

Liz Windover - Speech at World Seikido's 20th Anniversary Awards Banquet

24 November 2007

I would like to start by thanking Master Zeke and Master Gagel for helping me to get to this point in my life. It has been a great experience being a part of the Seikido family for the past 16 years of my life. Being part of the Seikido family has helped me in every aspect of my life as I grew up. I have many memories over the years from classes and tournaments and seminars and dances and picnics and awards banquets and all the people that I have had the privilege to meet and become friends with. I remember being in this very room 10 years ago to do the demonstration for the 10th Anniversary and everyone had such a great time. Could everyone that was a part of Seikido at the 10th Anniversary please stand. (Some people stood, all black belts were already standing at the front of the room) I thank you all for giving me such a great event to remember. And I'd like to thank everyone that came today for coming to the 20th Anniversary and making this a great event too. As the years have gone by people have come and gone, but no matter how brief a time anyone was part of Seikido they are still a part of the Seikido family wherever they go because they will always retain a part of us and we will always retain a part of them. Seikido was created 20 years ago as a dynamic art that will continue to evolve in order to keep up with the latest scientifically sound principles of sparring, self defence and conditioning exercises and as students, spectators and supporters we must all continue to evolve and grow and be open minded to learn new things.

An old Asian legend tells of a robust young warrior who came to learn from an old martial arts master. The warrior went to great lengths to tell the master of his prowess, bragging about his strength and skills. The master politely listened then suggested that they have tea before the teaching begins. When the tea was brought out, the master poured a cup for himself, and then for the warrior, then he poured more into the warrior's cup until it overflowed. The warrior jumped back from the table and asked, "What are you doing?" "Ah," replied the master, "the cup must be empty before it can be filled, you are so full of yourself that I can teach you nothing, you must empty your mind of preconceived ideas before more knowledge can be put in."

Seikido means "the way of universal force" it is the vital force that enlivens the universe. Much of Seikido has come from old Asian philosophy and cultural traditions of etiquette and behaviour that have been laid down by martial arts masters over centuries. Seikido respects these masters who devoted their lives to developing techniques as well as ethical principles which guide their practice. O-Sensei said that the martial way is "the spirit of loving protection for all beings". Having been a student of

Seikido during some of my most impressionable youth years I learned many things about how to act in all aspects of my life. I learned the tenets courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self control and harmony. But I think that the most important and most useful thing that Seikido taught me that I use every day of my life wherever I go and whatever I do is respect. I learned to respect everything and everyone, no matter what and no matter how hard that it may be. And the second most important thing that Seikido taught me is to always set a good example for other people. These are only a few of the many things that I have learned over the past 16 years as a dedicated student to Seikido and I am still continuing to learn and improve on things everyday. All of these things have been possible with the help of fellow students, my parents, the instructors and the masters. So again to all I say thank you for helping me become the person that I am standing here today.