

**SGI-USA HISTORY CELEBRATED IN ARIZONA
BY DIANA DECKER
PHOENIX CORRESPONDENT**

More than 1,000 members and guests from Arizona, New Mexico and the El Paso, Texas, area gathered in Glendale, Ariz., on Oct. 15 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the American kosen-rufu movement.

Also in attendance was SGI-USA General Director Danny Nagashima, who stressed the importance of determination. "Single-minded determination is invisible," Mr. Nagashima said, "but will eventually create a huge result. Never put yourself down, but rather, have boundless hope."

Also speaking were Paul Eppinger, president of the InterFaith Action Coalition of Arizona, and Nemi C. Jain of Arizona State University, who spoke of the contributions of his mentor, Mahatma Gandhi.

Dr. Eppinger shared his memories of a visit to the Soka Gakkai Headquarters while living in Japan in 1957. "I was so impressed. I wondered when this was going to come to America," he said. "In 1960, it did."

Twenty Boys and Girls Group members impressed the audience with a reading of SGI President Ikeda's poem, "Soar—Into the Vast Skies of Freedom! Into the New Century!" Ken Komoda shared a deeply moving experience about his young son William's struggle with autism. William, now 6 and doing well, ran to the stage to join his mom and dad. And members and guests laughed and cheered during a slide show of 30 years of SGI-USA activities in Arizona, New Mexico and El Paso.

The program also included performances by Phoenix jazz artist Sherry Roberson and the Arizona Cactus Chorus.

Kurt Staller of Safford, Ariz., a 30-year SGI-USA member, said: "The meeting was fantastic. We need to have more like it in Arizona."