

**SAN FRANCISCO YOUTH STANDING UP AND STANDING OUT**  
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On April 15, the performing groups of the San Francisco youth division made a brilliant display of joy and hope at the Cherry Blossom Festival. The groups that performed were the Taiko drummers, the Mystic Flavor Hip-Hop dance group, the New Century Brass Band and the Fife and Drum Corps.

We started off the day with a vigorous gongyo, chanting for the success of the event, the realization of our mission as SGI-USA members and what can we do for kosen-rufu. Everyone headed off, despite cloudy skies, toward the Japan Town Peace Plaza, the sun shining in their hearts.

As the different groups gathered, the performers shared a slight feeling of stage fright, mingled with excitement and joy. As the different performing groups stepped onto the stage, even though there was a drizzle before we arrived, the audience grew larger and larger. It was as if the stage were a large magnet, drawing in bodhisattvas.

Each performance conveyed the meaning of the SGI and the significance of youth in America—how we can trigger a positive wave of events in society and, further, the entire world. The event was a total success, with the thanks going to all the parents, members, performers, leaders, and volunteers who worked with the conviction that we would triumph.