

## **YOUTH IN ACTION**

It's not a thing of the past. Youth throughout the SGI-USA have been and still are seriously asking themselves how the temple issue relates to their lives and what exactly they can do about it. They're creative, motivated and taking action!

### **CHICAGO**

Making their prayers heard, the youth of the three regions that comprise the SGI-USA membership in Chicago have focused their efforts in chanting a lot — supporting the nationwide “Victorious America” 10 billion daimoku campaign. A four-divisional committee formed the Sunshine Group — the name is based on Aesop's fable the “North Wind and the Sun,” illustrating that compassion (the sun) is the greatest influence. The group is committed to awakening, within themselves first and then others, the desire for education and dialogue. One of three main goals is: to challenge injustice in their own lives, winning over their own negativity.

### **NEW YORK CITY**

New Yorkers have the spirit — the Soka Spirit that is — and they're showing it off! The Soka Spirit Room is an ongoing exhibit created by a committee involving the youth, and it is located on the fifth floor of the New York Culture Center.

Highlights of the exhibition include a time line of the history of Buddhism, videos and panels on ‘What is the temple issue?'; the United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights; and the First Amendment. Members are able to use the room as a resource for information regarding the temple issue to bring back to their districts.

### **SAN FRANCISCO**

For those on the Internet, the Soka Spirit group, San Francisco style, has created a Web site to reach members nationwide. Initiated by Andrew Templeman, the site offers the basics on the temple issue as well as topics of interest including letters of interviews from former priests, issues concerning the Nichikan Gohonzon and viewpoints. To visit the Web site: <http://www.sokaspirit.com>

### **LOS ANGELES**

On top of prayer and information, discussion is deepening to include a wider range of viewpoints. The Los Angeles youth are broadening their understanding of the temple issue. Monthly seminars sponsored by the New Civilization Group concerning human rights, religious tolerance, character development and the future of the SGI inspire dialogue on the topics as they relate to the temple issue. The group's focus is to apply these topics to their individual lives and understand their impact on a global scale.

The purpose of such groups is to inform and discuss the facts and dispel myths surrounding this issue, providing a clear understanding for all who are interested. On a fundamental level, the temple issue encompasses more than the SGI vs. the temple. It embodies human rights and justice — causes for which SGI-USA youth will never cease championing.

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