

**AUG. 24—MEN’S DIVISION DAY—COMMEMORATED  
10,000 MEN GATHER FOR AUGUST MEETINGS  
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SGI-USA VICE MEN’S DIVISION LEADER**

*From the living rooms of men’s homes  
To the FNCC, to the Pacific Rim, to the Caribbean Sea  
Oh what a milestone we reached when 10,000 men gathered to seek  
Our mentor’s heart  
The friendships we keep  
Eternal bonds forever complete.*

Victory in Webster’s Dictionary means “to win a battle or a struggle.”

In August 1999, President Ikeda’s message to the men’s division stated: “A decisive battle to usher in the dawn of the 21st century has already begun. At last, our time has come. If we do not rise to the challenge now, then when? If we do not fight today, then when?”

This year, as we focused on our annual men’s division meetings throughout the SGI-USA, we recalled his words and made a goal that 10,000 men nationwide would participate. Never before have we been able to gather 10,000 men, but we accomplished this great goal during August 2000 by gathering 10,625 men across the country. I believe that the gathering of these many men has clearly indicated to President Ikeda that we are responding to his call as we make this accomplishment at the dawn of the 21st century. During the meetings, we celebrated the 53rd anniversary of President Ikeda’s joining the Soka Gakkai and we determined to be the cornerstones of the Soka Gakkai.

This activity enabled many of us—whether by doing home visits or helping to plan the meetings or by attending our respective men’s meetings—to open up our lives and share our hearts. We shared with, encouraged and learned from one another. We deepened our relationships. We were able to renew determinations to become more engaged in securing peace and happiness in our world through our Buddhist practice. A portion of President Ikeda’s message to the men’s division states: “I hope that all the members of the SGI-USA men’s division are regarded as reliable by their fellow members, listening carefully to women’s opinions, embracing everybody and taking full and final responsibility in everything.” We will live up to this expectation.

Our tremendous victory could not have happened without the support of the youth division and the women’s division. Matilda Buck, SGI-USA women’s leader, sent the most heartfelt message to the men. Her message was representative of the entire women’s division’s hearts and the efforts they made to ensure our success. The efforts of the youth, who supported us by participating and working behind the scenes, were truly appreciated.

How sweet our victory felt! Even though this was a tremendous milestone, it is only the beginning of what we, the men’s division, will accomplish in the future.