

## **QUESTION MONTH: 'What's the significance to you of supporting the organization financially?'**

Our Buddhist practice is an act of contribution. Offerings such as gongyo, home visits, calling members, district meetings, etc., are all acts of sincerity. Financial contribution is one more act to show appreciation for having a beautiful building to practice our faith and enjoy our activities in.

— TINA L. DICKERSON, New York

When a very close friend of mine visits my house, I treat her the best I can to show my appreciation for the visit. Likewise, I think of my financial contributions to the organization as an excellent opportunity to express my wholehearted appreciation toward the SGI.

— YANG JA PARK, St. Louis, Mo.

Supporting the SGI is an act of my sincere appreciation for the support, dedication and tireless efforts of all those who put the happiness of the members first. Studying the Lotus Sutra and practicing for myself and others is the greatest benefit I can ever imagine. Like Sessen Doji, I am overjoyed to make offerings so that others will be able to hear one verse. Eleven years ago when I first began this practice, I was in debt over my head and saw no way out. However, since I began to contribute financially, I have never been without. Not only my financial circumstances but that of other family members have improved.

— CHRISTINA YANNONE, Philadelphia

I used to contribute to many political groups as well as the SGI, until I realized that I could go broke fast if I gave to every organization whose agenda I support. I asked myself: Who can do the most good for the most people and create a truly happy world? Without a doubt, it's the people who practice Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. So by focusing my contributions on the SGI, I feel that I'm reaffirming my conviction in the power of this Buddhism.

— LISA JONES, West Hollywood, Calif.

Giving financial contributions allows me the opportunity to support an organization that is the vital link to contributing to world peace. Over the past several years, I have had many opportunities to participate in contribution campaigns. I consider it an honor and a privilege to lend both time and money to such a great cause. As a result of giving sincerely, I now enjoy financial security. I will always lend my support to the SGI-USA.

— MAUDE O'DONNELL, Houston

Whenever I make a financial commitment to the SGI, I always receive wonderful benefits. But the real reason I make contributions is to pay back, in some small way, the SGI-USA for the way of life it has given me.

— PATTY JACOBS, Las Vegas

The vision and daily life behavior of Daisaku Ikeda convinced me that the SGI will accomplish world peace. The consistency of his leadership causes me to remain convinced, even as our local organization struggles to understand his ideal. Financial contributions represent one more practical way to do world peace with my life. The benefit to me has been financial stability far beyond my expectations.

— CLAUDINE MUSSUTO, Boston

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In my view, right now at this place in time, it means challenging myself to find the best possible workplace for me to grow in, so that I can contribute to society in the fields of art and film. This will be a great opportunity for me to experience breakthroughs and overcome self-doubt so others in my life can benefit from my victories as well. Consequently, I can then contribute to the organization of SGI-USA and our efforts for world peace.

— GENIE CHOW, Albany, Calif.

In the past, I made really high contribution goals that I could never meet. But then I made a determination to set a realistic yearly goal and accomplish it. I've done this and as a result my financial situation has improved. I even overcame bad credit and received my own credit card.

— SARA ALGASE, New York

Twenty years ago I was working freelance and didn't have a dime. I remember filling out an income tax return back then. When I realized I owed \$50, I put my head down on the kitchen table and cried because I didn't have the money to pay it. After all these years of steady contributions, \$50 is now chump change to me. Plus I have the more lasting pleasure of enjoying the many new culture centers and facilities created by the members' sincere financial efforts.

— NIKKI AMDUR, New York

Contributing financially to the SGI-USA has enabled me to understand in a very real way what the Daishonin meant when he talked about the immeasurable benefits one receives when making offerings to the Lotus Sutra. The development of my finances as a result of the May contribution campaigns is insignificant compared to the depth of expansion of my life-condition and the joy and pride I feel in being part of the development and happiness of the American people.

— M.J. WARRENDER-FRAZIER, San Diego, Calif.

I believe that the law of cause and effect is very strict. Therefore, when we make the cause to financially support the organization, the universe, in return, supports our lives and meets our financial needs. Some of us may feel that we are giving to the organization. The reality is we are in fact giving to our lives.

— DOROTHY HAWKINS, Kansas City, Mo.

In Chicago we have a new culture center that wouldn't exist unless the members in the joint territory had understood the importance of establishing a castle of kosen-rufu. The May contribution is a way for me to personally reply to SGI President Ikeda's call to expand the SGI-USA. To make more friends of the SGI, we have to have something to show them. If I am not growing, then kosen-rufu won't expand. And if I can put this feeling into action, then both will occur. The May contribution is an excellent opportunity to do that.

— STEVE FURMAN, Chicago

### **Thanks to all who responded.**

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