

New-Nonprofit 'Colorado Phoenix Project' for Self-Esteem and Resilience in Woodland Park, CO

CPP to focus on how to be a more stable person who can face life's bullies, whether they are people or life's experiences; featuring integration of a boxing gym

WOODLAND PARK, COLORADO, UNITED STATES, January 14, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Thom Seehafer, owner of [Kenpo Karate](#) in Woodland Park and life-long martial arts enthusiast, is branching out into a new nonprofit venture, the [Colorado Phoenix Project](#).

The [CPP](#) will still be a martial-arts-based organization, but the focus of the Phoenix Project will be to instill a sense of self-esteem and resilience in survivors of tragedies and at-risk children.

Thom, who has been involved in martial arts himself for about 25 years, started studying at Kenpo Karate when he moved to Colorado almost 10 years ago. He made the decision to start running the martial arts school when his instructor was planning to leave. He was on the fence about taking over the school when he started seeing several posts on social media about children committing suicide because they were being bullied.

“

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*Thom Seehafer, Founder
Colorado Phoenix Project*

“That's my message,” Thom said, of opening his own martial arts school. “It's not really about teaching martial arts, it's more about bully awareness and suicide prevention. So I just thought, you know, I've got about half of my life involved in martial arts, so I figured it would be a good platform for me to use to start getting my message out regarding what bullying is about, the statistics of it, how young it can hit a person, and the suicide

prevention.”

According to Thom, his martial arts school focuses much more on teaching confidence, bully prevention, self-awareness, and discipline than on the actual fighting aspects of the sport. However, the Phoenix Project will really focus on his core beliefs about how to be a more stable



individual who can face life's bullies, whether they are people or life's experiences.

Thom chose the name the "Colorado Phoenix Project" because he believes the mythical phoenix represents the reliance a well-trained person can have through all of life's struggles.

"I've always used the phoenix in my business because of what the relevance and actual meaning of the phoenix is," Thom said. "Some people know it, some people don't, but the Greek mythological bird basically got too close to the sun, burnt to ashes.

My focus is the fact that it rose up and

became a big bright bird, stronger, faster, more intense, so using that so people understand that even if you have an addiction of sorts, or you're a victim of rape or domestic violence or any of those things, you can rise up, you can make yourself stronger, and you can become a whole person, a better person."

Though Thom, himself, has never struggled with severe bullying or thoughts of suicide, he did have struggles as a youth. He recounts being up to no good and spending his spare time in useless activities until he found martial arts. He used martial arts as an outlet for his stress and emotions, and as a positive use of his time that helped him stay disciplined and on a positive course.

To him, the benefits of martial arts far surpass the physical benefits. He has been passionate about sharing that with individuals of all ages, but especially with young people, for some time.

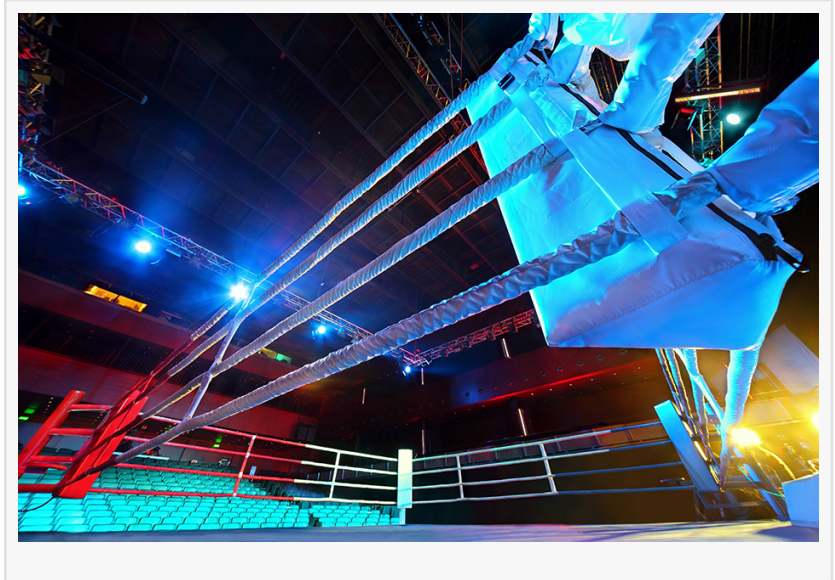
"The Phoenix Project has been in my mind for about a year, a little more than a year, to try to get something like this going," Thom said. "(The goal of the Phoenix Project is to give) everyone a means to strengthen themselves through physical activity, emotional activity, mental activity, just strengthen them in a lot of different ways."

An important part of the new non-profit will be the integration of a boxing gym. "The boxing gym will be useful in providing high-intensity training as well as changing lives," Thom said. "Studies show that boxing in a ring can easily get participants to have a more significant impact on obesity, cardiovascular health and better quality of life."

Thom is still considering how to package gym time and how to charge to the packages. Right now, his main concern is getting kids and adults who need the strength to move forward into the gym. He said he is more than happy to work with people to determine a price and package they can afford.

"I've done a lot of reading about gyms that use the honor policy, you know, you pay what you can," Thom said. "It's never been about money, and if there is an issue with money, let's communicate and talk about it. How can we get your child or children in here and not have to worry about paying for it? If I can give kids means of building their confidence, and building their awareness, and yeah, also building their muscles, but just knowing that they have a good, strong mental focus to defend themselves and protect themselves, that's what I want this gym to be," he continued.

Colorado ranks high in the nation with rates of youth suicide. Thom sees his gym being a much-



needed outlet for struggling youth in the community and wants to make sure kids who need to be at the gym can get to the gym.

"I see it becoming usable for all ages to the point of bringing in the variety of different fighters, different styles, different techniques. Just exposing people to different means of defense, (and) showing them that any age can protect themselves," he said. "Teller County where the gym is going to be (has an even higher rate of suicide)," he said. "It's still a taboo subject to talk about. We can't talk about it because sometimes (people think) if you don't talk about something it doesn't exist, and when you have that kind of philosophy, that is you're just hiding from something."

Facebook reviews on the Kenpo Karate and CPP pages reflect that this sentiment is already in effect in his business, a good indicator that it will continue to be the case now that the Colorado Phoenix Project is up and running.

CPP is registered as a 501c3 nonprofit in the state of Colorado as well at the federal level through the IRS.

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