

Thank You

At this time of year, we like to take a moment to reach out with a word of thanks for all you do to keep Thousand Waves strong. Our organization thrives because of all the dedicated training, teaching, and volunteerism our community provides.

With this letter, I'm also hoping you will consider making a final financial gift this year to support our important work. The funds you generously provide during this season of giving help us run important programs all year long.

I know that, like me, you have been at once heartened and saddened by the many revelations hitting the headlines of powerful men who have abused their positions. In a world where the struggles of most victims of harassment do not occur at the hands public figures, it gives me great solace to know that the work we do on the karate training floor at Thousand Waves and in our broader Chicago community connects people with an innate strength – a strength that empowers us all to speak truth to power, both for ourselves and on behalf of others.

Currently, 17 black belt instructors, led by Sei Shihan Nancy and Jun Shihan Sarah, teach one or more classes weekly to keep **our Seido karate program** humming along. About 425 adult and child karate members, about ten percent of whom train with **scholarship assistance**, comprise our student body. One of the most common threads we find woven throughout the rank promotion essays of our adult students is the way in which doing challenging things on the karate training floor enables us to do challenging things outside the dojo's walls.

This year, Senpai Sam Boyer has skillfully led **the Adapted Seido Karate program** with Sensei Tom West, Senpai Denise Coleman, and a great group of volunteers. Our ASK program is a partnership with the Shirley Ryan Ability Lab's Caring for Kids program. Earlier this year, Sam and I met with the head of that program - it was a great joy for me to hear her effusive praise of our work providing kids with disabilities an empowering, physically demanding activity in which they can take pride. The same benefits of hard training that our adults write about make the kids in our ASK program more resilient, too.

Our **Violence Prevention/Empowerment Self-Defense Program**, under the leadership of Amy Jones, has never been busier. We've been training new instructors to meet the demand for our powerful programs, which we continue to deliver all over the city to constituencies as broad as hospital emergency department personnel, children with special needs in the public schools, and community organizations determined to resist the marginalization of vulnerable populations. Over the past year,

we've also established a new quarterly bystander intervention workshop to help counter heightened fears associated with instances of identity-based violence.

As we head into 2018, we're seeking to expand our violence prevention work even further, by offering pro-bono 12-hour trainings to community organizations serving populations at heightened risk of violence. This new, strategic-plan based initiative requires a greater commitment of financial resources. We're counting on your contributions to help us start 2018 on solid financial ground.

Thank you, again, for making everything we do possible.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan Libel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ryan Libel
Executive Director

PS: Thousand Waves' Plum Blossom Society is our way of recognizing donors whose annual giving totals \$1000 or more. On Saturday, February 3, 2018, Sei Shihan Nancy and Jun Shihan Sarah will be hosting a special dinner at their home to honor 2017 Plum Blossom Society members – I hope to see you there!