

# CONTRA COSTA TIMES

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## Community Youth Center opens martial arts building

■ **CONCORD:** Operators renovate warehouse, freeing up room for other programs to expand

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A Concord youth sports center founded by former Oakland A's owner Ken Hofmann is opening a new martial arts center today, providing more space for its growing East Bay membership.

Tae kwon do and judo students at the nonprofit Community Youth Center will join in festivities tonight to dedicate the martial arts building.

Youth center operators spent an estimated \$150,000 to convert a 2,750-square-foot storage warehouse into the martial arts building, located within a cluster of sports buildings at the center on

### IF YOU GO

For information about the Community Youth Center at 2241 Galaxy Court in Concord, contact [www.communityyouthcenter.com](http://www.communityyouthcenter.com) or 925-671-7070.

Galaxy Court near the Big C Athletic Club.

Martial arts students will get an elevated wood floor mounted on more than 2,000 plastic foam blocks to cushion the impact in thrown bodies.

Martial arts students used to crowd into a building shared by several sports.

"A building dedicated to martial arts frees up space for other programs to expand," said Julie Marvel, a spokeswoman for the center. "This continues the growth of the center."

The center has waiting lists for programs in tae kwon do,

gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, dance and cheerleading, said Dennis Costanza, the youth center executive director.

The center also offers boxing, wrestling, sports-specific conditioning and academic tutoring.

Membership has grown since the center, formerly called Concord Youth Center, opened in 1995 with a \$1 million grant from the Hofmann Foundation, a favorite charity of Ken Hofmann. A Lafayette resident who founded a Concord construction company, Hofmann sold his interest in the Oakland A's baseball team in 2005.

Some 614 youths visited the center at least once in October, compared with 480 in October 2005.

The center charges \$20 a month per youth and offers scholarships to low-income boys and girls for sports instruction at both recreational and competitive levels.

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