



## Organization Dept

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**DISTRIBUTE TO:** All Group through Zone Women's Leaders  
**FROM:** Women's Leader—Linda Johnson  
Women's Chief Secretary—Barbara Snyder  
**SUBJECT:** 2010 Women's Activity Guidelines

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SGI President Ikeda, states: “The power of the Mystic law to ‘change poison into medicine’ is absolute. The purpose of faith is to transform our karma and enjoy a life of unparalleled happiness. Prayer to the Gohonzon, chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, is not abstract or theoretical. It is a burning inner flame to be victorious. If that flame of resolve blazes in our heart the instant we chant, we have already won. It is, as the Daishonin declares, like ‘a lantern lighting up a place that has been dark for a hundred, a thousand, or ten thousand- years.’ (WND-1, 23) This is the practice of human revolution that is accessible to all.” (May 15 *World Tribune*, p.5)

In the December 25, 2009 *World Tribune* you will find a special women's insert that thoroughly outlines the focus of activities for the SGI-USA Women's Division in 2010, including our women's theme for next year: “Live the Vow.” In addition, in early December a special DVD message of encouragement from Linda was shipped out for every chapter, area, region, zone and territory. Please share this with all of the women in your organization. In it, she fully explains our women's activities toward February. In brief, they are as follows:

**February District Discussion Meetings** – These four-divisional district meetings will be led by the women but attended by all members together with many guests. Let's celebrate women's month with the greatest attendance and largest number of people receiving the Gohonzon and beginning their own journey of human revolution. In February, let's ensure that every district is able to welcome at least one new member.

**20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Women's Day meetings** – This will be a larger gathering for all women, including our younger sisters in faith. Rather than focusing on decorations and food, please pour your hearts into making it a faith-based, joyful meeting that centers on two or three jaw-dropping experiences and bring as many guests as possible (with an emphasis on youth.) Please choose the most appropriate level of the organization



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(chapter, area or region) for your locale. We suggest that the women who take responsibility for these meetings are not the same people planning the district discussion meetings. Please choose a date prior to the discussion meetings that will allow plenty of time to follow up with guests and bring them back to the district meeting at the end of February.

### **Sophia Group of the Second Act**

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of thousands of women across the country during the last twenty years, the Sophia Group has flourished, enabling the women of SGI-USA to grow and develop into capable leaders of the 21st century. It is a source of great pride that so many leaders have been raised through participating in the Sophia Group.

The continuing mission of each Sophia sister is to infuse a passion for study into her district through sharing the joy and benefit derived from her participation in the Sophia Group.

Now, in the Second Act of worldwide *kosen-rufu*, we have revisited the original purpose of President Ikeda's establishment of the Sophia Group, which is:

1. Leadership development based on the Oneness of Mentor and Disciple; and
2. Support for the transition of recent YWD graduates into the Women's Division.

In support of this purpose, the focal points of the Sophia group have always been to:

- ❖ Understand the history of the SGI and the significance of the district discussion meeting;
- ❖ Deepen one's understanding of the oneness of mentor and disciple; and
- ❖ Infuse the spirit of these first two points into the district discussion meetings.

**In keeping with the original spirit of Sophia Group, the following new guidelines for participation have been established, effective January 2010.**

All Sophia Group members will have a term limit of two years, including facilitators. In January of every even year—2010, 2012, 2014, etc.—a new term will start with a new group of women ... members and facilitators alike. Women who have participated in the Sophia Group prior to 2010 are



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eligible to join a two-year term of Sophia Group beginning in January 2010. All existing Sophia Groups will have completed their present rotation and finished their current curriculum at the end of 2009.

Throughout SGI-USA, Sophia Groups of the Second Act will have begun the new curriculum together in January 2010. We hope that Sophia Groups that have previously started in the fall or at another time of year will have inaugurated their Sophia Group of the Second Act last month in unity with their sister groups around the country.

### **Material:**

The material for all Sophia Group activities will be *The Human Revolution*, (Books One and Two) exclusively. Book One contains the original Volumes 1-6 and Book Two contains Volumes 7-12. (This is the blue, two-book boxed set published in 2004, which is the most current version.) In the SGI-USA, *The Human Revolution* is available in English only. (For other language-based Sophia Groups, please select appropriate material available in your respective language.)

Due to the large volume of material in *The Human Revolution*, we suggest that each Sophia Group meet once a month, January through December, for the entire two-year term. Each local Sophia Group should determine the number of pages or chapters to read each month, as well as the most effective agenda for meetings. The group should create its own pace and read the amount that best suits its membership. As a result, it is understood that the entire two-book set may not be completed within the two-year term.

### **Facilitators:**

Facilitators should be selected and assigned by the appropriate level (region or area) of women leaders. No prior Sophia Group experience is necessary. This is a chance to give more women the opportunity to grow and develop through taking responsibility as a facilitator. With the spirit of continually raising more successors, leaders should select individuals they are confident can fulfill this important responsibility. This will keep the Sophia Group fresh and vital.

### **Group Size:**

Please select a Sophia group size that is small enough to accommodate meaningful discussion.

It is our hope that throughout her Sophia Group term, and after its completion, each participant will



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infuse her district with the benefit of her experience, helping to generate the most exciting discussion meetings based on faith, practice, and study, with a strong emphasis on the importance of study.

### **Secretariat or Planning Board:**

The planning board or secretariat is generally intended to provide support and assistance, as needed, for the region, zone or territory women's leader.

Planning boards are by no means a requirement and do not need to be created unless the need arises. Existing planning boards or secretariats that are fulfilling a specific function to support the women's leader may continue to function with a clear vision of its ongoing mission and a specified term limit.

In many cases, the creation of a one-time planning committee for a specific event will serve the purpose a planning board may have taken on, create the opportunity for wider participation and remove the necessity of creating a permanent board.

### **Mothers/Parents Groups:**

Mothers and/or parents group activities provide an opportunity for parents to engage in dialogue about how they can encourage the development of their children's faith at home, how they can resolve problems encountered in raising their children, and how they can use faith to accomplish their goals in every area of their life.

After appropriate discussion in each organization, a mothers and/or parents group may be created based on the needs of the members. Each organization should determine on what level the activities will occur and how often. Organizations should be flexible about what ages of children define the group based on the needs of the members. Meeting frequency should be determined by what kind of support and faith encouragement is needed. While it is generally the women who determine the need for a mothers and/or parents group, men are welcome to initiate and/or support the parents group.



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### **Supporting Young Women and Young Women recent graduates:**

President Ikeda has aptly stated, “Today’s Soka Gakkai, too, has been built by women who, since they were young, have dedicated themselves tirelessly for the sake of suffering friends and for *kosen-rufu*, with the determination of Joans of Arc of the Mystic Law. My deepest appreciation to the women! Now, it is the young women’s turn to take the lead. All around the world, the Age of Women has arrived. I hope that our women and young women will work together, inspire each other and demonstrate a combined strength far greater than what either could achieve alone. We are living in a turbulent age. Separate, we are weak. Those who can join together like a powerful alloy will triumph.” (*World Tribune*, April 19, 2002, p. 7)

To continue raising successors in the Second Act of *kosen-rufu*, we should always focus on warmly embracing all of the young women who will graduate into women’s division.

In order to wholeheartedly welcome them into the women’s division, please visit every young woman in advance of her graduation date. Engage in sincere and honest dialogue, and determine the best place for her to practice.

Because experienced YWD leaders will be the women’s leaders of the future, it is imperative that they gain leadership experience at the district level, which is at the forefront of our organization. Prior to graduation, at the appropriate level personnel committee, please have a thorough discussion to determine which graduates should have a leadership position in the women’s division and what the appropriate position should be.

At the time of graduation, please acknowledge each graduate at a district discussion meeting and/or World Peace Prayer meeting. Where appropriate, please announce the graduate’s new leadership position in the women’s division at the same time.