

**YOUTH OF AMERICA—UNITE!**  
**BY WENDY DESOUZA**  
**SGI-USA YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADER**

Over the past 10 years, the youth of America have been progressing steadily based on SGI President Ikeda's guidance. I am one of these young people whose lives have opened up.

Like many young women in the SGI-USA, I have been praying to understand President Ikeda's heart. I have practiced in Washington, D.C., Chicago, San Francisco — even Ghana and Iran — writing to President Ikeda and sharing my dreams with him. In the most difficult times when I felt I had nothing, I had his guidance to make it to the next day.

One year has passed since I first took leadership in the student division together with Daisaku Leslie, Maggie Eisenberg, and Boston Snowden. They are heroes of the youth division and my cherished friends. Together with newly appointed leader, Myeong Chung, I am confident that the Student Division will soar to new heights with these wonderful leaders.

With the new responsibilities that lie ahead, I wish to offer three pledges together with my fellow young women:

- 1) Let's put the mentor-disciple relationship first.
- 2) Let's put home visitation first.
- 3) Let's put the Gosho first.

With faith in the Gohonzon, the prayer to unite with President Ikeda, the practice of one-to-one dialogue and study of Nichiren Daishonin's writings, I will work to support each young woman with every fiber of my being. I thank all the young women of SGI-USA from the bottom of my heart for your courage and commitment.

To the youth I say: "Youth of America and the world, unite! We have nothing to lose but a life of misery and regret!" Uniting together with President Ikeda, we will live lives where we can say: "I have the greatest mentor. I have become so happy."

President Ikeda writes in the poem, "Youth Scale the Mountain of the 21st Century," "May 3, 2001 / Let us make that the glorious day / That we together reach the summit!"

I'm looking forward to welcoming President Ikeda back to the United States together with all of you.