

**SGI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO DENVER'S  
'DIALOGUE WITH NATURE' EXHIBIT  
EXPANDING THE ROAD TO UNDERSTANDING AND EXCHANGE**

**'Nothing gives me more joy if I can, through my photos, help expand the road to mutual understanding and cultural exchange beyond the limits of national boundaries and beyond the lapse of time,' SGI President Ikeda says.**

My sincere gratitude to the Mayor of Denver, the Honorable Wellington E. Webb, and the Vice Provost of the University of Denver, the Honorable Ved P. Nanda, those city officials who have devoted their time and effort in support of this photo exhibit and many others who took time to attend its opening today.

Indeed, it is my great honor that you all kindly worked together to hold such a magnificent exhibition for my photos in Denver, the Queen City of the Plains. For this, I am truly grateful.

In June 1996, I visited Denver for the first time. Deep in my heart, I have since been adoring this international city hugged by the great Rocky Mountains. Denver always reminds me of the infinite expanse of blue skies, the land and lakes full of fresh foliage, the Rocky Mountains that exude such resolute spirit and, most of all, the beautiful hearts of its people.

Though my stay in Denver was short, the unlimited splendor of your city was deeply etched in my heart.

In the midst of my hectic schedule, each photo I took at my lodging or from the window of my car records a moment of life that I encountered in Denver. Indeed, photography possesses a wondrous power to enshrine a moment for eternity.

Of course, I am not a professional photographer. As an individual who endlessly admires art that is open to all people, nothing gives me more joy if I can, through my photos, help expand the road to mutual understanding and cultural exchange beyond the limits of national boundaries and beyond the lapse of time.

When I visited your city four years ago, I received an honorary doctorate in education from the University of Denver, an academic citadel of pioneering spirit. No award reflects such universality than one given in the world of education.

The "Ikeda Cherry Trees" planted near the SGI-USA Denver Culture Center and enjoyed by the citizens of Denver have been commended several times for beautifying the city. I understand that our members, to embellish their beloved city, have planted more than 500 cherry trees.

We, the SGI members, are determined to advance together with our communities, aiming toward the creation of a great haven of humanity for the 21st century.

I end my message of gratitude with my heartfelt prayer for the good health of all present and for the further glory of this treasured land that the world holds in such high esteem.

*Daisaku Ikeda  
President  
Soka Gakkai International  
May 23, 2000*