

CITY OF LOS ANGELES



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, born August 1, 1920 in Fresno, California, the legendary Dr. Sammy Lee is the first American of Asian descent to win an Olympic gold medal, the first person of color to win a medal in diving and the first man to win back-to-back gold medals in Olympic platform diving; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Sammy Lee became the first person of color to win the National Diving Championship in 1942 and received the James E. Sullivan Memorial Trophy for "Outstanding Amateur Athlete" in 1953; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Sammy Lee studied pre-med at Occidental College, enrolling in an accelerated program completing a four-year program in just three years while he perfected the diving skills that made him a champion; and

WHEREAS, soon after completing his program, Dr. Sammy Lee continued his scholarly pursuits at the University of Southern California Medical School and received his M.D. in 1947. He served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps in Korea; and


WHEREAS, just one year later at the 1948 Olympic Games hosted in London, Dr. Sammy Lee won the gold medal in Men's Platform Diving and took home a bronze for the 3-Meter Springboard. Just 4 years later in Helsinki's 1952 Olympic Games, he won the gold again for platform diving, making him the oldest person to win a gold medal in diving at the age of 32; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Sammy Lee coached many Olympic greats such as gold medalist Bob Webster in 1960 and 1964 and silver medalist Greg Louganis in 1976. During this time Dr. Sammy Lee's branded his own towels, "The Sammy Sports Towel," especially convenient for practice dives; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Sammy Lee had the prestigious honor of representing President Eisenhower, President Nixon, and President Reagan to the 1956, 1972 and 1988 Olympic Games and served on the President's Council for Physical Fitness during five presidential administrations. He was inducted to the US Olympic Hall of Fame in 1990; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Sammy Lee became a pillar of the community and opened a private practice specializing in Otolaryngology until his retirement in 1991;

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that by the adoption of this resolution, the Los Angeles City Council hereby recognizes Dr. Sammy Lee on this day, August 5, 2010, as Dr. Sammy Lee Day. He is an American legend, forever and irrevocably tied to Olympic history. May his outstanding career continue to inspire athletes for generations to come.

CO- PRESENTED BY: 
Herb J. Wesson, Jr.
Councilmember, 10th District

CO- PRESENTED BY: 
Tom LaBonge
Councilmember, 4th District

SECONDED BY:



ADOPTED
AUG 03 2010
LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL