

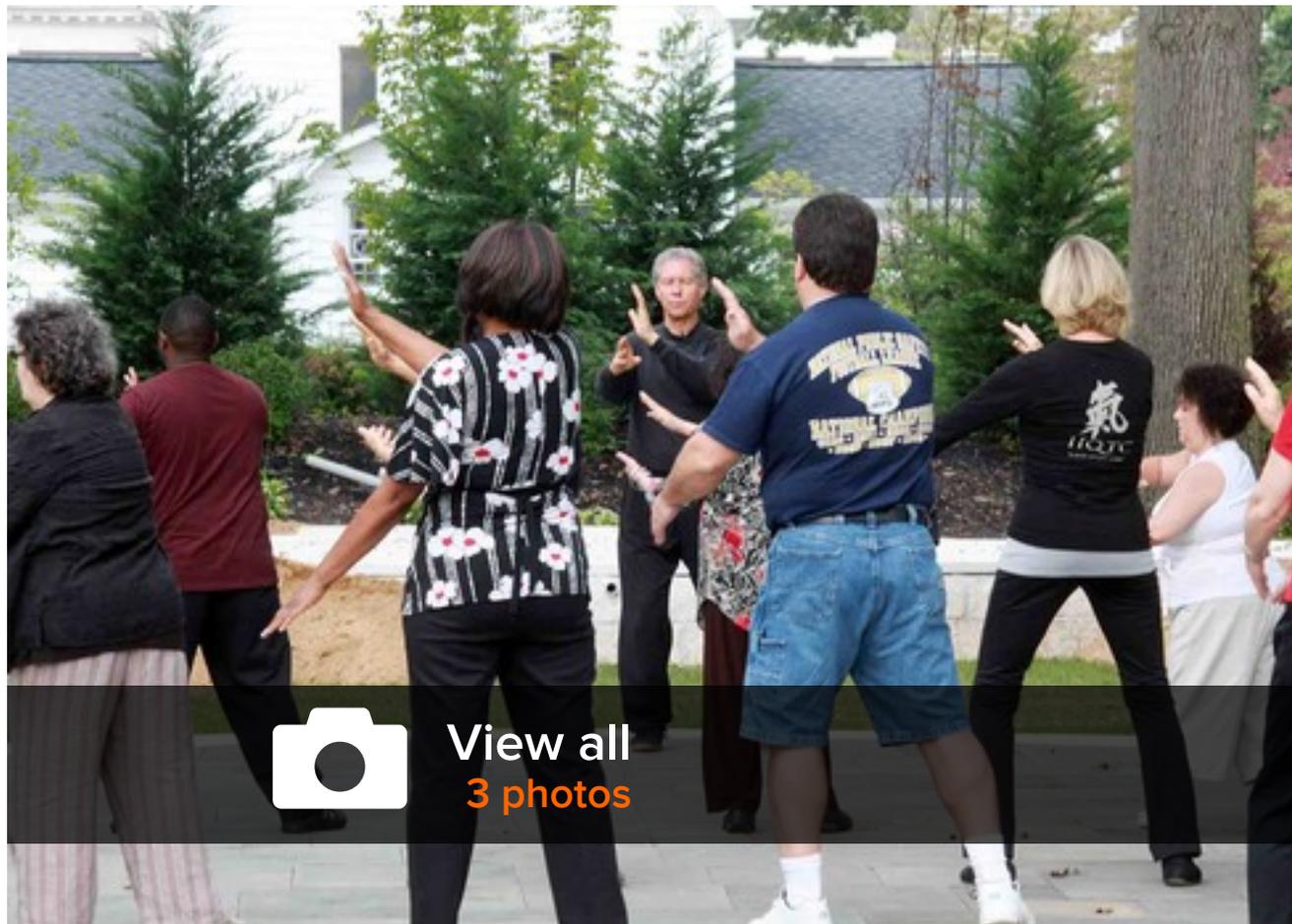
SPORTS / RECREATION / COMBAT SPORTS

Northport VA Medical Center is adopting Tai Chi Easy™

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Northport VA Medical Center (VAMC) is in Long Island, New York. It cares for approximately 34,000 veterans a year. Since the start of the war in Afghanistan, Northport VAMC has seen over 4,500 returning service member veterans. The Northport VAMC's mission is to improve the health of the men and women who have served our nation. Northport VAMC is always looking for new ideas to enhance their services. Recently, they invited the world-renowned **Tai Chi** Master Dr. Roger Jahnke to host a training program for medical professionals. The purpose of this program is to train the medical professionals who will integrate the knowledge and skills of Tai Chi and **Qigong** to treat patients.



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Dr. Jahnke's workshop at Northport VAMC
Northport VAMC



Northport VAMC

Dr. Roger Jahnke has been a practicing Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) for over 30 years. He is a Tai Chi/Qigong master and has innovatively created **Tai Chi Easy™**, which has been taught to thousands around the world through **Institute of Integratl Qigong and Tai Chi**, an organization funded by Dr. Jahnke. Additionally, Dr. Jahnke has actively collaborated with other scientists in medical research on the benefits of Tai Chi and Qigong. The Northport training was a three day program on Sept 13-15. Dr. Jahnke and his students Elizabeth Lemon and Meri Halem provided a very intensive curriculum for 20 health care professionals including one nurse from Hudson Valley VA, who intends to use Tai Chi as an intervention for fall-prevention among older veterans.

Tai Chi Easy™ is a carefully developed method and approach to Tai Chi and Qi cultivation that is easy, beneficial and fun. Tai Chi Easy is not “just” an exercise program that uses gentle activities to help increase joint flexibility and range of motion and to help maintain muscle strength. As a practice of “**meditation** in motion,” the slow movements and mindset of Tai Chi can be used to manage stress levels by creating a sense of choice and a heightened awareness of our capacities to mobilize motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action in every movement. The Northport training consisted of lecture, discussion, and demonstration with several practice sessions over the three days. The training primarily followed the Tai Chi Easy Practice Leader Training Guide. All trainees received an instructional DVD of Dr. Jahnke demonstrating the various exercises featured in the seminar, which is very helpful. Richelle Rapaport, ODE Coordinator at Northport VAMC, was in charge of the training program. According to her, participants all enjoyed the content and material of the training program. They have been eager to integrate their learning in their medical practice.

As a psychotherapist herself, Richelle has used some of the Tai Chi techniques in treating patients with

mental health issues and substance abuse problems. She confirmed that the results are very impressive. She said that Tai Chi is very effective in helping patients to manage anxiety and stress.

Northport VAMC program is funded by a grant. Richelle said that they will collect data from the results of using Tai Chi/Qigong in medical treatments for a year. A report will be generated in Sept 2012.

Hopefully, it will help other VA hospitals or regular hospitals to model after Northport VAMC.

Additionally, due to the enthusiasm of the trainees, Northport VAMC is going to host follow-up sessions with IITQC to refine trainees' teaching skills.

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Tai Chi Examiner