



SUMMER 2021 NEWSLETTER

SPECIAL SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Chozen-ji's 2021 summer newsletter focuses on a big new project at the Dojo: the development of new housing on the empty lot at 3570 Kalihi Street to support steadily increasing demand for live-in Zen training. Remarkably, we've already raised \$1.4 million through a capital campaign to fund construction. Please read on for more details about the designs for this new project and how to participate in the capital campaign.

Inside, Sayama Roshi shares a glimpse into the packed

summer sesshin that just took place and Chozen-ji board members Colbert Matsumoto, Michael Kangen, and Vernon Char reflect on the changes and growth Chozen-ji has experienced, and why they're supportive of the new plans for expanding our housing options at the Dojo.

Finally, you'll find photos of the new awning over the entrance to the Budo Dojo, our Summer Sesshin update, the class schedule, and a schedule of upcoming events—including a post-COVID in person Zen Art Show and Sale in November.

A NEW SPRING

SAYAMA DAIAN ROSHI, ABBOT

We just finished the summer sesshin last week. 19 people trained, many of them young and local. It was great to see that. Not that we do not welcome students from anywhere, of any age, but as a temple and Dojo in Kalihi Valley, Chozen-ji cannot be sustained without a new generation of local teachers and students. Twice as I walked over to the Dojo for the evening inspection of the sitting, there was a full rainbow over Chozen-ji. "Wondrous," I thought.

For teisho I spoke on Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng's *Platform Sutra*, one of Chozen-ji's three basic texts, the other two being Takuan's *Fudochi Shimmyo Roku (The Records of the Wondrous Mind of Immovable Wisdom)* and Omori Sogen's *Zen and Budo (Zen and the Martial Way)*. Compared to the other two, the *Platform Sutra* is much longer, much more inaccessible because of its philosophical complexity, and harder to speak from, particularly at a sesshin when everyone is already tired and sleepy.

Hui-neng revolutionized Zen with his teachings that "From the first not a thing is," and that "Seeing your Original Nature" was the essence of practice, not dust-wiping meditation. Hui-neng also taught that training is enlightenment and enlightenment is training with his teaching that the "Straight-

forward mind is the Dojo." And the Dojo is daily life.

The Platform Sutra is introduced as "including the Giving of the Discipline that Frees One from the Attachment to Differentiated Characters" (tr. Wing-tsit Chan, 1963, p. 26). Tanouye Roshi said this was the essence of the book. Differentiated characters refers to "any sphere of objects" external to one's original nature. The original nature is the undifferentiated Void, and "to meditate means to realize the impermutability of one's original nature." (p. 55) When there are attachments, contact between one's nature and external objects lead to thoughts and emotional disturbance. Thoughts and emotional disturbance, however, are also external to the original nature which remains calm and unperturbed.



Instead of imperturbability, Tanouye Roshi used the term “immovability.” The original nature remains undisturbed despite encountering all manner of external objects. Because there are no attachments, the Mind does not stop. Being immovable, the body can move in any direction. Hui-Neng described it this way:

If you cultivate the practice of inactivity,
You will be as inactive as an insentient object.

If you want to see true inactivity,
You must be inactive in your activity....

“One who skillfully differentiates the various dharma-characters,
Abides immovably in the First Principle.” (tr. Wing-tsit Chan, 1963, p. 131)

Tanouye Roshi said, “Fudo is the First Principle.” Fudo is immovability; fudoshin is the immovable mind that does not move because it does not stop. It does not move because there are no attachments in the midst of differentiated objects. Tanouye Roshi explained this using the metaphor of a fan: the whirling blades are like your thoughts and feelings. If you have attachments, you are stuck on the blade and are getting spun around. Through the practice of zazen you get off the blade, first to become aware of the activity of your consciousness and then to develop the ability to see through the thoughts and emotions spinning around from a perspective outside your ego.

In our Canon this actual realization is described as *Iwo no Mi* (body of a huge boulder- going through life like a huge boulder) by Miyamoto Musashi and *Marobashi no Michi* (round bridge – to accord the myriad changes of life) by Yagyū Sekishū.

The rainbows over the Dojo at sesshin are as wondrous as the residences materializing across the street. They will enable us to hold more short-term programs teaching the psychophysical discipline practiced at Chozen-ji. Participants will be able to stay at Chozen-ji for days or weeks to collect the mind in programs such as Zen and Tea, Kendo, or any art, Zen and Politics, Zen and Trauma, or Zen and Executive Development. Such programs will make “the discipline that frees one from attachment to differentiated characters” accessible to many more people.

I deeply thank all the people who contributed to this very important project. Like the growing sakura trees, it signals a new spring for us.



SESSHIN UPDATE

The recent summer sesshin was remarkable in many ways, building on the energy of last winter’s sesshin and the spring live-in training period. The crowd was made up of 19 people with young, mostly local students including a few first-timers. Jackson Sayama was the jiki with assistance from Nick Alamia. In addition to the long hours of zazen there was significant training with the suburito, Hojo Walk, and Kyudo, among other arts. We were also joined by long time teacher and Chozen-ji priest, Gary Omori Sensei, who was given inka on the final day by Sayama Roshi. The excellent food was provided by Tenzos Yumiko Sayama and Cristina Moon.

This winter’s sesshin will be held December 6-12. Please let us know ASAP if you are hoping to attend.



HOUSING A NEW GENERATION AT CHOZEN-JI

CRISTINA MOON

Since last Fall, we've successfully raised \$1.4 million to construct short-term and long-term housing on the empty lot across the street from the Dojo at 3570 Kalihi Street. We're sharing this news with the Chozen-ji network now to invite members and supporters around the world to join us to raise the remaining \$400,000 to break ground and complete construction.

Please go to www.chozen-ji.org/housing to read more about the new designs and to participate in our capital campaign to raise the remaining money needed for the project.



3570 Kalihi Street outlined in red.

Over the past four years, our many experiments trying to share Chozen-ji's unique method of spiritual forging with a new generation have yielded plentiful fruit. We know this, in part, because we keep running out of space.

We still have strong, young live-ins for whom sleeping on the floor of the kitchen and the Dojo is appropriate. But we have also found a growing number of accomplished professionals in their 30s, 40s, and 50s who want to train deeply in Zen to be able to approach any circumstance with wisdom and take away people's fear.

The new housing slated to be built across the street will provide accommodations for a new generation of live-ins staying for several weeks up to several years. It will also facilitate the expansion of short-term, introductory programs like our successful Zen & Politics program, which helps

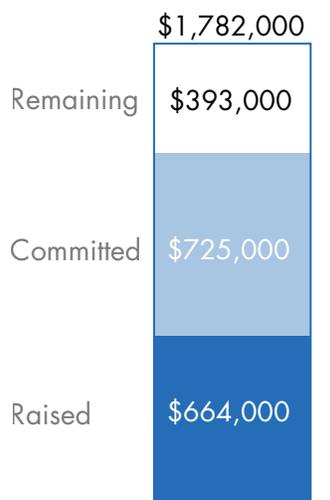
young professionals seeking to turn public leadership into a Way to realize their True Selves. Long-term housing for teachers and Dojo members who are anchoring day-to-day training and programs is also included in the designs.

Thanks to the generosity of foundations and individual donors—led by major gifts from the Island Insurance Foundation, Colbert Matsumoto, the Omidyar ohana, all Chozen-ji Board members, Richard Lim, and Michael Kangen and me—we have already raised the lion's share of funds needed for construction. Special thanks go to the members of our volunteer Capital Campaign Committee: Colbert Matsumoto, Vernon Char, Mike Tokunaga, Christine Cordero, and April Nishimura.

We humbly invite you to learn more about our plans for the new development at 3570 Kalihi Street, and to join our capital campaign by visiting www.chozen-ji.org/housing. Together, we can build the infrastructure needed to continue sending Chozen-ji's unique approach to Zen training out into the world through more and more people experiencing training and doing shugyo.



3-D model of the project. Design is nearly complete.



MESSAGES FROM THE BOARD

MICHAEL KANGEN

Four years ago there was one person signed up to do the summer sesshin. The most recent sesshin had 19 participants. This is a great indicator of the change that has happened over the last four years. We've had 60 people live in for at least three weeks; several hundred people come for programs; and we've had thousands of people through the gates for our art shows, classes, and events.

Numbers are not the only metric that matter. It is critical that the kiai of Chozen-ji is maintained. It has been invaluable during this time that many of the old-time members have helped guide the training and teach the new students. Our Kendo class continues to be led by 7th dan Teshima Sensei and because of our ability to have folks live here and quarantine together our Kendo class was the only class on the island that continued throughout the entire pandemic.

After Tanouye Roshi passed away in 2003, Chozen-ji Archbishop Richard Lim wrote that the Dojo needed to adopt

a strategy of "the many will replace the one". This approach has come to life as the Dojo community of teachers, senior students, and beginners keep the spirit of this place alive and continue to adapt to our changing times. As the community has grown several times over in the last few years, we have run out of bathrooms and sleeping quarters—especially during the pandemic with its required quarantines. Our answer to this challenge is to create more housing on the property the Dojo owns at 3570 Kalihi Street, providing space for some of the longtime members and teachers as well as more facilities for programs and short term stays.

It is a great moment to rally energy for the next generation of people committing their lives to training in Chozen-ji's unique approach to Zen. My commitment is to continue to do everything I can to make sure that another generation of students has the same opportunity to train in Zen that I did 18 years ago..

Michael Kangen is an architect and developer. He serves as the president of the board and Head Priest of Chozen-ji.

COLBERT MATSUMOTO

After completing law school when I was 25, I entered Chozen-ji as a live-in trainee. It was during that time that I underwent the most intense period of training in my life. My days were filled with a rigorous routine from pre-dawn hours to late evening engaged in zazen, sutra chanting, martial arts training, manual labor, and humbling household chores such as cleaning toilets.

The training was not just physically exhausting but mentally taxing, as my 20 years of traditional education were of little help in achieving a frame of mind the training was pointing me toward. The experience was transformational for me. It enabled me to pivot to an alternate career path based upon a newfound perspective that I gained. I exited being a live-in after six months but I continued my training thereafter. My life continues to be profoundly affected

by the insights I gained through many years of training at Chozen-ji.

Looking back, I especially appreciate the value and benefit of my live-in training over 40 years ago. That is why I am enthusiastically committed to supporting the capital campaign for the development of improved residential facilities to enable more individuals to benefit from such training.

I hope others familiar with Chozen-ji's unique approach to Zen training and personal development will also support the capital campaign.

Colbert Matsumoto is the Chairman of Island Holdings, Inc., one of Hawaii's leading companies and has played an active role in civic and community affairs throughout his career.

VERNON CHAR

I came to Daihonzan Chozen-ji in 2003 at the invitation of Abbot Mike Sayama. I was then approaching 70 years of age, a new stage in life departing from a period of acquiring and achieving to a time for contemplation and aging.

Zazen, Kendo, Hojo, Shodo, and Kado are the Ways I have trained in with guidance by Mike Sayama, Tom Fujikawa and Norma Wong. To this day, Chozen-ji remains a place and time for my self-discovery and learning. Recently, I have been happy to see many new people also experiencing the spiritu-

al depth and joy I've found here.

I support the new extension of buildings for use by myself and many new and current members and to enable continued learning. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the new buildings and thereby enhance my participation at Chozen-ji.

Vernon Char is a practicing attorney. He has led professional, community, and private organizations, as well as serving on the State Ethics Commission, Hawaii Tourism Authority, and Board of Land and Natural Resources.

UPDATES

2021 CHOZEN-JI ART SHOW

Friday, November 12 to Sunday, November 14 we'll be back to holding our annual Zen Art Show & Sale in person (with COVID precautions). After the success of last year's all-virtual sale, we will continue selling items online, as well. Items on display and for sale will include calligraphy, special gold

omamori commemorating Chozen-ji's 50th anniversary in 2022, and ceramics fired earlier this year in our gas and wood-fired kilns.

This art show will take a lot of community support to be successful! Please email cristina@chozen-ji.org if you're able to volunteer.



A NEW AWNING FOR THE DOJO

Several weeks ago Dojo members completed construction of a new awning over the steps into the Dojo. This awning was part of the original design but was never built. The design is simple and matches the rest of the Budo Dojo. This solves the long time problem of slippers getting rained on as well as keeping the steps from rotting every several years. It also makes the entry more prominent. Mahalo to everyone who helped with the construction and in particular Biwen Li who did the design.



2021 EVENTS CALENDAR

The following is just a partial listing of events. Please check our website for additional events and class schedule.

August 21 - 10:00am Founder's Memorial Service

November 12-14 - Art Show

December 6-12 - Winter Sesshin

December 31 - 11:00pm-12:30am New Year's Eve ceremony

January 1 - 10:00am New Year's Day ceremony and potluck



SUPPORT ZEN TRAINING AT CHOZEN-JI



We are more than 80% of the way to our \$1.8 million fund-raising goal to construct new housing at 3570 Kalihi Street!

More and more over the past several years, we have run up against the upper limit of how many people can live and train at Chozen-ji. This new development across the street will provide accommodations for new program participants and live-ins, as well as create long-term housing for teachers and Dojo members anchoring day-to-day training and programs.

Because we already own the land, we only need to raise the funds for construction. With your help, we will be able to complete our capital campaign and commence construction across the street this year. Occupancy will start as soon as early 2023.

Please visit www.chozen-ji.org/housing to make an online donation.

Checks can be mailed to:
 Daihonzan Chozen-ji
 3565 Kalihi Street
 Honolulu, HI 96819

2021 CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Zazen - 5:30am	Zazen - 5:30am	Zazen - 5:30am	Zazen - 5:30am	Zazen - 5:30am
Practical Zen for seniors 9:00-10:30am				
Zazen - 6:00pm	Zazen - 6:00pm Intro to Zazen for beginners - 6:00pm	Zazen - 6:00pm	Zazen - 6:00pm	Zazen - 6:00pm Intro to Zazen for beginners - 6:00pm
Zazen - 6:45pm	Zazen - 6:45pm	Zazen - 6:45pm	Zazen - 6:45pm	Zazen - 6:45pm
Okyo - 7:30pm	Hojo/Kendo - 7:30pm	Intro to Zen Training - 7:30pm	Okyo - 7:30pm	Hojo/Kendo - 7:30pm

Saturday	Sunday
Zazen - 8:00am	Zazen - 8:00am Intro to Zazen for beginners - 8:00am
Hitsuzendo (calligraphy) - 8:45am	Chado (Way of Tea) - 8:45am
Kado (Way of the Flower) - 8:45am	Okyo - 8:45am
Ceramics - 8:45am	

