

**L.A. Students Start To Meet**  
**By JEFF FARR**  
**Associate Editor**

No one knew who would come to the L.A. student division kickoff, held Sept. 21 at the World Culture Center. Because the L.A. organization has been going through a massive reorganization, communicating to students about the meeting was done mostly through fliers and e-mail. The meeting organizers were surprised by how many showed up — 150 students from 40 schools in the L.A. area.

Valerie Thomas, SGI-USA student division chief, began the meeting by announcing the participants had received a message from SGI President Ikeda sending his warm regards — plus juice and hamburgers from him. The hamburgers seemed to be especially appreciated.

Danny Nagashima, SGI-USA senior vice general director, gave the students some important encouragement: to make sure they graduate. After the formal portion of the meeting, students broke into groups to discuss student life and student division activities, and even gathered by schools. This was often the first chance for students to meet fellow members going to the same school.

Now the L.A. students are starting to have activities by joint territory and by schools. On Oct. 26, L.A. #5 Joint Territory had its student division kickoff meeting in Santa Ana, organized by the #5 student division leaders, Adonis Van Campen, Lansil Choi and Lisa Crummett, who were appointed Nov. 2. Student division members in #5 are looking ahead to the 2001 opening of Soka University's Aliso Viejo campus, which is located in their joint territory, and the arrival of Soka students from all over the world.

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