

## YOUTH STUDY MAY 2000 WANTED: SUCCESSORS

Recently SGI President Ikeda urged us as youth to achieve magnificent victories. He said: “If the youth division achieves magnificent victories for kosen-rufu this year, we can confidently pass them the baton of our kosen-rufu movement for the 21st century. But victory in any realm of endeavor can only be realized by arduous, all-out effort. We cannot win by pretending to work hard or by leaving things to others” (Jan. 28 *World Tribune*, p. 7).

Part of achieving magnificent victories as youth is coming up with new ideas that really encourage people and create value, but it is not easy. First of all, how do you know if your ideas are good? I think the key to making any idea good is to chant with the determination to live up to the mentor–disciple relationship. What is the mentor–disciple relationship? There is nothing extraordinary about this relationship. It is a beautiful human-to-human bond based on the disciple’s sincere desire to understand the heart of the mentor and work toward achieving all their mutual goals. In the Soka Gakkai International, this bond with our mentor, President Ikeda, is exemplified in our spirit to constantly be on the side of the people’s happiness, and to be a humanistic person who takes sincere action for the sake of the people, despite our own challenges and weaknesses. Heartfelt action taken toward this end expands our capability and spurs new growth in every direction.

But even if you have a great idea, how does one cultivate the inner strength to put new ideas into action? To call forth the inner strength required to create a new age, we must be committed to an ideal. Resolving to become triumphant in daily life, to understand the Soka Spirit movement and to take positive action in the community will generate a buzz of fresh activity.

And what do we do if others don’t understand our ideas or even oppose them outright? In his youth, President Ikeda created new activities that were initially misunderstood by the men’s and women’s division. For example, when he first proposed a youth division sports meet, an event that later evolved into the current peace and culture festivals that the SGI holds today, the directors were dead-set against it. At that time, he announced to the directors: “I will not cause the organization any trouble or inconvenience. I promise that propagation will progress dramatically as a result of this event. And I believe that the significance of this sports meet will become more and more apparent with each passing year...” (*The New Human Revolution*, vol. 5, pp. 197–99).

One of the first youth leaders during second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda’s time made a strong declaration upon the formation of the new young men’s division, saying, “Thousands of years of history show that it was always youth who brought changes to their societies. Unmistakably, our great religious movement must be carried out by youth.” It sounds like the creation of a new age is up to us! What is required, therefore, is a deeply heartfelt determination to create something new that will eventually win over the hearts of everyone.

Waves of spontaneous, heartfelt activity from youth—successors who share a sense of responsibility for the future—are indispensable for the eternal flow of our world peace movement. With our eyes toward the future, let’s show our mentor that

we are ready to grab that baton and run with all our might!

By Torilenya Jeffries, Texas

### **QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

1. What qualities are necessary to develop to become a successor?
2. What activities can you create to widen the road SGI President Ikeda has created?
3. What qualities are necessary for us to cultivate to successfully carry out activities that help others?
4. Has there been a time when you passionately wanted to accomplish something positive in your personal life and met with resistance from your friends? What did you do to encourage yourself to reach your goal?