

Featured Dojo-cho, March 2017



Jerome Buenviaje

Takemusu Aikido New Mexico, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Division 1

I was first introduced to Aikido in 1989, at age 16, when I saw a demonstration of Mar DeLeon Sensei of Philippine Aikikai in San Diego, California. I was fascinated by the throwing and the ability of DeLeon Sensei to control multiple attackers. I joined his dojo and have not stopped training since.

INFLUENTIAL TEACHERS

There have been many teachers that have influenced my aikido and inspire me to continue learning and growing. From DeLeon Sensei, I learned about the philosophy of Aikido and the basic movements of Aikido. A few years after I started training, I was fortunate enough to attend a seminar of Morihiro Saito in San Diego, California. I was inspired by his technical skills and the manner in which he taught. My first Iwama Sensei was Wolfgang Baumgartner Sensei whom I trained with when he was in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He has great charisma and passion for the art of aikido. My own passion for aikido grew under Baumgartner Sensei's tutelage and under him I decided that Iwama was the style I wanted to learn. My aikido grew under the intensity of training and strict discipline at the Tanrenkan Dojo under Hitohiro Saito in Iwama, Japan. Patricia Hendricks Sensei is my Sensei and she taught me to be more precise in my technique yet fluid at the same time. Hendricks Sensei is an amazing and inspirational leader; inspiring me to be a better teacher to my students.

TAKEMUSU AIKIDO NEW MEXICO

Founded in 2008, the name of my dojo is Takemusu Aikido New Mexico. It's a small dojo but the training is intense. My logo is composed of a Japanese Koi Fish. In Japan,

the koi fish is a symbol of good fortune or luck but they also are associated with perseverance in adversity and strength of purpose. Perseverance and strength of purpose are traits that are needed when training in aikido, and in life in general.

MEMORABLE AIKIDO EXPERIENCE

A memorable Aikido experience was not on the mat or related to training at all. The night before I left Iwama, the other uchideshis held a sayonara party for me. Saito Sensei prepared a special dish - chicken sashimi, RAW chicken. I am a sushi and Japanese cuisine lover, but had never had chicken sashimi before. My microbiology background made me hesitant to eat it, but when Saito Sensei prepares you a dish, you eat it. The chicken sashimi was delicious and I ended up eating half the dish all by myself, although I was nervous about whether I would be okay for my flight the next day.