

**Thomas Tsuyoshi (Tom) Takekawa**  
**1933 – 2020**

**Thomas T. Takekawa Memorial Scholarship**

Tom was born on November 5, 1933, in Seattle, WA to Yasuhei and Kaneji (Kakegawa) Takekawa. His parents were from Nagano, Japan. Tom died on Friday, March 6, 2020 at the age of 86.

Tom had two older brothers, Dutch and John. Their father passed away only months after Tom's birth.

At 8 years-old in 1942, due to WWII hysteria against Japanese and Americans of Japanese descent, Tom was incarcerated with his mother and 2 older brothers in Camp Minidoka, ID. While his 2 older brothers enlisted in the US Army – Military Intelligence Service, Tom and his mother remained incarcerated for the duration of the war. After the war, they were released and his brothers moved them to live initially at Fort Snelling in St. Paul, MN getting their mom a job as a housemaid for an officer on base.

After attending Minnehaha School and Bryant Junior High, Tom proudly graduated in 1952 from his beloved Minneapolis Central High School. His 1952 Centralian remained one of his most coveted possessions.

Tom attended the University of Minnesota and received a degree in Sociology in 1956. In 1957, he enlisted into the US Army and served overseas in post-war Korea through late 1958. After his military service, Tom moved to Rochester for a position as a Case Worker for Olmsted County Social Services in 1959. He went on to attend Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH where he earned his Master of Social Work degree in 1964.

Tom met Kiyomi Komuta from Japan while she was an exchange nurse at the Mayo Clinic. They married in Tokyo in 1966. Together they raised two children, Lisa and Mike and had 3 grandchildren. They were married for 54 years. The couple lived in Rochester, MN where Tom continued to work for Olmsted County as a social worker for 33 years.

Throughout junior high, high school, and college, Tom loved singing bass in choirs and a cappella groups. Continuing singing, he became the longest-serving choir member of the Rochester Symphony Orchestra and Chorale from 1959 – 2012. He was a member of the VFW, National Association of Social Workers, and Toastmasters International. Tom also enjoyed his bowling league.

Tom was always known as a really nice, happy, gentle, humble, friendly, very accepting guy, who would do good things for others without need for acknowledgement or accolades. Tom was always respectful of others and got along well with all types.

Tom was a great father. This was admired by his children since he grew up without one. He took them to all their practices, lessons, events/games/etc. He supported them in everything they did. He took them on many family outings and trips. He was a great role model as he always worked hard, had many good friends, and always tried to do the right things. They always felt very loved.

Tom loved being a Minnesotan, loved the Vikings, Twins, Gophers, WCCO, and Minneapolis Central High School.

Tom still very much loved this country and his life here despite the earlier negative treatment before, during and after WWII and its lasting effects.