

Youth, Community Involvement Focus of Boston Kickoffs

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Boston Joint Territory got a jump start on 1997 with separate kickoffs for men and youth this week.

Beginning with a chanting session on Jan. 5, the youth of Boston Territory #1 launched into their action plan for the new year, the Year of Advancement Toward the New Century.

After discussing the youth division guidelines for 1997, Territory #1 youth decided to take responsibility for planning and executing district discussion meetings in February, April, July and October; to plan the content and presentations for 11 commemorative meetings during the year; and to create a framework for nurturing and supporting youth division members in each district.

According to Andrew Asboe, Territory #1 young men's division chief, the action plan in the proposal stage won unanimous praise and support from the youth division, the territory and the four-divisional leaders of the joint territory.

Men's division members, too, kicked off the new year with a special gathering on Jan. 11. A question-and-answer period was the highlight of that meeting. The answer to one question, about getting involved in local communities, was answered in part by a letter from SGI-USA Men's Division Chief Richard Sasaki to the Boston men:

"It is important that leaders always ask themselves, 'What can I do to advance kosen-rufu in my community?'" he wrote. "This should be the constant focus of their thoughts and prayers. It is also vital for leaders to gather to discuss matters in earnest and to be united, openly sharing information and pooling their wisdom. Such efforts will pave a fresh path toward victory. Leaders must carefully weigh the various issues confronting them and act accordingly.

"Our local communities represent the true land," Mr. Sasaki continued in the letter. "We are deceiving ourselves if we think we can advance kosen-rufu and practice Buddhism correctly while neglecting the community we live in."

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