

**YOUTH FESTIVAL ELECTRIFIES  
NEW YORK  
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Celebrating the 19th anniversary of SGI President Ikeda's poem "To My Young American Friends," written in New York during his 1981 visit, the youth members of New York staged a Day of New York Festival on June 18 at Union Square Park.

The festival, themed "The Power of Youth for the New Century," was open to the public and welcomed more than 4,500 people.

In addition to the many inspiring musical and dramatic performances by SGI-USA members, the youth set up information booths on Soka University of America, SGI-USA publications and the Victory Over Violence campaign. At the VOV booth, which included members' artwork and the VOV video, 500 people signed the VOV pledge form.

Later that evening, 28 guests attended an introductory meeting on Buddhism at the New York Culture Center. (Please see our color photo essay, as well as SGI President Ikeda's message to the event, on pages 6-7.)