

## COMING SOON: NATIONWIDE YOUTH CULTURE FESTIVAL!

After the youth division holds a series of introductory meetings across the country next month, planning will begin for the 1st SGI-USA Youth Grand Culture Festival. To be held later this year in Los Angeles, this will be the first culture festival with nationwide participation since the January 1995 World Peace Youth Culture Festival in Hawaii.

The theme for this year's festival has recently been decided on: "Sound to the World! A Fanfare of Life and Peace!" It will commemorate 10 years of "the new SGI-USA," which began in February 1990, and the upcoming 40th anniversary, in 2000, of SGI President Ikeda's first trip to the United States.

SGI-USA Youth Division Leader Ed Feasel explains how the theme for the conference was decided on: "President Ikeda has often mentioned that the 21st century will be a century of life, a century of peace. Wanting to express that through the festival, we decided on the theme after several interactions with President Ikeda about it.

"We also want the culture festival to express our pledge as successors for the 21st century," Ed adds, "so we decided on this subtheme: 'A Vibrant Dance of Successors Expressing Our Pledge for the 21st Century.' I believe that it is our greatest fortune that we will usher in the new century with the holding of this Youth Grand Culture Festival. I believe that the whole theme reflects President Ikeda's great expectations for all the youth of America."

Heading up the Festival Executive Advisory Committee will be SGI-USA Senior Vice General Director Danny Nagashima, joined by women's and men's division leaders Naomi Sasaki, Matilda Buck, Gary Murie and Dan Arden. There will also be a Festival Steering Committee, led by Ed, which will include from the youth division Kaz Hatakeyama, Reiko Groshell, James Herrmann, Renu Jiandani, Marion Wheeler and Cory Taylor.

— JEFF FARR

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