

**SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S MESSAGE TO THE NORTHEASTERN ZONE  
KICKOFF  
A NEW ERA BEGINS**

**SGI President Ikeda calls the Northeastern Zone Kickoff ‘the beginning of a new era for the United States.... Your passionate spirit and courageous efforts to contribute to your respective areas are, without fail, the impetus for opening a new page for our kosen-rufu movement.’**

My sincere congratulations on holding your Northeastern Zone Kickoff! This meeting symbolizes the beginning of a new era for the United States. I understand that there are representatives from five regions gathered today—thank you for traveling such long distances.

I am full of confidence that your passionate spirit and courageous efforts to contribute to your respective areas are, without fail, the impetus for opening a new page for our kosen-rufu movement. My deepest respect to all of you, the Northeastern Zone members, who are walking the path of unlimited happiness.

In “Repaying Debts of Gratitude,” Nichiren Daishonin states, “A hundred years of practice in the Land of Perfect Bliss cannot compare to the benefit gained from one day’s practice in the impure world” (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 736). The fact that we are living our day-to-day existence based on the Mystic Law in itself proves the great value and happiness of our lives.

The essence of this Buddhism is found in devoting our entire energies to persevere through each day, always looking toward the future. We are setting ourselves on a steady course for accumulating great fortune by vibrantly chanting daimoku filled with joy and appreciation, and by advancing step by step in our lives—no matter what.

In “Letter to Niike,” the Daishonin says, “What a joy it is for us to have been born in the Latter Day of the Law and to have shared in the propagation of the Lotus Sutra!” (WND, 1026). Please make the spirit of propagation your firm foundation and enjoy participating in SGI activities with the conviction that your prayers and efforts for the sake of the Law, your friends and your communities will become unlimited, everlasting treasures in your own lives. I hope that you will today begin anew to advance gallantly.

Let’s continue helping our many friends establish their own foundation of happiness with this Buddhism. We can see our own lives expand beyond measure through tenacious encouragement of our friends.

When the Northeastern Zone members take action, I believe, the other regions in the United States will follow suit. You will bring about the expansion of happiness throughout the nation with your immense fighting spirit.

I am sending my wholehearted prayers to each and every one of you, who are following the correct path for American kosen-rufu, so that you will overcome every obstacle and establish a new history in this new century.

I am always praying from the depths of my heart for your continued success, victories and good health. Please convey my best regards to your family members. Please take care not to catch cold!

*Daisaku Ikeda*  
*January 28, 2001*