

Tong-II Moo-Do Black Belts National Conference

Shota Iwasaki
December 6, 2014



A call to action by Grandmaster Joon Ho Seuk prompted twelve Tong-II Moo-Do (TIMD) black belts from the East Coast and two from the West Coast to come together for a one-day national conference on December 6, 2014, in Clifton, New Jersey. The two West Coast members joined the meeting via conference call. Dr. Seuk urged them to gather in order to revolutionize Tong-II Moo-Do in America.

Master Shota Iwasaki, the national president of TIMD USA, led the conference, which focused primarily on reorganizing TIMD USA and on defining its vision, mission, goals and objectives.

After lengthy discussions, the group agreed to its new vision: “To revive and fulfill the original purpose of martial arts, the true way of life, on both the spiritual and physical dimension.”

The new mission was: “To become a person with mature character and develop the capacity to love, establish a healthy family life and contribute to the society for a peaceful world.”

The list of goals and objectives included establishing more martial arts schools, hosting an annual Peace Cup tournament, and encouraging schools to integrate martial arts into their physical education curricula.

An important part of the conference was the election of national officers. Mr. Emiljun Rapada facilitated the election and announced the results as follows: President: Master Shota Iwasaki; VP for Internal Affairs (Operations): Mr. Emiljun Rapada; VP for External Affairs (Technical): Master Vincent Belmonte, to be assisted by Mr. Ryan Abenir; Secretary-General: Ms. Hosanna Nitro; Treasurer: Mr. Nathaniel Nitro.

Four state representatives were also elected: Mr. Sueo To (New Jersey); Mr. Isagani Purganan (New York); Master Shota Iwasaki (Pennsylvania), and Mr. Thomas Sagayo (California). The group hopes that other states will join the roster and appoint active representatives as well.

The organization relies heavily on the commitment and dedication of its members. As such, a special part of the program was devoted to honoring two exemplary martial artists of the World Tong-II Moo-Do Federation. Master Shota Iwasaki awarded Master Kensaku Takashi and Master Gerry Servito a “Special Award of Recognition” for their unselfish contributions for the expansion of martial arts in Asia and North America. They were also asked to serve as members of the National Advisory Board for TIMD USA, which both willingly accepted. Upon receiving the honor, Master Servito said, “Let us continue to focus not just on the physical aspect of martial arts but, more importantly, on its spiritual aspect, contributing to the fulfillment of one’s purpose of life.”

With officers in place, the group looked to the future. They discussed the annual programming for the federation which includes hosting the Youth Peace Cup Tournament, spring and summer camps, and black belt conferences on both the East and West Coasts. The group also discussed several new initiatives that would help bring broader awareness and enthusiasm to the culture of martial arts. TIMD USA believes that anyone can benefit from martial arts, as it helps individuals gain maturity, responsibility, discipline and self-control, which in turn leads to fulfilling their highest purpose. The group plans to hold regular meetings in the future in order to keep the momentum going and successfully achieve its goals.