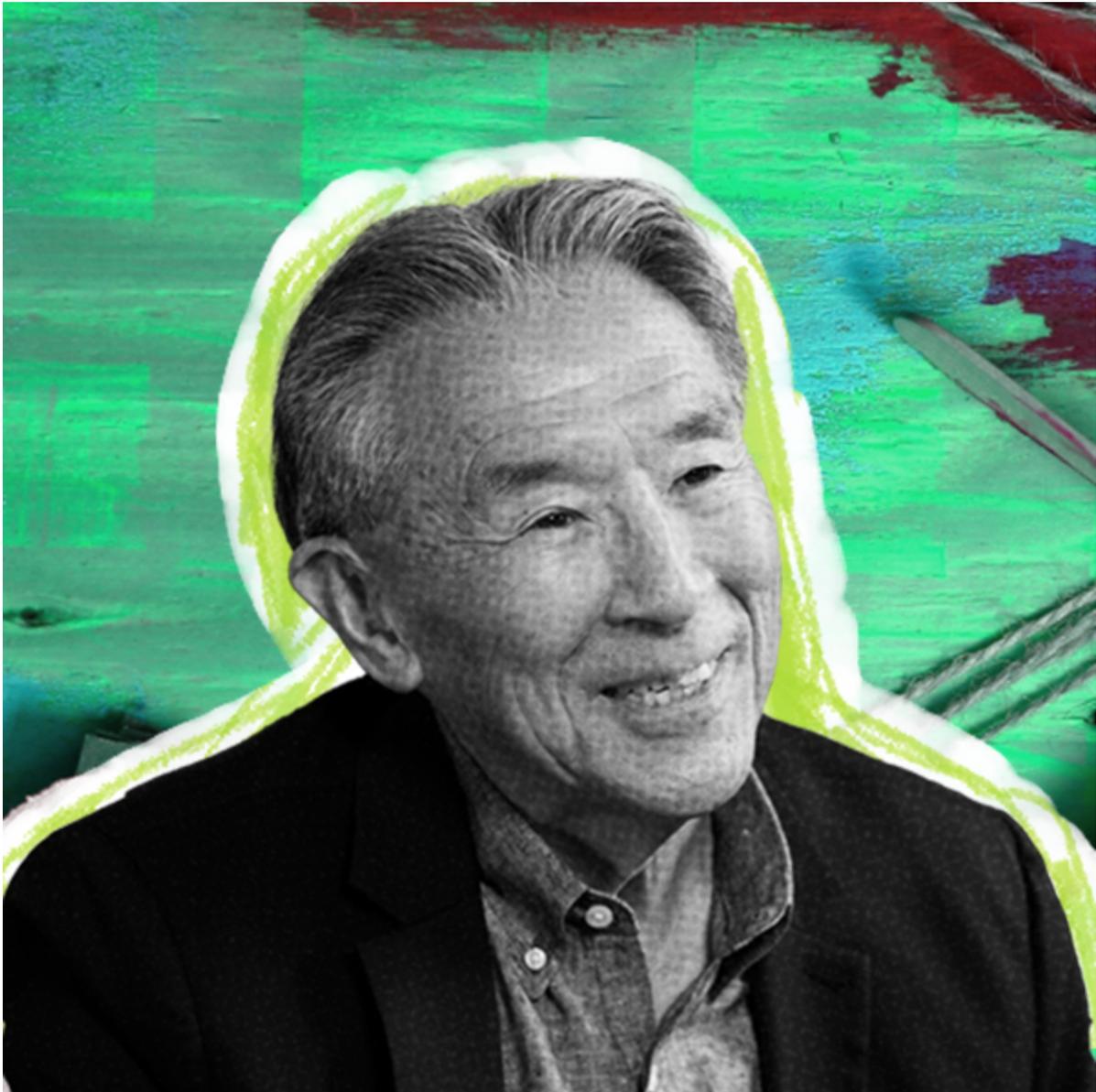


John Matsui

 roadtripnation.com/leader/john-matsui



Assistant Dean of Biological Sciences & Director of Biology Scholars Program

University of California, Berkeley

Berkeley, CA USA

“Wherever you go, go with all of your heart.”

Videos

By Roadtrip Nation

John Matsui



Milestones

My road in life has taken me all over.

I grew up in a low income household in the flats of west Berkeley, California.

I struggled through high school for various reasons, including an undiagnosed learning disability.

I graduated with a low GPA that prevented me from going to a four-year university, so I went to community college first and spent three years learning how to learn and fill the gaps from high school.

I transferred to UC Berkeley where I earned my bachelor's and master's degrees.

After earning my master's degree, I went to UC Santa Barbara for my Ph.D.

I spent nine years teaching general biology at community college—the experience was great because it taught me how to teach.

I was eventually recruited back to UC Berkeley to help write a grant that would start the Biology Scholars Program.

I currently direct the Biology Scholars Program in the Department of Integrative Biology at UC Berkeley, which has been helping to level the playing field for science students for 30 years now!

Education

High School

Bachelor

Biological Science

University of California, Berkeley

Graduate

Zoology

University of California, Berkeley

Doctorate
Science Education
University of California, Santa Barbara

Career

Assistant Dean of Biological Sciences & Director of Biology Scholars Program

I direct a program that makes biology more accessible for all students with an interest to become leaders in science.

Career Roadmap



My work combines:

Science

Education

Teaching / Mentoring

Advice for Getting Started

Here's the first step for college students

Try out different programs to find the support and resources you need to succeed in college and beyond. Remember that what works for one person may not work for you—so it's important to explore and try multiple options. If you can't find something that works for you, build it yourself. You'll get that personalized support and develop valuable life skills through the process. I also recommend finding multiple mentors to support different needs—psychosocial, financial, etc.

The Noise I Shed

From Peers:

"Don't waste your time creating a feel-good program for students that don't even belong at Berkeley in the first place."

When people say no, you shouldn't, you can't, or it's wrong, sometimes it should be taken as encouragement to continue doing what you're doing. When I was starting the Biology Scholars Program (BSP), one of my colleagues told me that I shouldn't waste my time on a program for students that don't belong. That was a huge "no," but it actually encouraged me to keep going. I knew BSP was something we needed, so I committed to making it happen. 30 years later, BSP is still going strong!

Challenges I Overcame

Racial Discrimination

Racial Discrimination

Though it happened before I was born, my life was marked by the Japanese internment. Growing up, I felt like an outsider constantly trying to prove I was a real American. It's why I created an alternate system that values differences as strengths.

Learning Issues

Learning Issues

I have an undiagnosed learning disability. I process information differently and have a hard time learning in the way people teach. I really struggled in high school because of it. I had to build ways to fill the gaps and teach myself.

Interviewed By

ROADTRIP NATION

CARING FORWARD



Caring Forward

Meet who's building the future of California healthcare.