

NASA Program Commends SGI Leader
Courtesy of SGI NEWSLETTER
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Telescopes In Education, a Mount Wilson Institute program sponsored by NASA, presented SGI President Ikeda with a Certificate of Commendation today. This was in recognition of his support of the educational program that the Kansai Soka high schools have participated in since 1994. A delegation of educators from the Soka high schools received the certificate on the SGI leader's behalf from TIE Program Director Gilbert Clark at the Mount Wilson Institute and Observatory in Pasadena today.

The commendation lauds Mr. Ikeda for "his remarkable vision and understanding of the importance of a diverse education for the leaders of tomorrow."

It continues: "His vision has brought a new and unique perspective to the education process in Japan. This approach now opens the door for the students of Soka schools to partner with students around the world in joint research efforts in the future."

In September 1993, Mr. Ikeda met with Dr. Robert Jastrow, director of the Mount Wilson Institute. At that time, Mr. Ikeda said that he felt that learning about the universe was meaningful for everyone, especially youth. "Gazing up into the heavens enables us to open our hearts and broaden our outlook, as well as deepen our understanding of the importance of peace," he said.

Dr. Jastrow, the American astronomer and physicist well known for his work in the Apollo space program, then took the opportunity to explain the TIE program, designed to promote the study of astronomy and astrophysics among students around the world. He proposed to President Ikeda that a computer link be established between the Soka schools in Japan and the Mount Wilson Institute.

This link was made the following September, making it possible for students of the Kansai Soka high schools to use a remote controlled telescope in a real-time, interactive environment via the Internet. Some of the astronomy photographs the students have taken during those sessions have been introduced in technical journals. The Kansai Soka high schools are the first secondary schools in Japan to participate in the program, which has been applauded by specialists and the general public alike.

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