

Congratulatory Address

To all of you who are entering Sophia University, to your parents and guarantors, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations.

My name is Minoru Yonezawa, and I am the chairman of the Sophia University Supporters' Association. On behalf of the Sophia University Parents' Association, I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations.

To all new students, as you learn the Sophia University's founding spirit, "For Others, With Others", I hope that you will seize various opportunities to take on challenges proactively and learn actively, fostering the wisdom to live boldly in a society with increasing uncertainty.

As a parent, I have great confidence in Sophia University, which will watch over you and provide you with the best possible environment in which you can take on challenges in reassurance.

For example, two years ago in 2023, the university was among the first to announce its policy on the handling of generative AI in education and published the "Guidelines for the Use of Generative AI in Education". The guidelines were intended for faculty and staff members, but I received the impression that they had been compiled in a way that was in line with the educational policy of Sophia University, and that, while providing guidance on how utilizing one's talents and learning outcomes for the benefit of others leads to personal growth, they also encouraged students to think independently. I was impressed by how these guidelines address the question of how we should interact with and deal with generative AI that behaves like a human being, and I now have greater confidence in entrusting my child to this academic institution.

The Sophia University Parents' Association, which comprises the parents and guarantors of current students, respects the university's educational policy and supports the self-motivated challenges of students from a parent's perspective. Let me introduce some of the support provided by the Parents' Association.

We have set up multiple scholarships and grants to support study abroad and tuition fees for those who wish to deepen their discussions with people around the world with different ways of thinking. We also provide grants to support independent activities in extracurricular activities, which provide opportunities for shaping the outcomes of what you have learned and contemplated upon. In addition, the "100 Yen Breakfast" program, which provides breakfast at the campus cafeteria for 100 yen, is a very popular program that provides support to students both financially and in terms of health, serving over 50,000 meals a year.

For parents and guarantors who join the Parents' Association, there are opportunities to meet and become acquainted with each other at events such as the general meeting held in May and the autumn social gathering. These events serve as opportunities for parents to exchange information on study abroad and to meet guest professors. We also hold events with student participation, where parents can hear first-hand information about student life and become more familiar with the university.

The Sophia University Parents' Association was established in 1973. Learning of the selfless dedication of the Jesuit professors, who donated all of their salaries to the university, except for a minimal living allowance gave the parents and guarantors of then students the impetus for its establishment. The Association is run by membership fees, paid out of the goodwill of parents who wish to improve the learning environment and help students lead fulfilling student lives. Since its establishment, the Association has donated a total of over 7.4 billion yen to the university.

After 51 years, the Association's commitment remains the same.

The Sophia University Parents' Association supports the university and watches over students until the day they graduate and embark on their careers, helping them to seize various opportunities to take on new challenges. I would like to invite the parents and guarantors of new students to join the Parents' Association and support our activities.

Finally, I would like to conclude my message by wishing all new students and their parents and guarantors the very best.

April 1, 2025

Minoru Yonezawa

Chairperson of Sophia University Parents' Association