

# THE HISTORY OF TAEKWONDO

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Early Koreans developed unique martial arts forms for unarmed self defense to complement their skills with weapons. The first recorded evidence of what was to become modern Taekwondo is found about two thousand years ago in Korean history. A mural painting from the Koguryu kingdom (37 B.C. to 66 A.D.) was found in a tomb believed to have been built sometime during the period 3 to 427 A.D. This mural depicts figures practicing martial arts techniques. Historical records from this Koguryu period also mention the practice of martial arts techniques and tournaments. The early forms had different names, such as Kwonbak, Bakhi, Dangsoo, Taesoo and Kongsoo.

From about 600 A.D. to about 1400, the mainstream dominant form was Soobak, which further evolved into Taekyon beginning in the late 1300s. Taekyon was the dominant Korean martial arts form until the Japanese invasion and occupation of Korea in 1909. From 1909 to 1945, the Japanese suppressed Korean culture and martial arts, and introduced Japanese culture and martial arts.

The modern period of Taekwondo began with the defeat of the Japanese and the liberation of Korea in 1945. Korean martial arts masters wanted to eliminate Japanese influences. They began discussions on how to return to the traditional Taekyon based Korean martial arts and on how to unite the various martial arts schools (or Kwans) and styles into a single style and national sport. After several years of discussions, the name *Taekwondo* was chosen in April 1955 by the board of masters of the various Kwans, and the kwans started to unify through the late 1950s.

The spread of Taekwondo as a martial art and competitive sport continues to this date. Today, Taekwondo is by far the most widely practiced martial art in the world. The principle events in the rapid evolution of Taekwondo as a popular worldwide sport consist of:

- 1965 The Korea Taekwondo Association was formed.
- 1973 World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) was created.
- 1975 General Association of International Sports Federations was recognized the WTF.
- 1976 Taekwondo was accepted as a Consul International du Sport Militaire sport (world level military sports organization).
- 1980 International Olympic Committee was recognized the WTF.
- 1981 Taekwondo was accepted as a World Games sport
- 1983 Taekwondo was accepted as a Pan American Games and All Africa Games sport
- 1985 Taekwondo was adopted as a demonstration sport for the 1988 Olympic Games.
- 1986 Taekwondo was accepted as a Federation International du Sport Universitaire sport (world university level sport organization).
- 1992 Taekwondo was an Olympic demonstration sport in Barcelona, Spain.
- 1994 Taekwondo was selected as a full Olympic sport for the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia.
- 1996 Taekwondo was an Olympic demonstration sport in Atlanta.

# **BRIEF HISTORY OF THAN-PHONG INTERNATIONAL MARTIAL ARTS FEDERATION**

Than-Phong Martial Arts was founded on December 20, 1966, by Viet Nam Air Force General Luu Kim Cuong at Tan-Son-Nhat Air Force Base in Saigon, South Viet Nam. General Luu Kim Cuong, Commander of the 33rd Than-Phong Special Flight Squadron, named the school “Than-Phong” Martial Arts Academy after his special flight squadron. The school was opened to all Viet Nam Air Force Officers until 1975 when the change of regime took place in South Viet Nam.

After 1975, the first Than-Phong Martial Arts reemerged in 1976 in the United States and was set up by Master Lac Van Tran and Master Thuan Nguyen Truong in San Antonio, Texas. In 1977, Master Truong moved to Hayward, California, and, on November 4, established the first Than Phong Taekwondo Club in Hayward. In the same year, Master Truong founded the first Than-Phong Martial Arts Association and served as President. In 1981, he transferred to Houston, Texas, and opened the first Than-Phong Martial Arts school in Houston. In 1983, Master Truong relocated to San Jose, California, and established Than-Phong Martial Arts schools in San Jose (1983-1989), Santa Clara (1984-1986), and Oakland (1988-1991). In 1989, when Grand Master Victor Duc Phan came to the United States, Master Truong offered his school including all of his students to Grand Master Phan and handed his President role of Than-Phong Martial Arts Association to Grand Master Phan and became Vice-President. Grand Master Phan expanded the system internationally and renamed it to Than-Phong Intercontinental Martial Arts Federation. In 1991, Master Thuan Truong moved to Houston and Kingwood (1993), Texas. In 2000, Grand Master Phan renamed the system once again to Than-Phong The Planet Martial Arts Federation. In 2009, Grand Master Phan passed away. Master Truong was then elected President and oversees the system since. To reflect the true international status of the Than-Phong system, Master Truong changed the name to Than-Phong International Martial Arts Federation.

## **Than-Phong Martial Arts in South Vietnam – Key Members, 1966 to 1975**

Than Phong Martial Arts received great support from high-ranked Viet Nam Air Force Officials: General Tran Van Minh (Commander-in-Chief), Colonel Nguyen Xuan Lanh, Colonel Vo Dinh, Colonel Phan Phung Tien, Colonel Dinh Thach On, and Colonel Ly Ngoc An.

- Administrative Directors: Tran Dinh Huu, Tran Van Nguu, Tran Nhu Dau, Nguyen Truc Lan, Le Dinh Thuan, Cat Van Khoi, Le Cong Thinh, Nguyen Si Phu, Nguyen Van Thinh.
- Technical Directors: Master Kim Phuc Nam (1966-1967); Master Phan Van Duc (1967-1975).
- Chief Instructors: Nguyen Van Loi, Huynh Van Phuc, Truong Van Nhieu, Nguyen Ngoc Diep
- Aikijitsu Instructors: Mr. Nguyen Dang Duc, Le An Ninh, Bui Van Chuc.
- Judo Instructor: Mr. Thinh Duc Phu.
- Board of Advisors: Master Vong Mau Thoong, Nguyen Van Nang, Kang Tae Ho, Kang Dong Kil, Lee Sha Un, Lee Keun Tae, Kim Byung Woon, Herman, Cho Sung Taik, Shu Jung Do, Cho Hyung Ho, Chung Tae Kap.

## **Championships**

- 1969 Viet Nam Armed Force Taekwondo Championship: Black Belt Team Grand Champion.
- 1970 Viet Nam National Taekwondo Championship: Black Belt Grand Champions (Team and Individual).

- 1971 Second Asia Sea Game in Malaysia: Black Belt Gold Medal (Master Phan Van Duc); Black Belt Team Gold Medal (Mr. Kim Phuc Nam, Huynh Van Phuc, Le Van Chau); Bronze Medal in Individual Breaking Competition.
- 1972 Viet Nam National Taekwondo Championship: Black Belt Grand Champion.
- 1973 Viet Nam Armed Force Taekwondo Championship: Black Belt Grand Champions (Team and Individual).
- 1974 Viet Nam National Taekwondo Championship: Team Grand Champion and Team Runner-up.

### **Than-Phong Martial Arts Schools in U.S.A.**

- San Antonio, Texas, 1976; Instructors: Tran Van Lac and Truong Nguyen Thuan
- Hayward, California, 1977-1981; Instructor: Truong Nguyen Thuan
- Houston, Texas, 1981-1983; Chief Instructor: Truong Nguyen Thuan
- San Jose, California, 1983-1989; Chief Instructor: Truong Nguyen Thuan
- Santa Clara, California, 1984-1986; Chief Instructor: Truong Nguyen Thuan
- San Jose, California, 1989-2009; Grand Master Victor Duc Phan
- Oakland, California, 1988-1991; Master Truong Nguyen Thuan
- Houston, Texas, 1992-2005; Master Ho Phan
- Kingwood, Texas, 1993-1997; Master Truong Nguyen Thuan
- Spring, Texas, 2003-present; Master Truong Nguyen Thuan
- Santa Ana, California; Master Trinh Khai Hoan and Master Le Van Xuan
- San Diego, California; Master Mai Thanh Long
- Virginia; Grand Master Nguyen Van Loi and Grand Master Kim Phuc Nam
- Michigan; Instructor Trang Tran
- Florida; Master Thomas Burgress
- Washington; Master Truong Bich Ve

### **Than-Phong Martial Arts Schools, Around the World**

- U.S.A.: Houston, Seattle, San Jose, Orange County, San Diego, Michigan, Virginia, and Florida
- Australia: Footscray, Collingwood, Brunswick, Broadmeadow, Victoria, Richmond, Fawkner, Braybrook, Northern Territory, and Ringwood.
- France: Paris
- Canada: Peterborough, Ontario
- Sweden
- Viet Nam: Saigon, Hanoi

## Grand Master Victor Duc Phan



**1945 – 2009**

**9th Dan Black Belt Taekwondo**

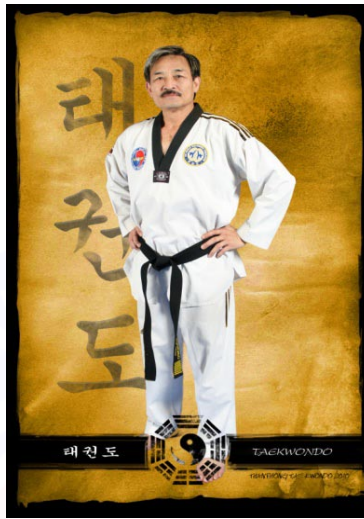
**8th Dan Black Belt Gumdo**

**President of Than-Phong The Planet Martial Arts Federation**

**Director of Than-Phong Martial Arts Headquarter**

- 1945 Born in Cho Lon, Viet Nam, in a traditional martial arts family, and started learning and practicing martial arts at a young age.
- 1960s Learned Taekwondo from the late founder, General Choi Hong Hi and Grand Master Kim Byung-Woon (currently Chairman of the Kukkiwon Technical Counsel, World Taekwondo Federation) when Korea first introduced Taekwondo in Viet Nam.
- 1965 Joined the Viet Nam Air Force, was assigned to the Supplies and Maintenance Unit, then transferred to the Political Warfare Unit, Martial Arts Division (1966).
- 1967-1975 Technical Director of Than-Phong Martial Arts Academy at Tan-Son-Nhat Air Force Base in Saigon, Viet Nam.
- 1975-1984 Jailed in the “re-education” camps by the Communist North Viet Nam Government when they took over South Viet Nam.
- 1984-1989 Secretly taught martial arts to a small group of Than-Phong Instructors and students in Saigon in spite of the communist government prohibition of Martial Arts in Viet Nam.
- 1989 Came to U.S.A. and resided in Rhode Island for a short period of time.
- Sep 1989 Relocated to San Jose, California at the invitation of Chief Instructor Thuan Nguyen Truong (one of his former and initial students from Than-Phong Martial Arts Academy at Tan-Son-Nhat Air Force Base), and started teaching with Instructor Truong at his Than-Phong Martial Arts school in San Jose. Instructor Truong handed his school with all of his 60 students and the President role of Than-Phong Arts Association to Grand Master Phan who took ownership until he passed away in 2009.
- 1990s Expanded the system internationally to Australia, Canada, France, and Sweden.
- 1990/2000 Renamed the system to Than-Phong Intercontinental Martial Arts Federation (1990) and Than-Phong The Planet Martial Arts Federation (2000).
- 1990-2009 President of Than-Phong Intercontinental Martial Arts Federation (1990-2000) and Than-Phong The Planet Martial Arts Federation (2000-2009).
- 1990-2009 Director of Than-Phong Martial Arts Headquarter, 230 Umbarger Street, San Jose, California.
- 2009 Passed away on April 30, in San Jose, California.

# Grand Master Truong Nguyen Thuan



## **8th Dan Black Belt Taekwondo President of Than-Phong International Martial Arts Federation Director of Than-Phong Taekwondo Institute**

- 1954-1969 Disciple of Northern Shaolin Kungfu, Viet Nam.
- 1968 Joined the Viet Nam Air Force and practiced Taekwondo at Than-Phong Martial Arts Academy at Tan-Son-Nhat Air Force Base in Saigon, Viet Nam, with Instructor Duc Phan.
- 1975 Relocated to U.S.A., continued practicing Taekwondo faithfully, and officially achieved several Dan Black Belts through several Dan tests with Grand Master Hee Ung Lee (President of American Taekwondo Association), Master Duc Huy Dang (Orange County, California) and Grand Master Victor Duc Phan (San Jose, California) over several years.
- 1975 Assistant Instructor at Guidry's Taekwondo Academy, San Antonio, Texas.
- 1976 Established and taught at Than-Phong Martial Arts school in San Antonio, Texas, together with Master Lac Van Tran.
- 1976 Trained with Master S. Kang in Tulsa, Oklahoma.
- 1977-1981 Relocated to Hayward, California, and established the first Than-Phong Taekwondo club in Hayward.
- 1977-1989 Founder and President of Than-Phong Martial Arts Association.
- 1981-1983 Relocated to Houston, Texas; Founder and Director of the first Than-Phong Martial Arts school in Houston.
- 1983-1991 Relocated to California; Founder and Director of Than-Phong Martial Arts schools in San Jose (1983-1989), Santa Clara (1984-1986), and Oakland (1988-1991).
- Sept 1989 Handed his Than-Phong Martial Arts school in San Jose, including 60 of his students, and his President role of Than-Phong Martial Arts Association to Grand Master Victor Duc Phan when Grand Master Phan relocated to U.S.A. from Viet Nam.
- 1989-2009 Vice President of Than-Phong Martial Arts Association (1989-1990), Than-Phong Intercontinental Martial Arts Federation (1990-2000) and Than-Phong The Planet Martial Arts Federation (2000-2009).
- 1993-1997 Master and Director of Than-Phong Taekwondo Academy, Kingwood, Texas.
- 2003-present Master and Director of Than-Phong Taekwondo Institute, Spring, Texas.

- 2009 Elected President of Than-Phong The Planet Martial Arts Federation by its Executive Board when Grand Master Victor Duc Phan passed away in April 2009.
- 2009 Renamed Than-Phong The Planet Martial Arts Federation to Than-Phong International Martial Arts Federation to reflect the true international status of the Than-Phong system.
- 2009-present President of Than-Phong International Martial Arts Federation.
- 2009-present Grand Master and Director of Than-Phong Taekwondo Institute, Spring, Texas.

### **Championship and Miscellaneous Awards**

- 1976 1st Place (individual, light weight) at Oklahoma Open Championship, Tulsa, Oklahoma.
- 1977 Grand Champion (individual) and Team 1st Place (Hayward Taekwondo Academy Black Belt Team) at California State Taekwondo tournament, San Jose, USTU (United States Taekwondo Union) sanctioned.
- 2004 Inducted into the U.S.A. Martial Arts Hall of Fame.
- 2004 Served as ITF (International Taekwondo Federation) International Referee for the World Cup in Orlando, Florida.
- 2004-2005 Named Master of the Year by U.S.A. Martial Arts.
- 2005 Member of the Coaching Staff of the National Martial Arts Team.
- 2005-2009 Served as Texas State Director of U.S.A. Martial Arts.