

In memoriam: Junichi Yoshikawa, MD, PhD, 1941–2016

Kiyoshi Yoshida¹

Published online: 16 August 2016
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Dr. Junichi Yoshikawa, a beloved physician, cardiologist, teacher, and charismatic mentor, passed away on June 22, 2016 in Kobe, Japan, at the age of 75 years.

Dr. Yoshikawa was born in Osaka, Japan in 1941. He received his medical degree from Osaka City University Medical College in Osaka. His subsequent training in cardiology was at the University of Tokyo (Phonocardiographic laboratory led by Dr. Tsuguya Sakamoto). In 1972, he was recruited to join the cardiology division at Kobe General Hospital, Kobe, Japan, to direct the Cardiovascular Imaging laboratory. In 1986, he was promoted to chairman, division of cardiology, Kobe General Hospital. In 1995, he was appointed to professor and chairman, the First Department of Medicine, Osaka City University Medical College and took leadership of research and clinical medicine. In 2005, he reached official retirement age and

retired from his position. He was then appointed as an honorary professor, Osaka City University.

Dr. Yoshikawa was founder of the Japanese Society of Echocardiography and the first meeting of Japanese Society of Echocardiography was held in Kobe in 1990. He contributed greatly to the international exchange, especially with the American and Korean Society of Echocardiography and he invited many famous cardiologists from around the world (Fig. 1). He also founded the educational meeting of the Japanese Society of Echocardiography (Echo Kobe) in 1992 (Fig. 2). He taught regularly in 2-day sessions. He was passionate, very knowledgeable, articulate, always well organized, and a forceful presenter across the broad spectrum of cardiovascular disease. His breadth of knowledge was an inspiration to every physician, sonographer, and student who attended the meeting. This year, we had the memorial 25th Echo Kobe meeting.

Dr. Yoshikawa and his colleagues wrote several leading papers on the coronary imaging in Kawasaki disease, valvular heart disease, and coronary Doppler flow imaging. I had the privilege of working with him for 15 years at Kobe General Hospital and to collaborate with him during a life-time career. During these years, I appreciated his talent and intuition for carrying out numerous and various scientific research programs, his passion and motivation for improving the clinical management of diseases, his attitudes and support for ameliorating the educational mission of scientific societies and research groups, as well as his personality. My scientific and clinical formation have been significantly influenced by my experience with Dr. Yoshikawa and I will never forget his intelligence, teaching, and generous mentorship.

Dr. Yoshikawa achieved a mythical status as a dedicated, hardworking, and brilliant clinician with outstanding bedside diagnostic skills and great empathy for patients.

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Fig. 1 Dr. Richard L. Popp (Stanford University) visited Kobe in 1986



Fig. 2 Dr. Jamil A. Tajik (Mayo Clinic) in Mayo-Kobe Meeting in 1993

His clinical skills in diagnosing cardiovascular diseases at the bedside were well known by cardiologists, by students

who wished to learn from him, and by patients who came from everywhere to receive his help. In the early 1980s, he started to perform quick echocardiographic examination (within 60 s) by himself in outpatient clinics. Later, this method, as a method for screening, has led to the development of hand-held devices.

The Japanese Society of Echocardiography highly appreciates Dr. Yoshikawa's achievements, including establishment of the Japanese Society of Echocardiography and clinical application of ultrasound. We have fond memories of Dr. Yoshikawa. He took a very rigorous approach toward clinical research and gave us strict advice before giving presentations at the meetings. The memory of Dr. Yoshikawa is still cherished in our hearts. We have much respect for his attitude as a dedicated academic researcher and clinician.

I am saddened by the departure of this outstanding physician. I extend my sympathies to his family and gratefully acknowledge his great contributions to our scientific societies.