

**SGI-USA CULTURE DEPARTMENT YEAR 2000 GUIDELINES**  
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- Let's continue the emphasis on our small study gatherings, the opportunities these gatherings give us to share Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism with others, especially to create friendships and joy.
- Let's develop activities that support the individual members of the Culture Department.
- Let's practice within our districts, within the heart of our organization, and have the Culture Department become recognized as a valuable and essential part of SGI-USA through our behavior.

As we rapidly approach the 10th anniversary of SGI President Ikeda's founding of the Culture Department, we wish to focus our attention and activities in this celebratory year on our renewed determination to care for the individual Culture Department member. The heart of our guidelines for this year lies in our desire to help each member find joy in their practice, their life and in their professional responsibilities. The key element is joy. We began this process with our new mission statement composed following the direct guidance given to us by President Ikeda on Jan. 30, 1999. Our guidelines and activities for this year should continue to follow the three basic elements of the mission statement (see box on this page).

President Ikeda has often said that true friendships with fellow members of the Culture Department and with people in our professions are the key to creating a new humanistic professional culture and, therefore, the beginnings of a new culture for humanity in this century. Toward that end, we began in 1999 to hold small study and dialogue gatherings in people's homes often times built around the study videotapes. In many areas, these small gatherings became places where members could find kindred spirits with whom to share their hopes and concerns, gatherings to which many brought their friends from work, places where members and non-members alike could discover the wisdom of Buddhism as it applied to their profession's crucial issues. In short, we began to breathe life into President Ikeda's reason for beginning the Culture Department. Consequently, Guideline #1, if you will, calls us to continue the emphasis on these small gatherings, their opportunity to introduce Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism to others, and especially their opportunity to create friendships and joy. Of course, larger meetings of the Culture Department are encouraging to many and should be supported, but they become the support activity for the smaller gatherings.

As part of the refreshed emphasis on the individual member and President Ikeda's encouragement to focus on our mission in society, we wish to re-assert our general director's 1999 guidance that the Culture Department's mission is to encourage the individual members of the Culture Department to be professionals of great character, trustworthiness and wisdom, and to then put this beautiful life-condition into our working environment. The wisdom of Buddhism then shines forth because of who we are and how we conduct ourselves. In so saying, the general director reaffirmed that the Culture Department is not an activity group. By this he meant that our mission does not lie in providing activities for the general membership of SGI-USA, nor in rendering service to

the organization as a Culture Department activity. In other words, Guideline #2, then, encourages us to develop activities to support the individual members of the Culture Department. Should the Culture Department come up with a tremendous idea for an activity or event from which all members of SGI-USA could benefit, i.e., a seminar on nonviolence or a workshop on alternative healthcare, please take that proposal to the region or area leaders and make it happen as a region activity. In other words, this new region activity is not sponsored by the Culture Department, but is wholly supported by individual members of the Culture Department.

This step will not only support Guideline #2, but will guarantee Guideline #3, calling for each of us to practice within our districts, within the heart of our organization, and to have the Culture Department become recognized as a valuable and essential part of SGI-USA through its members' behavior.

President Ikeda's recent encouragement calls for each of us to first and foremost be a person of great and abiding joy. And to then help at least one other person to do the same. We put forward our three guidelines for the year 2000 with this prayer in mind.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

### **Our mission...**

To nurture promising, capable people of faith and intellect who are vital to the development of the United States and who exemplify humanistic leadership, embracing wisdom, hope and compassion.

### **We strive to...**

**Foster a steady stream of capable CD members, beginning with ourselves.**

### **By...**

- Continuing to develop our direct connection to SGI President Ikeda by applying his guidance and by corresponding with him directly.
- Studying Buddhism more deeply and seriously than ever before.
- Steadily engaging in dialogue leading to mutual growth and friendship through home visitations, meetings, outings, electronic media, etc.
- Striving for excellence in our respective fields of endeavor.
- Actively searching for prospective CD members from among new and current members, especially youth and graduate students.
- Doing our best to participate in district activities

**Contribute to the achievement of the goals of SGI-USA.**

### **By...**

- Being a role model of faith equals daily life.
- Supporting discussion meetings through sharing experiences in faith and presenting topics of interest to the members.
- Engaging the youth division members in dialogue and study appropriate to their needs.
- Contributing to the organization's publications (*World Tribune*, *Living Buddhism*, books, pamphlets, etc.).
- Conducting regular communication meetings with appropriate line level leaders.

**Play an important and unique role in the SGI's mission to contribute to society.**

**By...**

- Conducting small-group dialogues in our homes where topics of concern can be discussed with professional colleagues, both member and non-member alike.
- Sponsoring community events which enhance society's understanding of the SGI movement of peace, culture, and education and the principles of the SGI Charter (i.e. seminars, symposia, exhibits, presentations, etc.).
- Applying the wisdom of Buddhism to the creation of a new, more humanistic approach to professionalism in our chosen fields.