

**SGI-USA FAMILY YOUTH FESTIVALS
YOUTH CELEBRATE DETROIT HISTORY
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More than 450 people witnessed the convergence of 300 years of Detroit history and 35 years of Buddhist activities in Michigan at the Detroit 300 Family Youth Festival, held at Wayne State University's Community Arts Auditorium on July 29. The festival's theme of "Detroit into the 21st Century Through Peace, Culture, and Education" was presented by SGI-USA, Wayne State University and the Value Creation Club student organization, along with the participation of the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self-Development and Homes for Black Children.

The play "300 Years of Detroit's Hopes and Dreams" began with a chorus asking the musical question "Where are we going to be 300 years from now?" The story of Detroit's history ensued, with two bored students in a local museum vanishing into the mist of historical events, courtesy of a helpful security guard and his magic time-traveling watch. The duo's starting point was the founding of Detroit 300 years ago, and they continued with skits and performances about the Underground Railroad, the life and times of Henry Ford and the founding of Motown Records.

The riot in 1967 was a defining moment in Detroit history, and was illustrated by slides and first person accounts of those dark days. However, remembering that Detroit's misfortunes will change into fortune, Keiko Omans and Setsuko Jackson were recognized among the mothers of kosen-rufu in Michigan who were doing SGI activities a few blocks from the epicenter of the conflict.

Then, above the clouds of racial disharmony individuals representing the multitudinous ethnic heritages of Detroit arrived on the scene, their voices blending together in the song "What Can I Do," a theme punctuated and underlined by the performance of the Homes for Black Children's African percussion group.

The time travelers returned to the present and were reminded that just like the protagonists of Detroit history, they have the potential to change the world. The auditorium joined them and the entire cast in the singing of "Ode to Joy." A proclamation from Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer commending SGI President Ikeda on his efforts supporting peace, culture and education was read, and Elaine Eason-Steele, co-founder of the Raymond and Rosa Parks Institute for Self-Development, led the crowd in a cheer.

As the audience exited, they were treated to 29 artistic collages prepared by the 29 SGI-USA districts of Michigan depicting their individual histories, and a collective history of the development of the SGI-USA in Michigan on 10 large tables.