

Message of Gratitude
Form Dr. Hideo Kanazawa

June 25th, 2011

The massive tsunami that struck the Pacific coast of Japan following the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11 was beyond anything imaginable. This disaster, which resulted in the loss of countless lives, homes and buildings, is still fresh in our memories. Many of the members of the Omoto, Taro, Hakubu, Miyako and Yamada affiliated dojos in our prefecture suffered from this tragedy. Among our members, Mr. Shiro Itoh, the head of the Yamada dojo and director of our prefecture's headquarters, lost his life in the tsunami. As we had been looking forward to establishing a new SKIF structure within Iwate prefecture, his passing came as a disappointing and heartbreaking blow.

Three months have already passed since the disaster and affected regions appear to be heading toward recovery, albeit slowly. Areas that have already been cleared of rubble feel like deserted wastelands. While the hospital had suffered partial destruction, through the cooperation of our staff and others, we were able to offer medical care four days after the earthquake struck, even though examination hours were shortened.

We have resumed our regular examination hours and, now that we have concluded the rounds we were making to provide examinations at evacuation centers, I have the chance to catch my breath, both emotionally as well as physically.

In response to the disaster, we have received countless financial donations and messages of encouragement from SKIF members both in Japan and overseas. On behalf of the members who were affected by the catastrophe, I would like to express our gratitude and appreciation.

On June 15 and 16, Kanazawa Kancho personally came to the area, visiting Yamada-cho, Iwaizumi-cho and Miyako-shi to convey the many expressions of support from SKIF members from Japan and overseas, presenting them in the form of donations. And to those members suffering in the aftermath of the disaster, he distributed condolence money along with Karate-gi.

Rebuilding and recovering from this tragedy will still take considerable time and we must take into consideration not only the emotional, but also the financial wellbeing of our members. It is for this reason that a portion of the donations that we received have been used to establish a special fund. It is for this reason that I would like to request your understanding.

As the dual pursuits in my life, I will continue to dedicate myself to my profession as a doctor and my training in karate. In addition, although I may not be able to contribute much, I will make every effort to assist in the rebuilding of the affiliated dojos that suffered have damage.

In closing, I would like to request from everyone at SKIF your continued guidance and support for the Iwate prefecture members, and wish you all the best of health and success.

Sincerely yours,

Hideo Kanazawa
Director, Iwate Prefecture Headquarters