

Karl Geis Promoted to Judan then Peacefully Passes Away

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The United States Judo Association promoted Karl Geis to Judan (10th degree black belt) at a presentation in his Houston dojo on March 12th, 2014. Geis is one of the [founding fathers of the USJA](#) and has trained hundreds of judo leaders throughout United States including several Olympians in his over 60 years in judo.

Here are letters from tonight's ceremony that were read by USJA President, Gary Goltz.

Dear Gary:

Without reservation, I fully support promoting the judo legend Karl Geis to Judan. Karl and I studied judo together in Japan during the early 1950s. In those days he was truly a tiger on the mat and he had a chance to practice and study with Japan's top instructors and legends like Osawa, Daigo, Kotani, Otaki, Kobayashi, Mifune and Tomiki. When Karl returned to the USA he became a professional full-time instructor. We have always been in touch with each other and each time we would sign off with "I love you Karl" or he would say "I love you Hal". Most important I regard Karl as my brother. It is ironic, that I started out as Karl's teacher and later he became my teacher. In my opinion Karl not only had a brilliant mind but he was also a genius when it came to understanding the aspects of judo and aikido. Karl is truly a teacher's teacher.

Hal Sharp

Dear Gary:

Thanks for including the Promotion Board in your decision to promote Karl Geis to Judan. I have known Karl for many years and I know some of his former students who are still active in Judo at the National and International level. His teaching has made great contributions to American Judo. My vote is Yes!

Ernie Smith

Dear Karl:

I was very happy and gratified to hear from Gary that you are being awarded the rank of Judan. You are joining the ranks of some of the greatest men in Judo History. Men like Kotani, Diego, and Osawa. Thank you for allowing me to be a small part of that amazing journey. I am eternally grateful.

Jimmy Wooley

Hi Gary:

Anything lower than Eleventh Degree would be an insult to Karl Geis. How many men or women are not only champions on the mat, but are champions off the mat. Karl walks on water in my book.

Keep smiling Gene LeBell





“We are sad to report that Karl Geis passed away peacefully on 4-7-14 due to cancer related complications. It is a big loss for the world of judo. We are grateful we were able to promote him while he was still alive”, said Gary Goltz, USJA President.

[Download Karl E. Geis’ Biography & OB](#) for more information.
