

Annual Contribution Forms Available
By DEBORAH GOODWIN
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Annual contribution forms, on which members can make determinations for 1998 donations, are available through the joint territories in November and December.

In an interview, General Director Zaitso expressed his deep appreciation for the members and their contributions to the growth and expansion of our world peace movement in the United States.

“It’s wonderful,” Mr. Zaitso said, “that we were able to celebrate many activities, exhibits, conferences, training sessions and new construction projects this year.” He praised the American members’ steadfast support, without which, he said, none of these accomplishments would have been possible.

For instance, members’ contributions have made it possible for the organization to install computers for volunteers in each community center. And the SGI-USA plans to continue sponsoring events such as its children’s rights exhibit, currently touring 15 U.S. cities .

The most recent facility opened was the San Francisco Ikeda Auditorium in February. The organization is also in the midst of a projected five-year plan to open two new community centers each year. In 1997, centers in New Jersey and Orlando, Fla., were approved and will open in the near future.

Deep Appreciation

“These community and culture centers are an integral part of our advancement as an organization,” Mr. Zaitso said. “In these places, we assemble to pray for world peace, to conduct vibrant meetings and activities, to share with one another and hold study and dialogue sessions. These places are the epicenters of action based on Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism.”

“Since the beginning of the American movement for worldwide kosen-rufu,” he continued, “the members of our organization have consistently redoubled their efforts to contribute to the creation of facilities that can be enjoyed and shared by all.”

Again thanking the members, Mr. Zaitso said he sensed in their contributions an actualization of the spirit in this Gosho passage: “In the deepest sense, earnest faith is the will to understand and live up to the spirit, not the words, of the sutras.... Therefore, saints consecrate themselves by offering their own bodies, whereas common mortals may consecrate themselves by the sincerity with which they give” (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 268).

He also stressed the significance of the coming year, the Year of Victory of the People for the New Century. “I hope each member will show great actual proof of victory in his or her life, thus contributing in the most meaningful way to the progress of our movement,” he said.

All contributions are tax deductible. Those who contributed in 1997 will get receipts in January 1998 as well as a new SGI-USA pocket calendar, a gift of appreciation.

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