

**TRAILBLAZERS
STEADILY ADVANCE, ONE STEP AT A TIME
BY BOSTON SNOWDEN, SGI-USA VICE STUDENT DIVISION LEADER**

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the student division on a wonderful year 2000!

We have truly made much advancement, however, these advancements were not easy and some of our goals were not attained. I know personally that there are many goals that I wanted to accomplish for 2000 that have not yet come to fruition.

Last year in my region, I wanted to have at least one student division leader per area to take on some of the responsibility for the local student division members. The idea was to make communication faster and more accessible. Many obstacles were a hindrance in accomplishing this goal. We did accomplish a great amount, and I'd like to thank all four divisions for their continual support.

I feel good that we did accomplish part of our goal, which was to identify members who are eager to take on the role of a student division leader. We have even taken the steps to finalize these appointments.

I am confident that this year in our region these positions will be filled with the most capable leaders. In some parts of our region many of the student division members have already made giant steps in fulfilling the national student division goals. There have been exhibits and conferences held, there has also been new campus clubs organized, and friendships formed because of the student division's efforts in our region.

This year, I have made three determinations to help myself accomplish my goals: First, to put my practice first. I learned early in my introduction to this faith that keeping the Gohonzon first would keep me in rhythm with the cosmos.

Second, keep my composure when responsibilities increase. Wandering around aimlessly just gives me a headache. Third, I need to try to stop clutching all the fortune, and give others the opportunity to gain benefit by asking for their help.

It's time now to put the past behind and move towards the next goal—even if was last year's. In his speech to the student division, SGI President Ikeda reminds us that “youth means to burn with hope, daring to face hardship and challenge, to forge a new path based on philosophy, passion and struggle. To steadily advance on your chosen path one step at a time.”

President Ikeda further said: “ I want each of you to make discoveries on your own. I want you to make lasting achievements. And they don't have to make headlines. They can be ordinary things. What matters the most is that you know what you have done. I hope that you will leave something behind, something of which you can proudly declare to the world: This is my discovery! This is how I lived my life!” (Aug. 27, 1999, *World Tribune*, p. 8)

My hope for the student division of our region is that we continue to follow along the path of mentor and disciple, and continue to form campus clubs, do shakubuku and make friends! I get so excited when I think of this new year and the new challenges it brings. There is nothing to fear because, as President Ikeda says, “Victory and hard work go hand in hand...[and] our strength is indomitable” (Nov. 10, 2000, *World Tribune*, pg. 4).

I am determined to do everything I can to support all areas of the Texas/Oklahoma student division and our new leaders. Together, with the help of all four divisions we'll make this a “Year of Total Victory for the New Century.”