After he graduated from college, Sammy joined the army as a doctor. There was no time for diving during the Korean War, but Sammy began to practice again after his service ended. He began winning awards again, too, and soon he qualified for the Olympic diving team. He won a gold and a bronze medal in two diving events in the 1948 US Olympics. Sammy was the first Korean American to win a medal at the Olympics. Four years later, in the 1952 Olympics, Sammy became the first man in the world to win two gold medals in an Olympic diving event.

After Sammy stopped diving in competitions, he coached other divers. Some of Sammy’s students also became Olympic athletes and won gold medals in diving. Sammy never gave up his passion for diving or medicine, and he worked hard to include that passion in whatever he did.