

**MOM... DAD...**

**Is getting your teenager to school a huge hassle?**

**Is your teen struggling in school?**

**Does your teenager seem to be falling through the cracks?**

**KIDS...**

**Do you feel like you are on the fast track to failure?**

**Are you frustrated and disgusted with school?**

**Do you see no reason to be or stay in school?**



**There's help. There's hope.**

**There's real life learning for living in the real world.**

**K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup> School of Learning**

Kinesthetic Approach to Relevant Academic Teaching



Susan McDonald, M.A.

Susan McDonald is the founder of K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup> School of Learning. She earned her Bachelor's degree in English and Education from Palm Beach Atlantic University in Palm Beach, Florida and a Masters degree in Inclusive Education from Seton Hill University in Greensburg, PA. Susan is intrigued with non-traditional learners — those learners who need something “different” to grasp the concept.

From her experience, Ms. McDonald learned that the old way of teaching with “stand and deliver” was not only out of date, it represented “bad teaching.” According to Scott, Clark, and Brady (2000), “When we teach difficult-to-teach children [and young adults] the teacher must become a student of the child's learning.” Her research and understanding of the non-traditional learner led her to develop an approach to teaching students according to their “bent,” or the way they are designed to learn.

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State-certified teacher since 1997

District Teacher of the Year, 2000,  
Florence District One, Florence, S.C.

Sam's Club Teacher of the Year, 2000

Winner of Golden Apple Award,  
Florence, S.C., 2000

Chamber of Commerce Blue Ribbon Award,  
Florence, S.C., 2000

## For Mom and Dad...

### Non-traditional education for 9 - 12 graders.

Designed to meet the needs of students not succeeding in the traditional school setting, K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup> School of Learning speaks to students' lack of interest in traditional learning methods, poor academic achievement, chronic tardiness and absenteeism, and other obstacles that may lead students to give up and/or drop out of high school.

Kinesthetic learners struggle to understand lessons when only reading and listening. It is imperative that students with a kinesthetic style of learning learn from *doing* relevant activities or being part of them. Kinesthetic learners use phrases such as “I can see myself doing that” and “It's starting to come alive.”

The best environment for kinesthetic learners involves a flexible but structured setting that is focused on the individual student's interests. Students take ownership of their learning. A key component is developing a sense of purpose. Service projects are one important part of the K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup> approach. Students are also provided many opportunities to give back to their community. Mentoring, work study, and job shadowing programs give students relevant, hands-on experience with real world perspectives and insights.

The K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup> School of Learning, a faith-based, non-profit and Member School ACASI, is recognized by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and provides the requisite 990 hours of education each year.

### Will they succeed?

*Here is what K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup> meant to me as a parent in St. Petersburg, Florida. When Susan McDonald proposed K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup>, I decided to enroll my son Josh for two reasons. First, I was willing to take the risk and incur the expense, because Josh was not doing well in traditional classroom education. It did not matter how much I scolded him or tried to motivate him. Josh was “wired” to be more active than to just sit still and participate in only the few ways provided by traditional classroom education. Second, I knew Susan McDonald very well and trusted her integrity.*

*It did not take long to see how much Josh liked K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup> and how well he did. Josh loves to get his hands on things. Josh loves to speak up. Josh loves to be creative. Josh loves to interact with other students. These are all qualities that K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup> uses to help a student learn.*

*But, the true test was how Josh would do after K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup>. Would he succeed when he went back to traditional classroom education in college or not?*

*In September 2008, Josh started Calvin College, a Christian liberal arts college in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In two months, he will have completed two years and has done well with a B- average. He majors in business and is seeking to be an entrepreneur. He has entered competitions with college students, both against other college students across Michigan and within Calvin College, to promote their business ideas and plans, and has done well in the competitions. He has participated in special entrepreneur programs. This success shows that K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup> both prepares its students for traditional classroom classes and also motivates and prepares its students to seek out and participate in extracurricular activities.*

*We have seen in today's economy that just having a good resume is not a guarantee of success, nor even a guarantee of getting that first job. Now, students need the skills of making their own opportunity and that is often done by being courageous and creative enough to take things into their own hands which are skills that K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup> promotes. Thus, it is an honor and pleasure to recommend K.A.R.A.T.<sup>®</sup> for your consideration.*

*Yours truly,  
Bill Hornbeck*



## For Kids...

*Are you a “non-traditional” learner?*

Do you like working with projects instead of reading out of a text book and answering questions at the end? Do you like creating presentations for your assessments, instead of filling in ovals on a sheet of paper in order to show what you’ve learned? Do you like to go into the community and experience learning? Do you like to have a choice on what you study for your career objective?...

**Then YOU are a non-traditional learner!**

*Hands-on activities examples*

- Experience a learning-rich environment by adding sound and graphics. Transform the classroom into a rain forest by using humidifiers, sound effects, music, and wall decorations. Come up with the entire package.
- Physics is involved in everything you do: Riding a bike, flying a kite, etc. Golf balls are made specifically for winds, distance, etc. Look at the golf ball’s design, play softball and measure how far it goes, the arc of the ball, etc. Use all the domains of thinking and learning - go outside and play the games represented in the physics lesson.
- Create a cultural fair! When studying different parts of the country or world have your group recreate that culture by putting on a fair with food, dress, religion, government, social aspects, family dynamics, and any thing else that you can think of to incorporate. Use the gym for the whole school to see!
- “Become” the historical person you want to be and star in your own video. The video includes the characterization, the setting, and the dialogue. Present the completed video to the class.



*As a high school student studying history, math, science, and English, I found it frustrating reading textbooks about theories I could not see in action. Once I put it into action, I began to see the work of my hands in coordination and harmony with what I read. A student’s learning is immensely enhanced when [he is] able to apply what [he’s] learned to an everyday situation to solve a problem. I can remember to this day the many moments where I excitedly proclaimed, “Ahhh! That’s how it works! I understand now because I can see!”*

— Josh Hornbeck, sophomore at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, and 2008 graduate of K.A.R.A.T.®, St. Petersburg, FL.



**Here are a few facts related to social-emotional, physical, and cognitive domains. K.A.R.A.T.® learning philosophy understands these facts in order to ensure student success. To see the complete list, please visit our web site, [www.karatlearning.com](http://www.karatlearning.com).**

**“The brain will not adapt to senseless tasks. As a teacher, you have to constantly reaffirm the relevance, value, and meaning of the skills taught” (Jensen, 2005).**

**Students learn better when they are asked how they would like to learn and what the teacher can do to help them learn (Lehmann, 2005).**

**Students must see connections to their learning and their life. These connections create greater intelligence (Burton, 2001).**

**Teenagers need at least nine hours of sleep at night. Getting any less than that decreases their brain function. Most teens are sleep deprived. Sleep is food for the brain. Without enough sleep, teenagers get moody, depressed, and irritable. Memory and judgment are affected. (Amen, 1998)**

**K.A.R.A.T.® philosophy in a nut shell:**

*We understand complex topics better when we **experience them** with rich sensory input, as opposed to merely reading or hearing about the subject.*

—Jensen, 2000

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Students must complete an application process that includes an interview with the student and parent/guardian that the student must pass. The interview process allows us to determine the commitment that the student has in attending and completing the K.A.R.A.T.® program. This process includes a personal development plan designed to identify and to help students meet personal and career goals. Family participation is essential to the student's success.

To start the application process, please call Susan McDonald at 724.689.9929 or send an e-mail to her at [smcdona@comcast.net](mailto:smcdona@comcast.net).

*We need to create in our students, "salmon-like tenacity." In the face of difficulties and struggles, our students need to be shown how to hold on and not give up, no matter what (Hetzl & Stranske, 2006/2007).*

**K.A.R.A.T.® School of Learning** educates its students with project-based learning and hands-on assessments instead of pencil and paper tests; students learn the relevance of their English, math, science, history, and electives by going into the community and experiencing their learning. Curriculum is applied with the student's individual academic and post high school goals in mind.

**K.A.R.A.T.®** curricula are based on four principles:  
(Curricula meet all state requirements for graduation.)

- #1 Individualized schedules tailored to students' post-graduate objectives
- #2 Dedication to service learning projects in the community
- #3 Focus on developing strong oral and written communication skills
- #4 Integrated Biblical relevance to all content and skills performed

**K.A.R.A.T.®** students:

- Use kinesthetic, project-based approach to their learning and assessments.
- Go into the community on a daily basis to ensure relevance to their learning.
- Experience hands-on relevance in all disciplines (English, social studies, math, science, and electives)

**K.A.R.A.T.®** is a non-profit, faith-based integrated school with open enrollment.

**K.A.R.A.T.® School of Learning** accepts only 24 students total, so space is limited.

Classes meet on the 4th Floor Educational Wing of the YMCA, 101 S. Maple Ave., Greensburg, PA 15601.

Tuition is based on classes taken and hours accrued. Tuition runs from \$360.00 - \$600.00 a month and includes all materials and activities. Economic scholarships are available.



# K.A.R.A.T.® School of Learning

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Please visit [www.karatlearning.com](http://www.karatlearning.com) for more information!