



Congratulatory Messages

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

I am delighted to extend warm greetings to all those gathered to dedicate the new campus of Soka University of America.

Excellence in education is vital to our nation's future success. Colleges and universities play an important role in preparing young people to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world. By providing students and faculty with the resources and mandate to explore new horizons of knowledge, institutions of



higher learning improve the future for all Americans.

I commend the staff and supporters for their continued commitment to high standards in education. Your efforts on behalf of our young people help ensure that they will be prepared for a future that is filled with hope, promise and opportunity.

May 3, 2001
George W. Bush

CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER ROSA PARKS

Congratulations on the grand opening of Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo. The new liberal arts campus for young adults of all cultures will encourage growth, vision and human rights.

I am glad this dedication is in the spring of



the year, which represents new birth. Please extend my best wishes of peace and prosperity to Mrs. Ikeda and the SGI family.

May 3, 2001
Rosa Parks

FORMER SOVIET PRESIDENT MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

The world of tomorrow begins today.

We are already living in an increasingly interdependent global community. No single country, acting alone, can successfully confront the challenges that we are all facing today. Dialogue, cooperation and partnership based on equality and mutual respect is the only way to build a better world—a task not only for government but also civil society and, indeed, every citizen.

It is my hope that this new university will produce many thoughtful and responsible citi-



zens for the global community of tomorrow. I am confident that it will be a school of both intellectual and moral learning, indispensable for leaders in politics, business and society. I have no doubt that Soka University of America will have a distinguished record of success and will be justly proud of its students and alumni.

May 3, 2001
Mikhail Gorbachev



Photos by BYRON COHEN, ROBBIE EVANS, TOSHI FUJIMOTO, DON HODGSON, LISA HOLLIS, GREGORY NAKASUJI, STEPHANIE SYDNEY

FROM SUA, I

The new campus, which will begin classes in the fall offering a four-year, liberal arts education, welcomed visitors from all over the world, bringing warm wishes of congratulations. Representatives of Aliso Viejo, Calif., and many neighboring communities brought resolutions proclaiming May 3 Soka University of America Day. Messages were also received from politicians, scholars and human rights activists around the world, including President George W. Bush, former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Rosa Parks.

"Welcome to Aliso Viejo!" said Carmen Vali, chair of the Aliso Viejo City Council-elect. "We consider this campus a gift to our community. Each year, we will remember this day with reverence and celebrate those with the bold vision to make this dream a reality."

"I can't quite believe this day is finally here," said Dr. Daniel Habuki, president of SUA. "I see this day marking the beginning of a new era for value creation as we advance together along the path of learning."

The ceremony, held in the new Recreation Center, began with a procession of dozens of visiting university presidents and representatives, as well as SUA's board of trustees, faculty and staff. Responding to thunderous applause, 75 representatives of the first entering class of students bounded into the room.

"As a member of the first class, I will strive to become the bridge that links all nations and closes all gaps among enemies," proclaimed Nicole Chu of Culver City, Calif. "I know that the students of SUA will break all barriers to be victorious in this world."

Dr. Alfred Balitzer, dean of faculty at SUA, clarified that "the aim of SUA is to produce

global citizens. Our faculty care about students, and we will put their concerns ahead of all other considerations."

A choir of fifth-graders from all four Aliso Viejo elementary schools performed "Song for the Children," welcoming the audience in a dozen languages. Two of the children also assisted in placing many SUA artifacts in a time capsule to be opened in 100 years.

After a ceremonial blessing from members of the Native American Acjachemen Nation, the original inhabitants of the Aliso Viejo area, and a booming performance from ADAWE, a women's African drum group, everyone moved to Peace Lake and Fountain, located in front of Founders Hall. Dr. Habuki officially opened the campus in the name of SUA's core values of peace, human rights and the sanctity of life.

Visitors then enjoyed lunch and tours of the campus, including viewing the Linus Pauling and the 20th Century exhibition in Founders Hall. The exhibition was opened on May 2, along with the dedication of Linus and Ava Helen Pauling Hall, and will be on view until June 10 (see story, p. 8).

Feelings of joy at the university's completion were in evidence everywhere. "I pulled into the parking lot and just started crying," said Emily Frausto of Seattle. "This place is the epitome of the good things people can do."

Jason Evans of Norfolk, Va., agreed: "I've been here before but the campus has transformed. It's breathtaking."

"I'm honored to be present to witness this grand occasion," said Herbie Hancock, SGI-USA member and Jazz legend. "The accomplishments of these students and their impact on society will be President Ikeda's legacy!"

— Jason Henninger
contributed to this article.