

From the Desk of Fred M. Zaitso

To My Dear Fellow SGI-USA Members:

I'm happy to report that the May Commemorative Contribution was another grand success. My most profound thanks for your support of our precious organization, as well as your efforts to explain to others the importance that offerings have in Buddhist practice.

The results show a significant increase not only in the amount of funds collected but, more important, in the number of people who joyfully gave. These increases, I believe, show how our organization is steadily expanding in American society.

Today, only the SGI-USA is spreading the hope-filled philosophy of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism in the United States. With the Daishonin's spirit both to strictly adhere to the Law and to cherish the people, we are working together to build an organization that can most effectively support the Buddha's work.

All our sincere efforts to support this organization — from our prayers to our activities to our donations — result in immeasurable fortune for ourselves and our families. As the Daishonin writes, "One who makes offerings to the votary of the Lotus Sutra in the Latter Day of the Law for even a single day will gain incomparably greater fortune than he would by offering countless treasures to the Buddha for one hundred thousand aeons" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 263).

One of our visions for our organization in the next few years, announced last December, is that we strengthen our financial foundation. When we recently reported our contribution results to SGI President Ikeda, he reminded us of this important goal and urged us to be very careful with the members' money and to look for ways to conserve.

As always, your contributions will be used to support your various activities and community centers across the country. Expenditures fall within the general categories of operations (including community center leases and insurance payments), asset acquisition (including property purchases and building improvements), administrative costs (including salaries and legal and accounting costs), and bookstore operations (including distribution and warehousing costs). Occasionally, the SGI-USA donates to disaster relief or community projects. None of our funds are given to the Soka Gakkai in Japan or Soka University of America.

With prayers for your happiness, health, safety and prosperity, I once again thank you for your generous contributions. Together we will make a great SGI-USA and contribute to a great America.

Sincerely,

Fred M. Zaitso