



**Don Tahara**  
2021 Community Spirit Award

Don Tahara is a restaurateur, chef, and caterer who has serviced the JA and Little Tokyo community for many years. He was impressed by the volunteerism exhibited by people affiliated with the various non-profit organizations along with the strong social commitment by Little Tokyo's community leaders and made it his goal to provide below market rate catering to the community since the early 1990's. He has supported JANM, LTSC, Visual Communications, East West Players, AADAP, JACCC and Aratani Theatre, Go For Broke, Nisei Week, and Keiro among others. He has catered events, weddings, celebrations, and memorial services at various local churches and temples.

In 2004, Don signed a lease to build a restaurant at the site of the historic Far East Cafe. He put together an ownership team to create Far Bar with the concept of community service an integral part of the mission statement. Far Bar is a Little Tokyo meeting place where the community dines and imbibes. It is the site of countless community meetings and events. He opened Sake Dojo in 2018 on 1st Street to celebrate sake and Japanese cuisine in the growing Little Tokyo district and to provide another community venue. Sake Dojo has hosted numerous JA and Asian events for non-profits, professional associations, and family celebrations. He has hosted the Little Tokyo Cocktail Competition and has provided lunches for Sparkle Little Tokyo. Sake Dojo prepares daily lunches for senior citizens through the Little Tokyo Nutritional Services program. The restaurant's catering kitchen has prepared meals for over 700 people.

Don was born, raised, and educated in Los Angeles and is a dedicated Trojan fan. He and his wife were married at Nishi Betsuin, have a daughter, and reside in Los Angeles.