

THE FLORIDA NATURE AND CULTURE CENTER

Located in Broward County just west of the City of Fort Lauderdale, the SGI-USA Florida Nature and Culture Center preserves and celebrates the unique Everglades environment of South Florida. Since opening in 1996, this Buddhist retreat and international conference facility has become a focal point for lectures, seminars, cultural exchanges, education and exhibits, all designed to stimulate interaction among people and enhance their understanding of our mutual humanity. Visitors come from every continent and from the more than 100 nations where SGI members practice Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

The facility also is home for the regular activities of local Soka Gakkai members. Special traveling exhibits and cultural events are held at the Center periodically for the enjoyment of the general public.

During SGI President Ikeda's visit to Florida in the spring of 1993, he shared his vision of establishing a facility in America where members could gather to refresh their spirit and determination for the further advancement of American kosen-rufu. Florida was selected not only because members from across the United States could gather, but because it is a location where members from the neighboring continents of South and Central America, Europe and Africa could conveniently travel to as well.

Construction of the FNCC was started in autumn of 1994 and completed in the spring two years later. It officially opened on June 19, 1996, upon the arrival of President and Mrs. Ikeda for the 21st SGI General Meeting.

The 12-building, campus-style complex occupies only one-fourth of the site — the main auditorium, the Miami Community Center, a conference center, the dining hall, a gymnasium, four dormitories, a reception hall and a guest house. The balance of the 125-acre tract is devoted to a combination of untouched or restored grasslands, a 20-acre lake and accompanying wetlands. Wildlife, especially Everglades birds, have flocked to the site. Herons, egrets, anhingas and ibises are seen regularly, along with eagles and other "visitors" whose presence helps visitors focus on their own place in the larger environment.

West of Fort Lauderdale and near the community of Weston, the secluded SGI-USA Florida Nature and Culture Center is accessible only from U.S. Highway 27. The Center is one mile east of U.S. 27 on S.W. 36th Street, which is the first street north of the major artery of Griffin Road.

SGI-USA Florida Nature
and Culture Center
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