

MOTION

Joseph "Joe" Gatto was born December 22, 1934, in Pueblo, Colorado to a poor, Italian immigrant father and Italian American mother. He served in the United States Army, and became the first in his family to attend college, graduating with a bachelor's degree from California State University, Los Angeles; a master's in education from Pepperdine University; and a master's in design from California State University, Los Angeles. He married in 1968 and subsequently chose to return to California with his wife and three children. In 1978, Mr. Gatto settled his family in the community of Silver Lake.

Mr. Gatto, a beloved teacher, retired after more than 47 years in the classroom as an art and design teacher at the primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels. He helped found the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts, where he served as Dean of the Visual Arts Department. He also taught at other educational institutions, including Granada Hills High School; Pierce College; California State University, Northridge; California State University, Los Angeles; the Otis Art Institute; and the Art Center in Pasadena.


Mr. Gatto inspired thousands of pupils and students with a unique philosophy on teaching. He was awarded the Bravo Award as the California Arts Teacher of the Year in 1986; a recipient of the National Distinguished Teacher Award; honored at the White House in 1988, 1989, and 1998; named the California and Pacific Region Art Educator of the Year in 1990; and received a distinguished teacher award from the City of Los Angeles in 2003.

Mr. Gatto pursued many passions, including cooking dinner for his family; restoring antique furniture; photography and painting; speaking the Italian language; making his own preserves, sausages, and liqueurs; reading; listening to classical bluegrass music; debating politics; writing; growing his own fruits and vegetables; and participating in his Catholic parish, Our Mother of Good Counsel. Mr. Gatto developed his own hand-crafted jewelry line called Wear Art Now.

Mr. Gatto will be remembered nationwide as an artist, writer, teacher, lecturer, influential member of his community, and loving father and grandfather. In recognition of Joseph Anthony Gatto's lifetime achievements, it is appropriate that the City honor him by naming the intersection at Rowena Avenue and West Silver Lake Drive as the "Joseph Anthony Gatto Memorial Square".

I THEREFORE MOVE that the intersection at Rowena Avenue and West Silver Lake Drive be designated as the "Joseph Anthony Gatto Memorial Square".

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of Transportation be instructed to work with Council District 4 in the development and installation of an appropriate commemorative sign(s), to be funded by Council District 4.

PRESENTED BY: 
TOM LABONGE
Councilmember, 4th District

CO-PRESENTED BY: 
JOE BUSCAINO
Councilmember, 15th District

SECONDED BY: 
MITCH O'FARRELL
Councilmember, 13th District

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ORIGINAL

