

The T. K. and Mitsuko Chiba Seminar Endowment

Birankai North America (BNA) is a 501c(3) nonprofit dedicated to improving the lives of its members through the practice of martial ways (budo) as exemplified by [Aikido](#), [Weapons](#), [Iaido](#) (the study of the Japanese sword), and [Zazen meditation](#), thereby supporting the possibility of individual transformation. BNA does this work through affiliated martial arts schools (dojos) led by certified instructors.

Since its founding in 2001, BNA has grown greatly, spreading across North America from coast to coast and from Canada to Mexico. This success and growth presents the organization with a challenge: the need to bring the larger community together to ensure a coherent community and bring quality, experienced instruction to all of the members practicing Aikido, Weapons, Iaido, and Zazen. In addition to providing guidance to the affiliated dojos, BNA provides intensive training sessions for teachers and students.

One such training opportunity is an annual week-long "Summer Camp," in which many BNA members from all over North America come together for intensive practice under the guidance of senior BNA teachers and one or more guest instructors from outside the organization. In addition, BNA dojos host weekend instructional seminars taught by senior BNA instructors.

These events inspire participants to higher levels of practice and generally raise the level of instruction at the local level. Offering Aikido, Weapons, and Iaido training by teachers from different generations and regions helps keep our community strong and working together on the path of self-development.

Because of the costs involved, many BNA dojos find it difficult to host seminars on a regular basis. The purpose of the Seminar Endowment is to better support BNA members by directly sponsoring weekend seminars with invited senior instructors. The Seminar Endowment will cover the major expenses of bringing a guest instructor to an affiliated dojo, including the honorarium, transportation, and lodging. The remaining seminar expenses will be covered by the host dojo, which collects a fee from the seminar participants. Any extra money generated by the seminar fees will remain with the host dojo to further our mission through their efforts. Offering greater access to training will not only enhance BNA's ability to address its mission, but will also answer the challenge that has arisen due to our success.

BNA is seeking to finance such sponsored seminars by establishing an endowment. Our goal is to collect \$400,000 through donations for the endowment by the end of 2019. This sum will allow the use about \$20,000 per year, which will sponsor 10 to 15 seminars.

Additionally, 10% of all donations will be used for capital to start and develop this program during this fundraising period, giving an overall goal of \$440,000. The work we do is valuable for the lives of our members and, by extension, the local communities in which they live. We strongly believe that the benefits of our practice spread beyond our individual students and teachers to their families, friends, and all with whom they come in contact. We hope that you agree that this is an endeavor worth supporting and will help make our fund raising efforts a success with a contribution or pledge. By supporting

this campaign you will be securing the future of Birankai North America and the practice of the martial way through Aikido, Weapons, Iaido, and Zazen.

In the practice of Budo,
service to others is the way
to understanding,
generosity of spirit is the way
to strength and integrity.

