

Motomichi Anno Sensei, 8th *dan*, receives the Japan Martial Arts Distinguished Service Award for Aikido, 2009



On January 12, 2009, at the *Budokan* in Tokyo, Motomichi Anno Sensei was given the Japan Martial Arts Distinguished Service Award for Aikido. Anno Sensei, 8th *dan*, is the current chief instructor of the Kumano Juku Dojo in Shingu, Japan, succeeding the late Michio Hikitsuchi Sensei. Anno Sensei began his study of Aikido in 1954 and received direct instruction from the founder of Aikido during Osensei's frequent visits to the Kumano area. Anno Sensei has traveled many times to teach Aikido in the US and Europe; he is well appreciated for his emphasis on the heart and spirit of the art.

The Japan Martial Arts Association (*Nihon Budo Kyogikai*) consists of nine separate *budo* organizations, such as the All-Japan Federations of Judo, Kendo, Kyudo, Sumo, Karatedo, etc., and the Aikikai (for Aikido). Each January, they get together at the *Budokan* in Tokyo ceremonially to start off the new year of *budo* training. Since the early 1980's, the Association has annually selected one instructor from each martial art, to receive the Martial Arts Distinguished Service Award. Previous recipients who are internationally well-known for their devoted service to Aikido include Senseis Michio Hikitsuchi, Morihiro Saito, Rinjiro Shirata, Seiseki Abe, Seigo Yamaguchi, Hiroshi Tada, and many other wonderful *shihan*.

Anno Sensei wrote a [short essay](#) that was published in the February issue of the *Aikido Shinbun* from Aikikai Hombu Dojo. In it, Anno Sensei describes his search for a meaningful path after the end of the war, and his appreciation for the presence of Aikido in his life for over 50 years. He writes, "I would like to express my gratitude to the Founder Osensei, the second Doshu, the current Doshu, and all teachers and students, offering these words of appreciation as a prayer for the increasing growth and development of Aikido."