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On Fujimoto Sensei's and Tomono Sensei's Retirement

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I consider myself honored to have been asked to write a few words for this kiyo as two valued teachers retire from full-time service. I feel I have not really done justice to their contributions, but hope that this short piece shares a sense of the kind of colleagues they are. We will surely miss them.

Fujimoto Sensei

I am not sure when I first met Fujimoto sensei. I think I first got to know her through her volunteer work with some of the main professional development and service organizations in language teaching: TESOL and JALT are two that come to mind.

In fact, looking back, we both participated on a forum at the JALT conference in Hamamatsu in 1997 on Teacher Development through Peer Mentoring. In addition, a former OJC teacher, Tonia McKay Peters was a colleague of Fujimoto sensei when she worked at International University of Japan. Fujimoto sensei is well known and respected by many teachers both in Japan and abroad. There are a few qualities I'd like to point out about her. One is her creativity. She has created or put her own mark on many interesting activities that we have come to use in many of our programs at OJU/OJC including orientation, open campus, schooling, and more. Many of us have used board games that she developed to get students engaging in English. And our material has videos on holding good conversations that she scripted and taped using students. She also helps students develop their abilities. I recall that she, along with Verity sensei, came up with a special process to help students entering speech contests—it was a process that worked and produced several winning entries. And it was an inclusive approach that encouraged students at all levels to enter the contests. Finally, I have had first hand experience working with Fujimoto sensei for three years on our cultural exchange program with Yuan Ze University. She has helped shape the program and increased its focus on peeling back the layers of culture by exploring features that are unfamiliar. Professional development, creativity, speech context preparation, culture exchange all point to a teacher's teacher—someone whom we have been privileged to work with and who we will miss as she transitions out of being a full-time faculty member.

Tomono Sensei

When I think of Tomono sensei, I think of persimmons and apples. Now that is strange some may say, but for those of us who have worked with her, it is not. I can recall countless

meetings in her office where we shared fruit (and tea and occasionally some chocolate) as we made plans for events such as the Communication Graduate Project poster session or just touched base on how our students were doing. What does this tell us about Tomono sensei? Well, she is a gracious host. She created an atmosphere conducive to accomplishing what we had to do in the time frame we had. She is concerned about our well-being (health). We could enjoy healthy snacks as we conducted our business. But there is much more to Tomono sensei than good taste in snacks. She really cares about her students and creates opportunities for them to see interpreting take place in real life situations. Many of my students told me how they were going to go to the Kyoto Prize (an international award to honor those who have contributed significantly to the scientific, cultural, and spiritual betterment of mankind) because of Tomono sensei. And she coaches her students well—one of her students won first prize in the 7th Student Interpretation Contest held at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies. Gracious and health conscious host, caring teacher, successful coach these are all qualities that Tomono sensei embodies. And they are qualities we will miss as she moves on. We were lucky to have her as a colleague and will miss her contributions.