

A MISSION ONLY YOU CAN FULFILL NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE FROM THE JR. HIGH & HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION LEADERS

Congratulations to all of you on arriving at this dramatic moment in history — the dawn of the new millennium, the first season of the next ten thousand years!

It can be said that century after century, human civilization has unfolded precisely so we can now be here, standing ready to welcome one of the most important twelve months in history.

“Year of Total Victory for the New Century” is the SGI’s theme for 2001.

The time is ripe for us to tap a new surge of energy, to revitalize our personal lives and come together with awesome force, constructing a truly happy society.

What kind of SGI-USA do you want to create?

The organization is yours to establish. Imagine meetings being conducted as you want. Imagine the publications exactly reflecting your own thoughts and style. And imagine our SGI-USA community centers as locations where your friends and neighbors deeply desire to come.

Many years before SGI President Ikeda began leadership, when he was a youth, he had his first encounters with members in the Soka Gakkai. These people would remark that young Daisaku Ikeda was an odd fellow, not at all typical. In fact, he was often alone, estranged from members. Perhaps this was due to his early sense of charting a new course. A person with revolutionary ideas will not always find the environment perfectly welcoming. But, President Ikeda was undaunted by any lack of support; he moved forward, doing everything he could to create what he thought was an ideal organization.

You too can advance, blazing a new trail, generating ideas that have never been thought of. During the course of this year we will encounter several key opportunities for growth:

(1) In March, to celebrate March 16, Kosen-rufu Day, the youth across America will fully support each district’s introductory meeting. We, the Junior High and High School Divisions, want to be at the forefront of this effort. Let’s each find an exciting way to get involved in our district. Some of you are musical maestros. Some of you are poets. Some of you are promising young painters. The district is your place to take the stage and, through your talents, profoundly encourage others. And on that note, we should realize that all of us, with our diversity of personalities, have great experiences to tell. It’s always a positive surprise to discover how much we touch peoples’ lives just by sharing our personal struggles, our victories, our dreams.

Let’s use the March 16 meetings as inspiration to start the process of helping others grow. Knowing that, as Nichiren Daishonin wrote “If you light the path for others, you will have a clear path before you as well” (Gosho Zenshu, p. 1598), we will find ourselves expanding our own lives as we introduce our friends to the power of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo.

(2) In commemorating May 3, Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo, will be dedicating its campus. As we begin to understand the profound significance of this amazing place of learning, we begin to see how every single one of us — whether we attend it, teach there or simply promote it — plays an essential role in the mission of this great school. We will find ourselves aligning along the most effective path toward

building a great world.

Soka University of America is President Ikeda's realized vision. He has fought intensely to bring this remarkable institution to us. And it is our divisions, the teenagers of SGI-USA, who are directly in line to benefit.

We pledge to deepen our understanding of President Ikeda's vision, to burn in our hearts his sense of compassion, to make as our own his dream for America.

(3) In the summer, each one of you will have a chance to participate in your zone's SGI Family Youth Culture Festival. This will be an explosion of culture — an occasion for you to work side by side with your friends and family putting together an incredible display of talent and artistry. Please seize this opportunity! You will find it a wonderful time to make advances in your daily life, to increase your capability to win in everything you do.

Consider President Ikeda words:

“In this universe filled with countless stars and planets, you were born here, on this earth, at this time. That is definitely not an accident. There is a meaning to your having been born. You were born because it was a good thing for you to be born. You have a mission that only you can fulfill” (Nov. 10, 2000, *World Tribune*, p. 7).

We would like to pose this question to you, the future leaders of the world, “What can you do that no one else can do?” The quest to determine your unique missions is a valiant struggle. The road itself is a source of benefit and growth.

Best wishes and Happy New Year! We look forward to working with you, and we look forward to seeing your brilliant futures become a reality.