

**SPIRITED STUDY IN NORTHERN CALIF.
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The 2nd SGI-USA Northern California Study Conference was held in San Ramon, Calif., July 15–16. A total of 280 members participated from 72 cities in Northern California, as well as San Diego and Santa Monica. There were four sessions per day with a choice of five topics per session, and all topics were offered on both days. Twenty different topics were presented including: “How Does the Buddha Behave?” “Love, Relationships and the Gohonzon,” “Sharing Buddhism in Modern America,” “How to Derive Maximum Benefit from Our Practice”, and “Nam-myoho-renge-kyo—A Doctrine of Personal Responsibility.” There were a total of 18 presenters, including SGI-USA Study Department Leader Eugene Hirahara and Vice General Director Richard Yoshimachi.

There was a genuine atmosphere of openness and equality during the sessions, leading to a natural flow of questions, answers and dialogue. Everyone felt free to voice their opinions and share experiences. Fundamental principles of Buddhism were addressed in fresh, creative, down-to-earth ways, giving everyone inspiration in their Buddhist practice.

In SGI President Ikeda’s message to the participants, he states: “Please study and carry out an honest and spirited dialogue while making today’s conference a truly joyful and significant one. When we embrace and honestly believe in the words of Nichiren Daishonin, there will be a wellspring of ultimate joy, confidence and appreciation within our own lives.”

At the end of the conference, everyone was asked if plans for the third study conference should begin. The response was an enthusiastic “Yes!”