

# MEET MEGAN DENNY AN AVERY RANCH NINJA



## YOUNG ACHIEVER

Story by Rachel Imbriale, Resident of Granite Shoals

When you hear the word "ninja," you may think back to the '80s, to a time when you were enthralled by your favorite G.I. Joe comics and the forever-conflicted Storm Shadow. Or perhaps you think back to the '90s and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles who would chow down pizza while fighting crime. But if you've channel-surfed primetime television lately, you may know that ninjas have made a comeback on NBC's American Ninja Warrior, a top-ranking show for kids ages 2-17. And would you believe we've got a band of ninjas right here in Avery Ranch?

You can find our ninjas training at Austin Ninjas on Parmer Lane at McNeil. They are attracted to the strength, agility, and mental focus the popular obstacle course requires. For more insight into the life of a ninja warrior, we connected with 10-year-old, accomplished ninja Megan Denny of Waters Edge.

Megan started training as a ninja in February, and in under a year, she has traveled to Houston for the UNAA Regionals where she received 3rd place, and to Albuquerque, NM, for the World Champi-

onship where she received 10th place! Although her background in gymnastics certainly helps with flexibility and agility, she trains in the gym once a week for about two hours. Pushups are her go-to exercise both inside and outside the gym. They help her build necessary upper body strength for any twist or turn that comes her way. Megan is also known to get creative on the

Every obstacle is scalable, no matter your age or fitness level. Get the family together and see who can achieve the iconic Warped Wall and Salmon Ladder!

### About Austin Ninjas

"My son, James, has been an avid Ninja Warrior fan and actually is just starting his Ninja journey with Austin Ninjas -- after almost a year of begging for classes! Ha!" - Liz McDermott, Avery Ranch Resident

"I opened Austin Ninjas to give our community a place to train like a ninja warrior and to learn how to overcome obstacles, big and small. It is amazing to see kids trying an obstacle over and over until they succeed. It is a fabulous way for kids to learn how to stick with things and never give up." - Jennifer Halla, owner of Austin Ninjas

"My son, Joseph, is currently in 5th grade at Rutledge and started going to classes at Austin Ninjas this last spring after hearing about them from one of his buddies, also a Rutledge 5th grader. Joseph is eagerly awaiting the start of fall classes at Austin Ninjas next week and looks forward to participating in upcoming competitions for his age group." - Vivian Wied, Avery Ranch Resident

"My 8-year-old son, Morris, attended a birthday party last year at Austin Ninjas and was hooked. We signed him up for classes the next day. He's not a terribly athletic or daring kid and the classes allowed him to build his skills at his own pace. I appreciate that it's full of strength building activities that encourage him to take risks and try again and again to get it right. I've seen a growth in his confidence for trying new things on the playground - some may be attributed to getting older, but I am sure a large part is from his ninja practice. He's still very much a novice, but this is the activity I've seen him have the most continued interest in." - Ann Koonce, Avery Ranch Resident



monkey bars at school while her schoolmates watch excitedly for her next move and cheer her on to the finale.

Megan firmly believes that you don't need to be the strongest or fittest to become a ninja. Any kid, teenager, or adult looking to have fun and explore their abilities can become a ninja. Her mentor, Marie, who is only a few years older than Megan, has taught Megan that real life obstacles will come and the important thing is to never give up. A defining moment for Megan was at the World Championships in Albuquerque. She received 10th place in the prelims but twisted her ankle on the very first obstacle during the finals. Megan was pretty disappointed until a group of kids came over, asked for her autograph, and shared how much they admired her.

Becoming a ninja is a great way to meet new friends, take advantage of a unique workout, and inspire mastery.



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