

**SPEECHES GIVEN AT THE CEC TELECONFERENCE  
CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF DAIMOKU THIS YEAR  
BY MATILDA BUCK  
SGI-USA WOMEN'S LEADER**

SGI President Ikeda's message to the Central Executive Committee is invaluable for me because he is so clear on what we should focus on in America. I have found that when I take his words to heart and take action—even a small action in that direction—I can make profound breakthroughs. “The fresh spirit of young, capable people creates a new era,” he writes. “For this reason, I ask that you, as leaders, exert your entire strength into developing the youth to be our successors” (see page 1).

The young, capable people who represent your zones shared so much with us this weekend. They are as diverse as the areas they represent—full of intelligence and heart. I was so moved by their character and commitment as they spoke about the upcoming zone festivals that will be spearheaded by the youth.

What is the best way for the men's and women's division members to support these precious successors? Let's begin with a strong prayer every day that each of them will grow and have a great personal victory in faith. Then, as we work together, let's put the spotlight on them. Let's make an environment where they can shine, where we work behind-the-scenes to secure the vision they have. Let's listen to them, not instruct them toward perfection.

Let's find ways to make their ideas work. We should be available to them spiritually and physically during activities. The respect and love we show to our young people today will determine the future of the SGI-USA.

I would like to share some recent and timely guidance from SGI General Director Eiichi Wada. He said that if we cut ourselves, it leaves a scar. We can see it. But words are sharp, too. They can cut like a knife. Careless words can cut another's heart. We can't see the scar, but it remains. He said our words are important because they can give hope and conviction or they can hurt and scar. Let's become masters of words that encourage our youth.

This year, let's create a very tangible atmosphere of dai-moku in the SGI-USA—the feeling that behind everything we do, there is a lot of strong prayer. This is the way to welcome President and Mrs. Ikeda back to America, I believe. The point is not to draw President Ikeda's attention to us, after all, but to create this incredible atmosphere through daimoku in which we can work together with him, shoulder to shoulder. Rather than just waiting for him to encourage America, let's create the environment in which he can lead the worldwide kosen-rufu movement from America.

I know we can do it. We can do it with joy, with style and with great appreciation. After all, as President Ikeda said in his message, we are his “beloved America.”