

FROM JAMES HERRMANN, SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION LEADER TOWARD JULY 3: OUR FINEST HOUR

SGI-USA Youth Division Leader James Herrmann encourages all youth division to focus on propagation and publications promotion for the next three months toward July 3, Mentor and Disciple Day.

Congratulations to all the youth of SGI-USA who put their heart and soul into our March 16 Introductory Meetings. I participated in many of these meetings with you and can confidently say that it is because of each one of your efforts that many more youth division members gathered than last year, and we achieved a 20 percent increase in the number of guests from last year. The joy and enthusiasm with which these meetings were conducted has sparked new life in the American kosen-rufu movement. This is a victory we have won together and can savor for all time.

And now we have entered another crucial phase of our noble effort—encouraging these guests to become members.

Our purpose for having “introductory” meetings nationwide for March 16 this year was so that we could expand the core of youth in America who practice Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism. By introducing a whole new group of people to Buddhism and SGI President Ikeda, we have created the opportunity for these individuals to achieve lasting happiness in their lives. In doing so, we have greatly changed the course of our own lives.

I wish to state clearly to the youth of SGI-USA that these next two months will deeply impact our future. Let’s pour our heart and soul into caring for these guests. By taking personal initiative, we can ensure that they have the best opportunity to start practicing Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism. In addition, we can realize our goal of welcoming one new member per district by July 3, just as General Director Danny Nagashima mentioned in his message in the April 21 *World Tribune*. With this success in propagation, together with our victory in promoting the *World Tribune*, we can contribute to changing the destiny of America. We will set the stage for our successful youth-sponsored 40th anniversary celebrations. We will set the stage for May 3, 2001. We will truly open the new millennium!

President Ikeda recently sent a message to SGI-USA in which he said, “The Soka Gakkai’s eternal ironclad principle for winning is the unity of *itai doshin*, of many in body, one in mind.” Now is our opportunity as youth to unite the SGI-USA through prayer and action to realize our goal in propagation. Harvesting the seeds we planted in our March 16 effort is crucial to our victory.

Let’s remember that in their historic February commemorative meetings, the women’s division invited thousands of guests, many of whom were young people. Let’s nurture these individuals as well.

Daimoku is the key. Therefore, the youth national leaders are initiating a simultaneous daimoku campaign by time zones across the country. We will challenge one hour of daimoku, every morning, between the hours of 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. by time zone. Of course, many of you are probably doing this already, and some of you probably chant more in the morning! Still others have to be at work by 7:00 a.m. and are unable to participate physically, which is perfectly understandable. But let’s participate in spirit! Let’s unite in chanting daimoku to realize this daring new chapter in the history of American kosen-rufu.

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I call out to all the youth of SGI-USA—let's really enjoy this dramatic and historic undertaking. The youth of America are opening the door to the new millennium. Let us seize the day.