

**1ST CEC OF NEW CENTURY GATHERS  
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The 1st SGI-USA Central Executive Conference was held March 30–April 1 at the SGI Plaza in Santa Monica, Calif. The CEC has decided to start the numbering system again at 1 to reflect the beginning of the new century and a new era of the kosen-rufu movement in the United States.

Many important topics were discussed, including the upcoming Zone Family Youth Culture Festivals, the progress of the Soka Spirit movement, the May commemorative contribution activity and the newly formed District Development Committee.

The DDC was created in recognition of the vital importance of each SGI-USA district's health. As it is the most important level of the organization, success in the district will propel SGI-USA forward. The DDC seeks to empower and strengthen each district through dialogue and new thinking in five key areas: propagation, publications promotion, expanding the number of districts, diversity and Soka Spirit. CEC members divided into these five groups to discuss at length how the SGI-USA can best advance, starting with the district level.

SGI-USA Youth Leader James Herrmann led a discussion on preparations for this summer's Zone Family Youth Culture Festivals, which will be held at more than 20 locations across the country. Each zone reported its progress, with ideas ranging from community marches for nonviolence to Victory Over Violence outreach programs in schools.

The discussion of this year's May Commemorative Contribution Activity included an announcement that the SGI-USA can now accept credit card payments for contributions. In addition, a secure page on the official SGI-USA Web site ([www.sgi-usa.org](http://www.sgi-usa.org)) will be set up to accept credit card donations over the Internet. More detailed information will be available in a forthcoming SGI-USA memo.

The Central Executive Committee meets quarterly to discuss organizational policy and direction, as well as report on the activities of local organizations. Decisions of the CEC are officially reported through SGI-USA memos to local organizations. CEC members are nominated by the general director and approved by the SGI-USA Council.

Please see pp. 10–11 for speeches from the April 1 CEC teleconference, in which chapter-and-up leaders across the country participated.