

**Receptionists**

Akemi Arakaki  
Susan Roe  
Janine Takasugi  
June Yamaki

**Sound**

Glenn Suravech

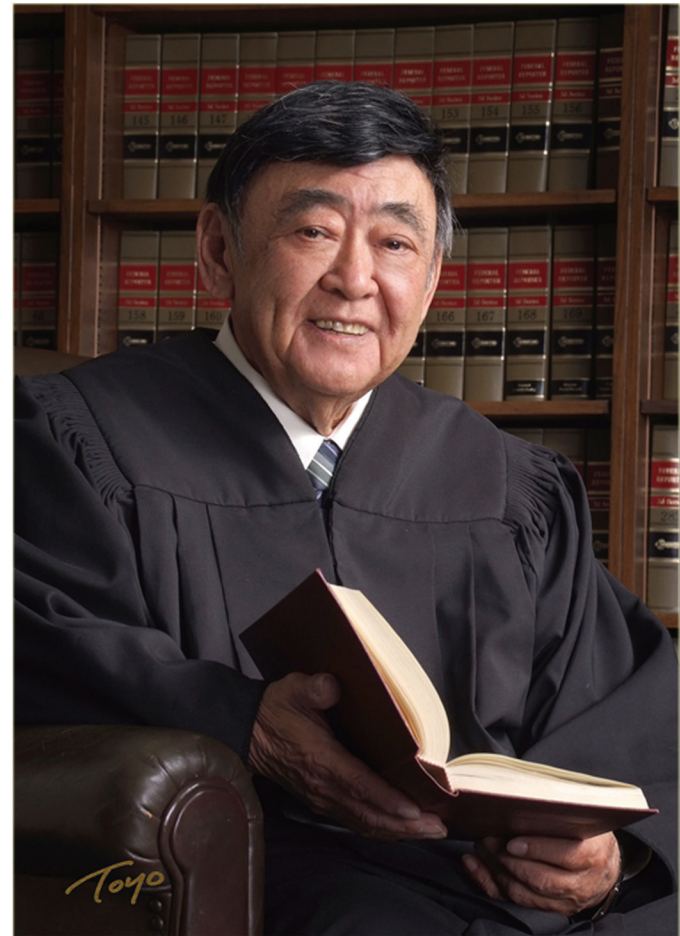
**Cover Photo**

Gary Miyatake, Toyo Photography

A Celebration of the Life of  
**The Hon. Robert M. Takasugi**

September 12, 1930

August 4, 2009



Thursday, August 13, 2009, 4 p.m.

University of Southern California  
Town & Gown

## BIOGRAPHY

Robert M. Takasugi was born in Tacoma, Washington on September 12, 1930, to Japanese parents who immigrated to the United States in search of a better life. In 1942 after the outbreak of World War II, his family was imprisoned in an internment camp in Tule Lake, California along with 130,000 other Japanese Americans. At the age of 12, he lost his father due to the lack of medical care in the camps.

After the war, the Takasugi family relocated to Los Angeles where Robert attended Belmont High School. He continued his education at UCLA where he met his wife Dorothy. He graduated with a business degree in 1953.

Despite his childhood incarceration by the country of his birth, Robert reported for duty when called to serve during the Korean War. Upon discharge, he attended law school at the University of Southern California during a time when there was only one African American, one Asian, one Latino, and one woman in the class.

Due to the social climate when Robert graduated in 1959, he and the only Latino in the class (now retired Judge Carlos Velarde) found themselves without job offers. They went into private practice together in East Los Angeles.

Robert was appointed to the East Los Angeles Municipal Court in 1973 and was elevated to the Superior Court in 1975. He was appointed to the U.S. District Court in 1976 and became the first Japanese American on the mainland to be appointed to the federal bench.

While many may know him for presiding over the John DeLorean cocaine trafficking trial in 1984, it was either fate or destiny that placed a challenge to the Patriot Act during post-9/11 hysteria on his court docket. In 2002, he found broad claims of "military necessity" and "national security" could not override the Constitution and Due Process as it had during his childhood.

One of his proudest legacies might be the free bar review course he started in his dining room some 40 years ago. He tutored hundreds of lawyers, and what began as friends helping friends has become a full-service bar review for "people who help people." His son runs the Pro Bono Bar Review with 14 volunteer instructors and a donated conference room.

He is survived by his wife Dorothy, son Jon (Haydeh), daughter Lesli, two grandchildren, Kinuyo and Matthew Takasugi. He is also survived by his older brother Terry (Mihoko), sister Misao Takasugi, and many nieces and nephews.

\* \* \*

Tax-deductible contributions may be made to the Robert M. Takasugi Pro Bono Bar Review. Please make checks out to "JABA Educational Foundation" with "Pro Bono Bar Review" on the Memo line, and send to the Japanese American Bar Association Educational Foundation; P.O. Box 86063; Los Angeles, CA 90086.

## PROGRAM

### Welcome

Robert K. Rasmussen  
Dean, USC School of Law

### Introduction from the Court

The Honorable Audrey B. Collins  
Chief Judge, U.S. District Court in Los Angeles

### Eulogies

Dr. Bob Suzuki  
President, California State Polytechnic University Pomona (ret)

Janice Fukai, Esq.  
Alternate Public Defender & Former Law Clerk

Dale Minami, Esq.  
Co-founder of the Asian Law Caucus in San Francisco

### Musical Dedication

Lesli Takasugi

### Family Appreciation

The Honorable Jon R. Takasugi  
Judge, Los Angeles Superior Court