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Kendo master Maki Hiroyuki Miyahara awarded Japan's medal



Mr. Maki Hiroyuki Miyahara, left, receives the Japanese government medal and the certificate from Consul General Junichi Ihara at the Official residence of the Consul General of Japan on July 21, 2011. (Cultural News Photo)

The Government of Japan announced the recipients of its Spring 2011 Decorations including Mr. Maki Hiroyuki Miyahara, 90-year-old of Hacienda Heights, former president of the Kendo Federation of the United States of America.

Mr. Miyahara is awarded with “The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays,” because he has contributed to the promotion of Kendo and the enhancement of friendly relations between Japan and the U.S.

He is also former president of the Southern California Kendo Federation, and an advisor to All United States Kendo Federation

The conferment ceremony for Mr. Miyahara will be held in Los Angeles.

Mr. Miyahara was born in Montebello, California, in 1921. At the age of 11, he started learning *kendo* from his father, who was teaching at six dojos and instructed him in a strict manner.

He has been involved in kendo since that time – nearly 80 years. At present, he holds the title grade of *hanshi 8-dan*, and his kendo skill is without comparison in the United States.

After having worked for GHQ in Japan following World War II, he returned to the United States in 1954. He worked at a private company as an architectural engineer, all the while teaching kendo at multiple dojos.

He is still teaching today, at the age of 90. He has held prominent positions at the Kendo Federation of the United States of America and at the All United States Kendo Federation.

Mr. Miyahara was a principle advocate of the promotion and development of kendo throughout America. At the same time, he involved himself deeply in the training and guidance of kendo students. Through kendo, he contributed to U.S.-Japan sports friendship and goodwill.

As executive secretary and president of the Kendo Federation of America, he contributed to the dissemination of kendo inside and outside the United States.

In 1974, he took a group of children kendoists to Japan; and in the same year, not hindered by borders, he led seminars in Canada and Mexico, as well as in the United States.

What is more, in 1976, he coached the American team at the Third World Kendo Championship, held in London, and led them to a stunning 3rd place team victory. He promoted and spread kendo throughout the entire United States and expanded sports exchange and friendship between the U.S. and Japan.

Mr. Miyahara's influence was not only strong nation-wide but in local kendo organizations. In 1973, he initiated the creation of official by-laws for the Southern California Kendo Federation, greatly helping the establishment of that Federation in its formative operations, as well.

He has remained an advisor to SCKF year after year until the present time. He was also largely responsible for the great success of the Second World Kendo Championships, held in California in 1973.

By giving great lessons to kendoists, and as advisor and president to the Southern California Kendo Federation, he has made great contributions to the emergence and development of kendo in southern California. He has been teaching the art of kendo and investing in the lives of kendoists throughout his entire life, strongly aspiring to the wider understanding and development of kendo.

He seeks to convey and prove the worth of continual practice and resolute focus in any endeavor by giving his own life's all to kendo training and to his students.



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