

**From:** Zen Studies Society [mailto:office@zenstudies.ccsend.com] **On Behalf Of** Zen Studies Society  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 04, 2013 9:11 AM  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Update from the Zen Studies Society Board

THE ZEN STUDIES SOCIETY

New York Zendo Shobo-ji  
Dai Bosatsu Zendo Konga-ji

March 26, 2013

Dear Sangha and Dharma Friends,

In our last letter, we provided you with information about the lawsuit that Eido and Aiho Shimano filed against the Zen Studies Society this past January, as well as the circumstances surrounding their retirement and the history of our financial negotiations over their retirement pension. (To review this letter, click [here](#).) We are writing to you today to keep you informed about our legal response and countersuit, and other related developments.

We first wish to make it clear that we never intended to end up in this antagonistic legal situation; our hope was to negotiate a reasonable and appropriate retirement pension for the Shimanos in a compassionate and harmonious manner. We wanted to heed the words of Soyen Shaku Roshi: "We are not born to fight one against another. We are born to enlighten our wisdom and cultivate our virtues according to the guidance of truth." Over a period of two years, we tried in good faith to arrange for arbitration or mediation to find an equitable solution. However, all those efforts were rejected. Instead, the Shimanos brought a multi-million-dollar lawsuit against the ZSS.

This lawsuit contains erroneous and unfounded claims. Further, it poses a serious threat to the survival of our centers and our organization itself. We therefore had no choice but to answer the Shimanos' lawsuit with a strong countersuit (to learn the details of our countersuit, please click [here](#)). This countersuit was filed on February 21, 2013. On March 11, 2013, the Shimanos delivered a response through their lawyer that not only denies that Eido Roshi failed to uphold his fiduciary and ethical responsibilities to the ZSS and its members and students, but "denies that Shimano Roshi had inappropriate sexual relationships with anyone." In fact, there are many who will testify to the contrary, and further testify that Eido Roshi's actions have repeatedly and significantly harmed individual students and our sangha as a whole. We still hope for a change of heart on the Shimanos' part and an arbitrated or mediated settlement out of court. However, if this is not possible, we must do what is needed to preserve the precious community that is the Zen Studies Society, and we are prepared to defend our legal position vigorously.

As we move forward, we remain deeply committed to maintaining an atmosphere of honesty, transparency, and encouragement within our organization, and to making our beautiful centers safe and welcoming places of practice for all students. We are happy to report that attendance is growing, and that our temple and monastery are recovering. Many excellent new students are deepening their practice, and old-timers are returning, trusting in and supporting our new direction. We are reaching out through our updated website and our new Facebook page. New York Zendo is reviving with the attentions of Spiritual Director Hokuto Dan Diffin and Resident Manager Zuiho Matthew Perez, and Dai Bosatsu Zendo is blooming under the guidance of Shinge Roshi, with dedicated residents, diligent training, and a welcoming atmosphere for lay and ordained students of all backgrounds, abilities, and ages.

We will continue to keep you informed as legal proceedings continue. We humbly ask for your continuing support and counsel, and we look forward to sharing this profound practice with you in 2013 and the years to come.

Let True Dharma Continue!

Gassho,

The Zen Studies Society Board of Directors:

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