



## **Connecticut MMA & Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Instructor Jim Hughes Promoted to Black Belt by Legendary Father of mma, Royce Gracie**

*Legendary fighter, Royce Gracie, promotes long time ct mma & jiu jitsu student Jim Hughes to Black Belt in his family martial art, Gracie Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. Jim Hughes heads Gracie Jiu Jitsu Self Defense & MMA training locations in Hartford Glastonbury, Southington, East Windsor, Enfield, Danbury, New Haven, Stratford, Norwich, UCONN/STORRS, Agawam MA, Boston MA, and Puerto Rico assisted by his top students and training partners.*

West Hartford, CT, March 29, 2008 --(PR.com)-- Jim Hughes offers the following statement to his students and friends regarding his promotion:

"Yep, it's true. Some of you were there to see it. Royce promoted me to black belt. I really feel this is an acknowledgment of our collective work together as Gracie Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and ma & ct mma coaches and students. When Royce promoted me he said "its been a long road Jim." It really has.

Obviously, no one achieves any type of meaningful success without very good people around them. So, thank you each of you for being part of the making of this promotion. I appreciate your help and support along the way very much. There is a little bit of this black belt in you and you in it.

The weekend was very trying for everyone involved. Coaches came from all over the world to train at Jeremy's new school near DC. Things were especially tuff for my family at home. Judy and the girls were all sick while I was gone. I was sick also during the training. I basically forced myself through it. But, it seems that there was, and is, more at work here than one's individual will power alone.

Our families and friends put up with a lot because of our way of life. So thank you to each of your family members and friends for enduring the ride on the "Gracie Train." It is that sea of support for which I am most grateful. With that in mind, it is important for me to acknowledge my Athletic Trainer, Perry Siegel, who I sometimes like to call "The Human MRI Machine." Perry is guiding me through a serious injury and has helped me to avoid surgery. He has helped me keep going when there were many good reasons to quit. I can carry my children, teach, and train because of Perry's care and investment in me (and in our network of schools and people throughout Connecticut, Massachusetts, New England and beyond).

Obviously, I am deeply appreciative of Royce Gracie and his father, Grandmaster Helio Gracie; Rolker Gracie; Royler Gracie; and Rodrigo Gracie. Also, to Rolls Gracie, who I have only met once in a dream, and who I experience as having a substantial guiding hand in what is happening with those of us connected with Royce and with the Gracie Family at large.

The Gracie Family took me under their wing way back and stuck with me through thick and thin. They have always treated me like part of the family. Their history is much like my own family where my grandfather and father inspired us to never quit and to always work towards developing our resources and being creative in solving life's problems, and my mom's examples where she always demonstrated open hearted compassion (many of my wayward friends could sit at our table and live at our house as long as



they followed the rules). And thanks to my grandfather's third grade teacher who had the whole class dig a hole in the hillside next to the school house in Sweetwater Illinois. She told them to bury the words "I can't" thus forever removing it from my family's vocabulary. My grandparents and parents got me ready for this when I was really just a baby.

Gracie Jiu Jitsu is not a practice where you always win. It is a way of life and attitude where you learn to endure and solve problems creatively no matter the situation or obstacle.

I keep getting the question: "So, what does it feel like to be a Black Belt?" All I can say is that I feel surprised and elated but mostly, I feel a sense of very deep personal responsibility to the Gracie Family, especially to Royce and Helio, and to my coaching staff at all our locations and to our current and future students. I feel a real sense of urgency to come back to the basics and to continue learning and growing and sharing what I know in a way that accurately preserves and fosters Gracie Jiu Jitsu and the Gracie Family tradition.

Thank you again. My deepest appreciate and blessing to each of you reading this message and to each of you following the Gracie Way."

Readers can find Jim at [www.gracie-jiu-jitsu.com](http://www.gracie-jiu-jitsu.com) [www.RoyceGracieJiuJitsu.com](http://www.RoyceGracieJiuJitsu.com) or [www.collegeMMAchallenge.com](http://www.collegeMMAchallenge.com)

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