

MOTION

PUBLIC WORKS

Dr. Masakazu Jack Fujimoto was born in National City, California in 1928. At the age of 13, he and his family were forcibly relocated to the Poston Water Relocation Center, an internment camp in Arizona. The Fujimoto family was released in 1945. After graduating from high school, Dr. Fujimoto served in the U.S. Army in Japan during the Korean War.

After returning from the Korean War, Dr. Fujimoto moved to Los Angeles to attend college. While working at a gas station in the Sawtelle area, he met his wife Grace Fusaye Toya who he married at the West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple in 1956. Dr. Fujimoto would go on to earn his bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees all from the University of California, Los Angeles. Dr. Fujimoto then taught Japanese language at Venice Gakuen, a private school at the Venice Japanese Community Center.

In 1969, Dr. Fujimoto was chosen to serve as dean at the Los Angeles Pierce College in Woodland Hills where he established Japanese language courses and other courses on humanities in East Asia. In 1979, Dr. Fujimoto began working as president of West Los Angeles College, where he again introduced and taught Japanese language courses, repeating this in 1989 when he became president at Los Angeles Mission College in the San Fernando Valley, a role he would hold until 1996.

Dr. Fujimoto had also been actively involved with the Japanese Institute of Sawtelle since 1986 and helped orchestrate its merger with the Sawtelle Gakuin, a Japanese language school. He would then serve as the Japanese Institute of Sawtelle's founding chairman and present until 2005, continuing to serve as a senior advisor to the institute afterwards. Dr. Fujimoto also chaired the Board of Trustees of the Institute of Buddhist Studies, a seminary affiliated with Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, from 1983 to 1995.

In recognition of Dr. Fujimoto's accomplishments in academia throughout the City and his lifelong promotion of Japanese culture, history, and language, it is appropriate that the City name the intersection of Sawtelle Boulevard and Mississippi Avenue, near the Japanese Institute of Sawtelle, as "Dr. Jack Fujimoto Square."

I THEREFORE MOVE that the intersection at Sawtelle Boulevard and Mississippi Avenue be named as "Dr. Jack Fujimoto Square" and that the Department of Transportation be directed to erect permanent ceremonial sign(s) to this effect at this location.

PRESENTED BY: 
MIKE BONIN Councilmember, 11th District

SECONDED BY: 

MAY 04 2022

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