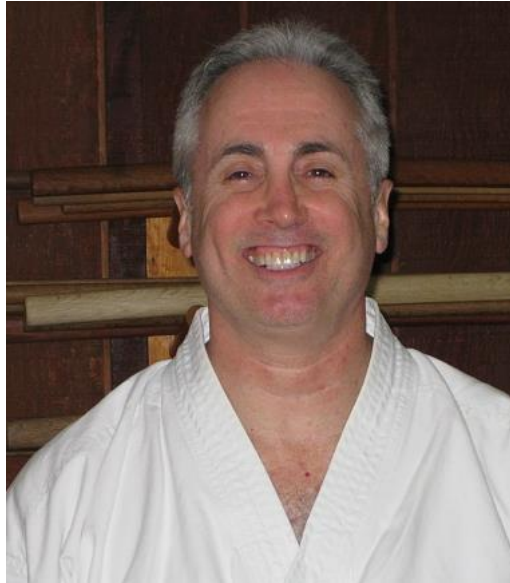


Featured Senior Instructor, April 2009



Jordan Kramer

Aikido of San Leandro, San Leandro, California
Division 1

I first became aware of aikido in 1978 when a college friend recommended that I try it. I watched a class at a club on campus. When I moved to California after graduation, I looked for a dojo. Word of mouth led me to the Aikido Institute on College Avenue in Oakland. I started training in 1979.

I began training at the old Turk Street Dojo in spring of 1981 after moving to San Francisco. I attended classes given by all three instructors. Frank Doran Sensei administered my 5th kyu test. I had to stop training because school became too demanding. Except for a few months in 1985, I was not able to resume regular training in Oakland until 1988.

I made my first trip to Iwama for three weeks in 1993 to study under Saito Sensei. I made a few other such trips until 1996. In July of that year, I put most of my possessions in storage and rented out my apartment. I traveled to Iwama for five to six week stays as an uchi deshi.

When I was in the US, I lived in the Oakland dojo. I worked part-time to continue my medical career and to pay for my trips to Japan. I continued this for 18 months through December 1997. I was able to achieve my goal of spending a year in Iwama. I am grateful to Kim Peuser Sensei and Hoa

Newens Sensei for their guidance and support.

I began training at Aikido of San Leandro in January 1998 and have continued to the present. I am grateful for being able to train under Pat Hendricks Sensei. Her dedication to the art over three decades and her mastery as a teacher has facilitated my continued development.

My most Memorable Aikido Experience

I was in Iwama in October 1996, when Saito Sensei became ill and was scheduled for surgery. I had to return to the US in November of that year because of work obligations. I returned to Iwama in January 1997. Being in the medical field, I expected Saito Sensei to be bedridden for months. I wondered if he would ever resume teaching.

I walked down the path to his house with some apprehension. I rang the doorbell. I was shocked when he opened the door to greet me. He had a big smile on his face. He pulled open his shirt to show me the scar from his surgery. He spoke of the fact that he had required no pain medications after the operation. His rapid recovery spoke volumes about the power of aikido.