

Dr. Jean Mayer Global Citizenship Award Presentation Ceremony
January 5, 2011
Memorial Hall, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum

(Mr. Ben Perlstein, Tufts University IGL member)

Domo arigato.

Today, the Institute for Global Leadership at Tufts University recognizes the work of Mayor Tadatashi Akiba with a Dr. Jean Mayer Global Citizenship Award.

The Institute for Global Leadership began 25 years ago at Tufts University with a mission of preparing new generations of critical thinkers for effective and ethical leadership, ready to act as global citizens in addressing the international and national issues across cultures. The institute promotes the linkage of theory to practice and exposes students to the rigors and challenges of a diverse world.

The Dr. Jean Mayer Global Citizenship Award was established in 1993 to honor Tufts University President and Chancellor Dr. Jean Mayer by challenging and inspiring our students and the community through recognizing distinguished scholars and practitioners whose moral courage, personal integrity, and passion for scholarship resonate his dictum that "scholarship, research and teaching must be dedicated to solving the most pressing problems facing the world."

A world-renowned nutritionist publishing more than 750 scientific papers and 10 books, Jean Mayer advised three U.S. Presidents, Nixon, Ford and Carter, the U.S. Congress, the United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organization, the World Health Organization, the United Nations' Children's Fund and the U.S. Secretary of State.

In 1966, Dr. Jean Mayer was the first scientist to speak out against the use of herbicides in the Vietnam War. In 1969, he led a mission to war-torn Biafra to assess health and nutrition conditions. In 1970, he organized an international symposium on famine, which produced the first comprehensive document on how nutrition and relief operations should be handled in times of disaster and he was the first to suggest that using starvation as a political tool was a violation of human rights and should be outlawed.

For his service in World War II, he was awarded 14 decorations, including three Croix de Guerre, the Resistance Medal and the Cross of the Knight of the Legion of Honor.

As chair of the New England Board of Higher Education, he created scholarships that enabled non-white South Africans to go to mixed race universities in their own country.

Of Dr. Jean Mayer, Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said, "Dr. Mayer's life and productive career have been dedicated to the service of mankind."

The Institute for Global Leadership established the Dr. Jean Mayer Global Citizenship Award in 1993 to honor the work and life of Dr. Jean Mayer, a great friend of the Institute.

We believe that Dr. Jean Mayer would be thrilled with the presentation of this award to Mayor Akiba, a leader in the global disarmament movement and a former Tufts University faculty member.

While his career may have begun with mathematics, many would consider him a global humanist. Since becoming the Mayor of Hiroshima, Dr. Akiba has worked tirelessly to foster peace and intercultural understanding both within his city and around the world. He has worked to develop Hiroshima into a leading International Peace Culture City and a city that extols rebirth and reconciliation.

As president of the Mayors for Peace, he has increased the organization's membership as well as its profile. Mayors for Peace now involves 4,467 cities in 150 countries and regions. He has traveled the world to encourage policymakers and citizens to work toward banning nuclear weapons by the year 2020 as part of the organization's 2020 Vision Campaign. This ongoing campaign to abolish nuclear weapons has received strong endorsements from the European Parliament, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), and the Third World Congress of United Cities and Local Governments, among many others. Mayor Akiba and the efforts of Mayors for Peace have been awarded the World Citizenship Award from the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, the Sean MacBride Peace Prize from the International Peace Bureau, and the Nuclear-Free Future Award from the Franz Moll Foundation. Most recently, he was bestowed with the Ramon Magsaysay Award, which is considered the "Nobel Prize" of Asia.

Importantly, Mayor Akiba's work has been informed by the voices and history of his city, Hiroshima.

Here now is Tufts University senior Nadia Nibbs, who is also an Institute for Global Leadership Synaptic Scholar. She is here on behalf of the Institute for Global Leadership, which is honored to present the Dr. Jean Mayer Global Citizenship Award to Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba.

(Ms. Nadia Nibbs, Tufts University IGL member)

Mayor Akiba, we really are fortunate to be able to hear you today share your thoughts and your opinions on world peace. Thank you for really being a change agent.

So on behalf of Tufts University, I would like to present you the Jean Mayer Award in recognition of your strong commitment to peace and intercultural understanding and of your dedication to the abolition of nuclear weapons.

(Dr. Tadatoshi Akiba, Mayor of Hiroshima)

Thank you very much. It means a great deal that Tufts University, where I used to teach and which, as I said before, was my home, recognizes my work as the mayor of Hiroshima, even though I left Tufts to come to Hiroshima. And in a sense I wish that I would be able to go back to Tufts to be among you after I retire from the mayoral position.

But more than anything else, this award, the Jean Mayer Award representing Dr. Mayer's contribution to humanity, is important for me. He was the president of Tufts University while I was teaching there and his leadership and his tireless work for creating a better future for all of us was an example for all the faculty members and students.

Because of his dedication, we were able to help some of the global causes that we were concerned about at that point. For example, while he was the president, there was the apartheid problem in South Africa. But Tufts as a community, urged by students, was able to take a stand on the issue finally and from the outside of South Africa we were able to contribute toward eliminating apartheid. And so that tradition goes on. This is a symbol of Tuft's commitment and also your commitment, and I graciously accept this award. Thank you very much and I pledge to continue to work with you to create a nuclear weapon free world by 2020. So thank you very much.