a 200 hour yoga teacher training. Most of her yoga classes are by donation with proceeds benefiting local charities and nonprofits.

Her goal as healing arts coordinator is to support wellness (emotional and physical) and longevity in the women's martial arts community. Awareness of the benefits of healing arts can help support martial arts as a lifelong practice.

## School Spotlight: Indiana Brazilian JiuJitsu Academy & Endurance Brazilian JiuJitsu

*Submitted by Member AJ Clingerman*



### **1. What is the name of your school, and where is it located?**

We have two academies: Indiana Brazilian JiuJitsu Academy in Greenwood, Indiana, and Endurance Brazilian JiuJitsu in Zionsville, Indiana.

### **2. What style(s) of martial art is/are taught at your school?**

Brazilian JiuJitsu, Kickboxing, and Wrestling

### **3. Tell us something about your school's martial arts(s).**

We always offer a free 30-day trial at our academies, which really gives people the opportunity to feel like part of the community. BJJ can really be for everyone; we have all different people in our school.

### **4. Does your school teach other programs besides martial arts?**

We have some conditioning classes--things that aren't martial arts, but help with the martial arts.

### **5. Who is/are the teacher(s) at your school?**

At Endurance, James Clingerman instructs nighttime classes. Myself (AJ Clingerman) and an instructor named Yoshi teach daytime classes and I teach at our Greenwood location.

### **6. When did your school begin? Who are its founders?**

In March 2000 the school began under Eric Sullivan. In August 2000, James and I took over.

### **7. How has your school changed over the years?**

One big change was the number of women. We have definitely normalized women in jiu-jitsu. We started with a very small number of women on the mats and now have the biggest women's team in the state. We have 3 women's-only classes outside of our coed classes.

**8. Does your school have a mission statement? Tell us about your school's goals or vision.**

We don't actually have a written mission statement. Our biggest goals are to bring jiu-jitsu to as many people as possible and to help build a community. Community is really important. And to just help people better their lives in so many ways. Jiu-jitsu can make your life better, from the social aspect, to the self-defense aspect, and obviously the physical and mental health aspects. We just want to touch as many people as possible to help better their lives.

**9. How many students attend your school, and who are they?**

About 200 at IBJJA and about 100 at Endurance.

**10. Share a unique or interesting fact about your school.**

IBJJA was the first jiu-jitsu mixed martial arts academy in Central Indiana. Since it was the only one around when it started, people would drive 2.5 hours one way to get to us because there was nowhere else to train.

**12. What is an interesting tradition you have at your school?**

Hatsu Geiko: Good luck training for the new year. We've done it every year on Jan 1st--14 years so far.

**13. Does your school have a website or social media presence?**

IBJJA

Website: [www.IBJJA.com](http://www.IBJJA.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IndianaBrazilianJiuJitsuAcademy>

Instagram: @IBJJA

Endurance Brazilian Jiu-jitsu

Website: [www.endurancebjj.com](http://www.endurancebjj.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EnduranceTrainingCenterBrazilianJiuJitsu>

Instagram: [@endurance\\_bjj](https://www.instagram.com/endurance_bjj)

**Your school could be next!**

Martial arts schools of all sizes are invited to be interviewed for our School Spotlight. To have your school spotlighted in a future issue, simply send answers to the following questions to [secretary@nwmf.org](mailto:secretary@nwmf.org). You needn't be the school owner – though we recommend presenting your answers to school leadership for approval.

# Membership Notes

*By Lauren Bailey, NWMAF Membership*

Hi, friends! I wanted to briefly update you on my ongoing membership-related initiatives and some fun and rewarding opportunities for you to get involved.

## Membership Directory

As you know, all active memberships are up for renewal in January. To all who've already renewed, thank you so much! If you haven't yet renewed, please do so as soon as you can. On March 1, I'll begin pulling active member records to compile the 2021 Member Directory, which will be available exclusively to members.

If you want to be included in the directory, please make sure your profile information is up to date and your membership is active. The directory will include your **name, city, state, martial arts/healing art/self-defense, and your school**. I won't include any contact information, to protect your privacy, but if you need to reach someone in the directory, you can contact me and I will facilitate the connection.

If you do **NOT** want to be included in the directory at all, please [click here](#) (or email me at [members@nwmaf.org](mailto:members@nwmaf.org) with the subject line **Directory Opt-Out**).

## NWMAF History Project

Even though you can take the girl (me) out of the publishing industry, you can't take the publishing industry out of the girl. I've launched a project of compiling a written history of the NWMAF, with the end goal of creating a book for our membership and to submit to our formal archives at Loyola University. It's a big task and I could use your help!

1. **Were you part of the NWMAF when it began?** If so, I'd love to see your pictures and hear your stories about how the Federation came to be and the early days of Special Training. (To those of you whom I've already contacted—thank you so much. I'll be setting up an interview schedule for this year very soon.)
2. **Do you have a journalism background or enjoy writing?** I'd love to build a committee that will interview our founding members and compile the stories and photos.

If you want to be a part of this project, please [click here](#) (or email me at [members@nwmaf.org](mailto:members@nwmaf.org) with the subject line **History Project**).

## Monthly Online Training

Inspired by our successful 2020 virtual conference and to bring more value to your membership, we'll be offering members-only monthly online trainings, beginning in February. Each month, we'll cover a different aspect of Martial Arts, Healing Arts, or Self-Defense. Each session will be 30-60 minutes long, and trainers will receive \$50 for their session. I'm compiling a training

calendar now, so if you'd like to teach, please [click here](#) (or reach out to me at [members@nwmaf.org](mailto:members@nwmaf.org) with the subject line **Monthly Training Instructor**).

### Seeking Web Development Ninja

Your Board, with a tremendous amount of help from **member Amy Eckert**, has undertaken a database migration and complete website redesign to bring you a site that's more modern and user friendly. Amy's done all the heavy lifting so far, but she needs a hand with **backend WordPress PHP custom development**. Do you have this skill or know someone who does? If so, please [click here](#) (or email me at [members@nwmaf.org](mailto:members@nwmaf.org) with the subject line **Web Design Project**).

Thank you all so much for your continued support. We honor your time and financial investment and are working hard to bring you the best NWMAF we can!

With love, gratitude, and respect,

Lauren

## Upcoming Training Opportunity

On **Sunday, February 21**, our NWMAF History Project Committee (led by Board member Lauren Bailey) is teaming up with Empowerment Self-Defense Global (ESDG) as part of the *Movement Matters ESD Herstory Campaign* (led by **NWMAF member Rachel Collins**), which aims to support research, investigation, preservation, and awareness of the social movement for access to empowerment self-defense training.

February's installment of this webinar series focuses on the NWMAF—the birthplace of what is now known as Empowerment Self-Defense—and is titled “The Herstory of the National Women's Martial Arts Federation.”

Focus: One organization does not a movement make, but some organizations make unprecedented headway. It's not possible to discuss the history of the ESD access movement without talking about the National Women's Martial Arts Federation. Like all intersections, the overlap between the history of feminist self-defense and women's martial arts has sometimes been fraught and never been simple. Those same commonalities and contradictions exemplify the diversity and power of the women who pioneer ESD, then and now.

NWMAF Membership Coordinator Lauren Bailey will serve as moderator for this panel discussion and will be joined by **founding NWMAF members Jaye Spiro, Sunny Graff, and Nadia Telsey**. Please join us on this free Zoom webinar, which will take place from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. eastern time on Sunday, February 21. [Register here](#) to reserve your spot.

## Self Defense

*By Martha Thompson, Board Member for Self Defense*

Planning is in process for the 2021 Self-Defense Instructors Conference (SDIC). What are ways we can expand our reach? Increase the racial diversity of presenters? Make empowerment self-defense part of community responses to violence? Center people who are currently underserved? Help aspiring self-defense instructors? Provide professional development for experienced instructors? To share your questions and ideas or to volunteer, contact Martha, [selfdefense@nwmaf.org](mailto:selfdefense@nwmaf.org).

*We invite you to contribute your own self-defense stories, either to Martha at [selfdefense@nwmaf.org](mailto:selfdefense@nwmaf.org) or directly to the newsletter at [secretary@nwmaf.org](mailto:secretary@nwmaf.org).*

## Youth Members

*By Jes Macalear, NWMAF Youth Program Director*

### **The Youth Certification Program**

Hello parents, guardians, instructors, and most importantly, youth! My name is Jes (she/her) and I am the Youth Coordinator for the NWMAF. I am excited to announce that 2021 is bringing a lot of new and exciting changes to NWMAF's Youth Program!

This month, I would like to highlight the certification program we are organizing for you. This certification program will be broken down into levels depending on age and/or experience, and will focus on teaching, rooted in the philosophies of our Empowerment Self-Defence Program.

Students will learn and build on skills in positive teaching, such as assisting in and leading a class, and classroom management, with the highest level of certification being the Instructor Certificate. This brings the opportunities for youth to teach at the annual conference! We are hoping to be able to provide youth mentorship, networking opportunities, and an environment to rise up and thrive in.

Parents and Guardians! We are bringing more opportunities to you as well! We are seeking opportunities to provide more classes and resources to further help you in empowering your child's path in the martial arts, self-defence, and/ or healing arts.

If you would like to see a class or activity run at the annual conference, or online throughout the year, are interested in teaching a class or becoming certified, or have any other inquiries, please contact me at [youth@nwmaf.org](mailto:youth@nwmaf.org).

*Do you have questions, comments, or suggestions regarding improving the NWMAF's youth program? Whether you're a student, parent/guardian, or instructor, the NWMAF would love to hear from you. If you're under the age of 18 years old, please write an email (with your parent/guardian or instructor) and send it from their email address to [youth@nwmaf.org](mailto:youth@nwmaf.org).*

## Board Member Elections: Treasurer

### **You can make a difference!**

The NWMAF is looking for a new treasurer for the term starting August 1, 2021. No accounting background is required - we have an accountant for that. The treasurer is basically the business manager for the organization. You also are part of making strategic decisions for NWMAF.

Want more information or to nominate yourself or another? Email Cheryl at [treasurer@nwmaf.org](mailto:treasurer@nwmaf.org) or contact any other board member. Join the team that is transforming the NWMAF to remain a leader in martial arts and empowerment self-defense.

## Upcoming Board Meeting

The next NWMAF Board meeting is **February 28**. Board meetings typically take place on Sundays at 2 pm Central time, via an online meeting site. If you are a member interested in attending, contact Liz, [chair@nwmaf.org](mailto:chair@nwmaf.org), and she will provide you with log-in instructions.

## Call for Submissions

### **Have News and Information to Share with the NWMAF Community?**

We welcome your submissions of news, opinion pieces, fiction, or other writing related to our practices of martial arts, healing arts, and self-defense. We also accept art, photos, and comics! Our editorial board reserves the right to edit for space or content considerations. The deadline for the next issue is **February 19**, and will be approximately every four to six weeks thereafter. Send contributions to [secretary@nwmaf.org](mailto:secretary@nwmaf.org).