

## WASHINGTON, DC REGION YOUNG WOMEN HOLD GENERAL MEETING BY MARY JENIFER, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Sunflowers ruled the day as Washington, D.C. Region young women held their general meeting with the theme “Cultivate Sunflowers of Happiness for the Century of Peace.” Some 160 participants entered the community center lobby filled with vases of fresh sunflowers. The theme of the meeting was taken from SGI President Daisaku Ikeda’s words in “Thoughts On *The New Human Revolution*.” He writes:

“World peace starts with the human revolution — the inner transformation — of the individual. A single large sunflower blossom contains the seeds from more than a thousand plants. Similarly when one brave warrior for peace stands up, his or her resolve spreads out in a thousand, ten thousand waves. Courage always stirs a response.”

The day was filled with a variety of activities. “Newborn Friend” was performed by the D.C. Region Chorus; the Byakuren performed an hilarious skit with Wen-Shing Ho enacting a bad day at work — she got on the phone with skit-writer Karen Palmer’s voice saying, “This is your Buddha nature speaking.” The audience was able to show their appreciation for all the behind-the-scenes work of the Byakuren during their graduation and induction ceremony. Early activities ended with a Gosho lecture on “The One Essential Phrase” given by Region Young Women’s Leader Chelsea Honderich.

The rest of the day was filled with workshops on a variety of subjects. The activity ended with the young women singing “I’ll Be There for You,” the theme from the TV show *Friends*. As the young women left, they were showered with even more sunflowers, given a book of quotations from *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, decorated with plastic blossoms and given packets of sunflower seeds as gifts from the Byakuren.

The success of the meeting can be attributed to a vigorous home visit campaign and the fact that the entire D.C. Region family was involved. The women’s division members helped plan and greet, and provided refreshments and gifts. The young men and Southeast District’s women planned and conducted introductory meetings throughout the day for members and their guests. A men’s division crew volunteered for clean-up duty. The meeting was a starting point for growth and unity. Together, the young women in Washington, D.C. will cultivate the seeds planted in their hearts during the meeting as they wait for the sunflower seeds planted on the community center grounds to blossom in the spring.