

SUA FOUNDERS

SOKA UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA BENEFACTORS & DONORS NEWSLETTER



JANUARY 2006 | VOLUME TWO | ISSUE ONE | WWW.SOKA.EDU

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A Message from the President



Dear SUA Donors and Supporters,

I hope you enjoy this new edition of SUA Founders, a newsletter created to keep you, our donors, informed of happenings at Soka University of America (SUA).

With the graduation of the first entering class this past May 2005, SUA, Aliso Viejo successfully completed its first four years of development, laying a solid foundation for the future. Starting with this academic year 2005-2006, the Undergraduate Program entered a new phase in its history: we will now focus on achieving an even greater level of academic excellence. Signaling the start of this second chapter, we welcomed the new freshman as the first class to enter the Undergraduate Program as an accredited institution.

Meanwhile, SUA is also focusing on expanding our circle of friendship with like-minded individuals in the community. On October 1, 2005, Soka held its inaugural Peace Gala at the Aliso Viejo campus and celebrated our students as our vision of peace, raising over \$350,000 in scholarship funds. This is a remarkable accomplishment that will enable us to better realize our University's mission to foster a continuous stream of capable people who, when they leave our doors, will dedicate themselves for the sake of peace and for the happiness of their fellow citizens.

Over the next five to ten years, we will strive to raise our academic standards to the point that SUA becomes a clearly recognized leader in higher education in the United States and the world. Thanks to your sincere contributions, I am confident that together we can make this dream a reality. Once again, thank you for your generosity and kindness.

Daniel Y. Habuki

President

Soka University of America

Nieves Family Foundation

\$3,500,000 BOOST FOR FUTURE

Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo, will be the sole beneficiary of the Luis and Linda Nieves Family Foundation, which has been funded initially with \$3.5 million. The Foundation will function as an unrestricted endowment, providing Soka University with the greatest flexibility in meeting its needs in the future.

In learning of the Nieves' generous gift, Daniel Habuki, SUA President, said "This gift is a reflection of the Nieves' deep commitment to the mission and values of our university. They are humanistic individuals who care deeply about the world

we live in, and who want to make a difference, not only during their lifetime, but beyond. We sincerely appreciate their generosity."

"What brings us the greatest joy and fulfillment is knowing that we are doing something that will outlive both of us."

– Luis Nieves

In recognition of their support of Soka University, Luis and Linda Nieves were named Soka University of America Honorary Ambassadors at the first commencement ceremony held on the campus on May 22, 2005. The Honorary Ambassador designation recognizes individuals for their "continuing devotion in promoting humanistic values and educational opportunities."

In establishing their foundation, the Nieves hope they will serve as an example to others to reflect on what is important in life. Luis said, "We have the great fortune of being born in the United States and of having built a very successful car warranty business. We live a wonderful life. But what brings us the greatest joy and fulfillment is knowing that we are doing something that will outlive both of us."

The Nieves live in Napa, California with their children, Mar-



garet and Eugene. They have actively engaged them in their philanthropic decisions. According to Linda, "We want to build a tradition for our descendents. We want to continue the feeling of responsibility that we feel to repay a debt of gratitude to parents and others for generations to come."

In 1990, Luis created Associates Underwriting Limited Administrators, known as AUL, a company that provides used automobile warranties. He was a pioneer in used car warranties when he created 'any age, any mileage' warranties. Today AUL is the premier contract administrator in the United States and employs people nationwide.

"We want to build a tradition for our descendents. We want to continue the feeling of responsibility that we feel to repay a debt of gratitude to parents and others for generations to come."

– Linda Nieves

AUL reflects the Nieves' personal philosophy of giving back. A portion of every service contract is dedicated to supporting cultural, educational and community service activities via local dealers and charitable organizations in which Luis and Linda are active participants.

Class of 2005 Commencement

CHANGING THE FACE OF THE FUTURE



On May 22, 2005, Soka University of America held its first ever undergraduate commencement ceremony for the 100 Members of the Class of 2005. The commencement speaker, H.E. Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the United Nations Office of the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, delivered an address, entitled 'Culture of Peace: In Our Lives and For Our World.' Other special guests in attendance included Aliso Viejo Mayor Karl Warkomski; Orange County Supervisor Tom Wilson; President Emeritus of the University of California, Irvine and newest SUA Trustee, Dr. Jack Peltason; and SGI Vice President Hiromasa Ikeda, the university founder's eldest son, attending on behalf of his father. Ryo Kondo, chosen as the senior student representative speaker by his fellow classmates, spoke of his mother's love and support and friends he has made in his four years at SUA.

"All of you, our precious graduates of the first class, have gathered at SUA with a shared sense of mission, to create genuine value under any circumstances, for the sake of humanity. Although you now depart to various corners of the globe... our hearts will always remain united in purpose."

– SUA President Daniel Habuki

After Mr. Chowdhury congratulated the graduates, he expressed his belief that SUA students must contribute to society and provide the "intellectual and spiritual energy and determination for a better world, based on principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, respect for diversity, dialogue and understanding." He also stressed that "work for peace is a continuous process. Each of us can make a difference in that process. This is especially true for people like you. You should take the initiative in your hands, without waiting for others to tell you what to do. Listen to the voice inside of you. Your personal actions and your co-operated efforts will lay the foundations of the world, where culture and peace reigns."

"What determines the true value and worth of a university? It is the quality of the graduates, the caliber of the people it sends into the world."

– SUA Founder Daisaku Ikeda

In addition to the Founder's written message to the graduating class, Mr. Ikeda delivered a video speech on the significance of SUA and its first graduating class in which he stated, "People's hearts are growing more complex, more confused and harder to understand. The same is true for human institutions. The darkness of this complicated and disturbed age may grow even deeper. This is why there is an even greater need for the brilliant inner light of culture, for university education that polishes people's wisdom and character. This is the key to winning in life."



2005 Alumni Reflections

GRADUATES OF THE FIRST CLASS SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS



"I am deeply grateful for the generosity of the donors. Without the financial support they provided I would not be a member of the first graduating class of SUA. Within four months of graduation, I have been hired by Tweeter Entertainment Group, as a national corporate sales representative within a brand new division for the company. I was one of 8 people chosen, out of 700 applicants nationwide. I plan to go back to graduate school in two to three years and study public policy and government. If it was not for the generosity and sacrifices made by the donors I would not be where I am today. I am looking forward to becoming a donor myself this year! Thank you so much!"

– *David Mendes*



"My four years at SUA have been nothing but an incredible experience. It gave me the opportunity to be part of the pioneers in building our school. The classes were challenging at times, but the warm-hearted professors and staff made it all rewarding and I was able to get so much out of it. I owe my debt of gratitude to all the people who made this school possible, and especially to the founder, Mr. Ikeda. As I pursue my graduate studies at Teachers College, Columbia University, and career in International Education policy in Latin America and Africa, I will continue to repay my debt of gratitude and my dream is to set up Soka schools in various countries in those regions."

– *Yuya Uchida*



"The members of Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo's first graduating class share a familial bond as strong as that between siblings which can never be broken. I realize that the precious memories that we were able to create and the valuable education that we

gained over a period of four short years would not have been possible without the help of a host of people who made our dream come true. I would like to take the time to personally thank you from the bottom of my heart for believing in a vision – a vision that many people in the world have already given up on. One of the most important lessons of all that I learned at Soka is the value of expressing my appreciation – for my Classmates, my Professors, the Staff and Faculty members, my Parents, the Founder, and for the selfless Donors. Together we are making a difference, striving to bring the people of the world together piece-by-piece."

– *Malayna Butler*



Inaugural Peace Gala 2005

OVER \$350,000 RAISED FOR STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP FUND



Left to right: SUA President Daniel Habuki, Latin Grammy award-winning flautist Nestor Torres, Co-Chairman Matilda Buck, Master of Ceremonies Patrick Duffy, Co-Chairman Lucy Steinberg

On October 1, 2005, SUA's inaugural Peace Gala culminated in raising over \$350,000 towards support of the Student Scholarship Fund. The Gala's theme, "Celebrating a Vision of Peace," was perfectly aligned with SUA's goal of raising graduates who will work to create a better world by fostering human rights, understanding, and tolerance. The Gala exceeded all fundraising expectations while these funds will provide scholarship opportunities for students in the United States and around the world.

Lucy Steinberg, a passionate and respected Orange County philanthropist, and Matilda Buck, a member of the SUA Board of Trustees, served as co-chairs of the event, bringing together many dedicated volunteers from the community to put on an elegant, black tie affair, with over 250 guests in attendance.

The evening's Master of Ceremonies, Patrick Duffy, a well-known television actor, and supporter of SUA, set the tone for the evening with his charming wit, as well as donating a bottle of scotch from his private collection for the live auction.

Guests were treated to a dazzling evening at SUA's Athenaeum, overlooking the canyons of Laguna Beach, while enjoying a sumptuous gourmet, three-course dinner presented

by Bon Appetit's General Manager, Jesse Guthery, and SUA's executive chef Justin McGruder and his staff. The welcome reception included a Taiko Drum performance, hors d'oeuvres and cocktails, and a silent auction with hundreds of items, ranging from fine art, jewelry and travel packages, to restaurant gift certificates, and a myriad of other exceptional items.

SUA President Daniel Habuki kicked off the gala with a welcoming address, followed by student representative and Class of 2005 alum, Gonzalo Obelleiro, who recounted his beginnings in his homeland of Argentina, and his recent acceptance at Columbia University's Teachers College in New York.

Thereafter, the Master of Ceremonies, Patrick Duffy, began the evening's live auction by opening up bids to an autographed guitar from the "Emissaries For Peace Concert Tour" signed by artists such as Grammy award-winners Carlos Santana, Herbie Hancock, and Wayne Shorter, African guitarist Lionele Leouke and the entire Santana band. Also included in the auction, was a South African Safari, a Grand Ole Opry vacation package; and a drawing for a Holland American Cruise.

The evening continued with Nestor Torres, Latin Grammy award-winning flautist, captivating the audience with his sensual mix of Latin, jazz and pop. Torres' performance was followed by Keynote speaker Linda Biehl, Co-Founder and Director of the Amy Biehl Foundation, who expressed her support of Soka's "diverse group of students, dedicated to peaceful work, who should be looked upon as the future leaders of the world."

Ultimately, the evening closed with a heartfelt performance finale from the Advanced Chamber Singers, and Orchestra Club, accompanied by Nestor Torres. "What a magical evening that was under the stars," said gala attendee Terry Mitchell, "Great food, great company, great entertainment and most of all, a great cause. Thanks for letting me be a part of all this."





Thank You
FOR MAKING THIS
A MAGICAL EVENING



People Make the Difference

GENEROUS CONTRIBUTORS TO THE SUCCESS OF THE PEACE GALA

We wish to thank the hundreds of businesses and individuals who donated the priceless art, vacations, services, jewelry, gift certificates, sporting event tickets, and many wonderful items to the auction!

Advanced Chamber Singers
Avalon Tent & Party
Linda Biehl
Bon Appetit
Norah & Bruce Broillet
Matilda & Carl Buck
Ingrid Yin-Yin Han & Cheng-Jen Chang, M.D.
Judy Chao Di Chow & Steve Chi Kong Lee
Jeannie Cross
Mary D'Elia
George Ellis
Patrick Duffy
Don English
Lloyd Fischel
Teresa Fu
Craig Taro Gold
Steve Goldner, Jr.
Young H. Heinrich
George & Kathryn Hicker
Tomoko Kawashima
Konica/Minolta
Reiko Minamizawa
Reujo Nubanuzawa
Orchestra Club
Richard Payne
Gretchen Peregrine
Rick Doten Productions

SGI-USA
Wayne Shorter
Soka Staff & Faculty
Soka Student Union
Soul Wings
Spectrum Lighting
Lucy & Leigh Steinberg
Momoko Steiner
Stroock & Stroock & Lavan, LLP
Christina Sun
Taiko Drum Ensemble
Jack Toan
Nestor Torres
Trader Joe's Newport Coast
Mike Vencus
Wells Fargo Foundation

Special Thanks to Author, Taro Gold

for presenting each guest a collection of his beautiful gift books including Taro's #1 bestselling book of Eastern wisdom, "Open Your Mind, Open Your Life: A Book of Eastern Wisdom".

Thank You Taro!

www.tarogold.com



Reserve Your Seat Now

2006 PEACE GALA – SUA, ALISO VIEJO

Saturday, October 7, 2006, 6:30 P.M.

Contact Linda Safran

Phone: (949) 480-4072

Email: Isafran@soka.edu



Gonzalo Obelleiro

STUDENT SPEECH AT GALA 2005



Good evening, my name is Gonzalo Obelleiro and I come from Argentina. Since my childhood, my heart has always ached for the suffering of Latin America and its people. My land has a long history of bloody revolutions and failing recurrent economic reforms. Political

corruptions and societal upheavals were the norm as the backdrop of my youth, so I'm sure you can imagine the dismal effect it had on me as a young man. I started out as an idealistic person with high ideals to create a better Argentina and Latin America; however, as I stepped into manhood I became more and more cynical. My resolve became that the best I could do with my life was to just concentrate on making a good life for my family and myself and forget those other ideals.

In 2000, I was enrolled in a technical college major to become a graphic artist. A friend told me about Soka University's new campus opening in America. It just so happened that a Vice President of Soka would be visiting Buenos Aires promoting the school, so I went along with my friend. I learned that it would be a 4-year liberal arts college, based on the values of peace and human rights with concentrations of western and eastern perspectives.

To be honest, because of my career choice and college focus, history, politics, philosophy and literature had been almost completely eliminated from my study regime. Although I was very intrigued by what the Soka VP had to say, it seemed so distant and out of reach to me financially. I thought maybe some day after I'm a graphic artist and make some money then and only then will I be able to go to America and get a Masters degree in philosophy in America. As I was lost in my own thoughts, half listening, she began to talk about the amazing scholarship program of Soka University, which is supported completely from sincere contributions from thousands of supporters like yourselves who believe in this humanistic education. So I decided to apply, and to my great amazement I was accepted to be part of the first class and came here to Aliso Viejo. I realized over time it was the perfect school for me.

My four years here profoundly transformed my life. For the first time the contents of my classes were not separate from my daily life concerns. My concentration at SUA was the humanities. My empty idealism and cynicism were challenged to the max in small seminar sessions, where not only did I converse with my professors and fellow students from

35 countries, but also with the greatest minds in the history of humanity, Descartes, Hemingway, Homer and Nietzsche to name a few. I read the classics of philosophy, and began to understand that many people throughout history had the same concerns as me. The difficult challenges of the sciences to advance knowledge and the perseverance of scholars, politicians, artists and common people to make a difference in their societies were all laid before me.

At Soka I truly learned about humanity with all its diversity and beauty with the important perspective on what it takes to contribute to society. As the Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard once said: "Humans are not born humans as cats are born cats." In a sense, we become human through education, and through education we gain perspective in life that allows us to discover our own potentials, creative ways to make our goals a reality, and courage to face the horrors of life. From my experience at Soka I not only realized that it is precisely the humanistic approach to the liberal arts education that Soka offers that represents this most essential kind of education that Kierkegaard indirectly refers to, but that education in general is lacking this most essential human component. Passionate, talented young people are everywhere, but only some have access to higher education. Out of those lucky ones, most will end up receiving training on how to become a professional in a particular field or discipline, but only few are fortunate beneficiaries of a human education. In the average 80 years of a human life few people actually have the chance to spend only a few years of their lives to truly discover what it means to be a human being and how he or she wants to live their lives. What are the prospects for a society built on such narrow education? After having a chance to consider these questions deeply, I am now working on my master's degree in Philosophy of Education. I am attending Columbia University's Teachers College in Manhattan.

Now that I am studying philosophy of education; my determination is to become a leader of ideas and culture in Latin America and promote the kind of humanistic education that I received at Soka University of America. I want to help educators, community leaders and policy makers in my country to understand the meaning and importance of a humanistic education for building democratic and peaceful societies with economies of truly sustainable growth. I am convinced that we have arrived at the dawn of an era marked not by the mere power of technology to transform the environment, but an era marked by the light of humanistic education guiding humanity in the use of its powers. A renaissance of humanism, I truly believe. Of which you and I, supporters of SUA, are protagonists. I came to Soka a diamond in the rough, and I feel that the facets of my life have been carefully polished to expose my true potential.

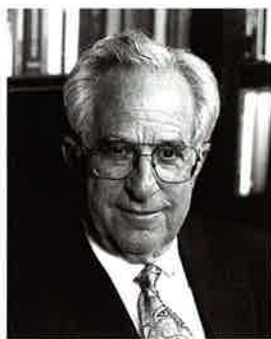
Welcoming the Class of 2009

STUDENTS FROM 32 COUNTRIES



Former UC President Joins SUA Board

JACK W. PELTASON ELECTED TO SOKA UNIVERSITY'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Jack W. Peltason, PhD, has been elected to the Soka University of America Board of Trustees. Daniel Y. Habuki, PhD, President of Soka University, and Steve Dunham, Chairman of the SUA Board of Trustees, welcomed Dr. Peltason to the Board.

"We are deeply honored," said Dr. Habuki, "that Dr. Peltason has agreed to share his wealth of experience, distinguished scholarship and leadership with our new four-year liberal arts college and masters program. Dr. Peltason, who is well-known in Orange County as President Emeritus of the University of California, Chancellor Emeritus of UCI and Chancellor Emeritus of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, will be a wonderful resource and inspiration as Soka University grows. SUA is now four-and-a-half years old. We've just graduated our first entering class of the undergraduate program and were accredited by the

Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), but we know that we are just at the beginning of our educational journey. We are grateful that Dr. Peltason will now be one of our guides and advisors."

In his acceptance letter to Dunham, Dr. Peltason wrote, "With the extraordinary dedication of its leadership, SUA is rich with promise and opportunity. I look forward to working with you and other members of the Board to benefit SUA students and the community at large."

Dr. Peltason also serves on the Boards of the Barclay Theatre, Kavli Foundation, Irvine Health Foundation and Archstone Foundation. He also serves as chair of the Leadership Council for the UCI Center for the Study of Democracy. He is a past president of the American Council on Education in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Peltason and his wife, Suzanne, reside in Irvine.

Kanika Batra

SOKA GLOBAL CITIZEN



Mahatma Gandhi, the father of my nation said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." These words have been my guiding force and strength and have empowered me to take compassionate action in many areas. Living in India allowed me to awaken to the harsh realities of the world and see the suffering of the people around me.

Each day was an alarm, as I drove past naked, hungry, innocent children begging in the scorching heat, women carrying their newborn babies in their arms begging for food at traffic signals, young girls with no clothes to wear sitting on the streets seeking refuge from the lecherous stares of passersby. I saw all this everyday and I saw other people who saw this too. It seemed as if nobody could feel the suffering of these people and for a long time I tried to make myself numb and insular like everyone around me. But, there was something in my heart that didn't feel right. I couldn't suppress the anger I felt at the apathy of everyone who drove past these people, not even acknowledging their presence.

The anger started to devour me each day and I felt a great sense of hopelessness. I was talking to one of the janitors at my high-school one day, when he expressed the great desire to give his children an education. He said he did not have the money for it and so his children were wasting away their lives by playing cards and doing drugs in the slum where they lived. That was it! I knew I couldn't just be angry; I needed to constructively channel my anger to affect positive change in society. If the apathy of the people angered me, I had to be the one to take responsibility to bring about meaningful changes! I joined a community service program at my school and established a link with the National Literacy Mission and got together a group of volunteers to go to the slums of Delhi and work with the motto of, "Each one teach one!"

Some of my friends and family were perturbed by this idea at first as they did not want me to go to the filth and squalor in the slums. They also believed that the slums were dangerous and unsafe for me. They said, "Why do you always have to do this? How much can you do alone anyway?" My response was the same as usual, "I can't keep waiting for someone else to do something. I may not eradicate all suffering from the world, but at least I can take my share of responsibility and

action...can't I? If we all just wait for someone else, then who will start? I want to be the one to start! It's high time! Please have faith in me." Now, I felt double the responsibility. I had to prove to my family and friends, the power of one person's dedication and contribution.

I worked with all my might to bring the children of the slums to my classes. Their parents resisted at times and the children themselves were not interested in studying. I used my dance and theater talents to make the classes interesting and attract more and more students. In addition to basic literacy, I focused on issues such as gender equality, personal and communal hygiene and the ill-effects of alcohol and drugs. The students began to enjoy my classes and eagerly waited for me each week. I was able to teach a total of 12 students who passed the National Literacy Exam. Also, I stirred up a group of volunteers to carry on the work with the same enthusiasm after I would go to Soka. The National Literacy Mission recognized this effort and awarded me for my success.

My real award, however, was gaining one of the most enriching learning experiences of my life. I was able to break all class barriers and connect with the children of the slums, like my own little brothers and sisters. Their warmth and high spirits taught me the value of life. The other volunteers I encouraged served as inspiration for my own spirit and confidence. My friends and family were proud of me. I continued working later in the Blind School, an institution for the mentally challenged and also a home for child prostitutes. I knew that I could pass on my new found hope! I was determined to do as much as possible before I came to Soka University of America and understand the pioneer spirit. I knew that it would be hard, but I was ready.

I can confidently say that I have remained true to my determination. At Soka, I have been actively engaged in Soka promotion activities, founded my own Indian Dance club – Ghungroo, served as the Chairperson of the Culture Committee of the Soka Student Government Association and galvanized the Model United Nations Club into action as Vice-President last year. Along with maintaining a good academic record, I have worked each year to pay my own tuition here. I still have a long way to go and I too have my own "impossible dream." No matter what people say, I will make my dream come true. Through all my experiences I have learned to be true to my heart and to trust my own potential. I strongly believe that I will do more than just make a difference – I will BE the difference!

– **Kanika Batra**, Class of 2006, India

Swimming & Diving Team Debut



SUA's fledging swimming and diving team won its first dual meet in only its second year. Fielding the team, Head Coach Dave Salo's men's team scored an overwhelming win over Chapman University with a final score of 83 to 41. Contributors to this first-ever win were freshmen, Ankur Poseria (Ohio), Andrew Jarvis (Canada) and Nate Flores (New Mexico), leading the team to seven wins over Chapman.

"This team has improved dramatically from our first year and we are attracting some outstanding student-athletes like Ankur, Nate and Andrew that will make a tremendous impact on our ability to compete," commented Head Coach Salo. "I think we will surprise a lot of people this year with our improved competitiveness and our great team spirit."

On the women's side, Soka University engaged in a double dual format against Chapman University and Mills College. Chapman defeated the Soka women 89 to 55, while an outstanding Mills team outscored Soka 120 to 38. Mills took Chapman with a score of 91 to 68.

"Our women have a bit of a way to go to be competitive, but they have improved so much since last season when we were just trying to teach them how to train," reported Salo on his women's team.

Salo, a two-time USA Olympic Coach and Head Coach of the 2005 USA Men's World Championship Team has been the Aquatics Director and Head Swim Coach at Soka University since 2003.

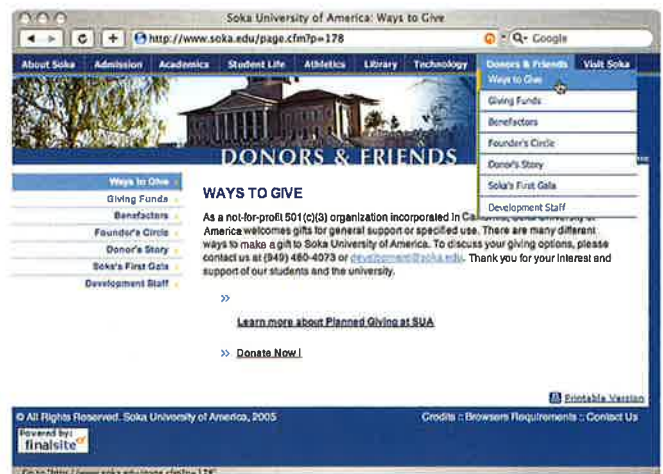
Visit the New SUA Planned Giving Website

CONTRIBUTIONS THAT WILL SHAPE GENERATIONS TO COME

The next time you visit the Soka website, you will find an up-to-the-minute resource for your planned giving needs. Simply visit the Undergraduate Program website at www.soka.edu and select the tab on the top marked Donors & Friends. Here you will find a variety of ways to support SUA. We have done our best to briefly explain how each option works and included a gift calculator to help you evaluate different options. You will also find a glossary of terms related to planned giving, a reading room full of articles and a place to request more information in the form of ebrochures.

Credit Card Donations Online through VeriSign

Here is a fast, simple and convenient way to make your contribution to the Soka Education Fund. You can donate any amount, at any time of day in complete privacy with the most trusted security mark on the Web. Select Donors & Friends, Ways to Give then click the Donate Now button.



Did you know you can donate to SUA online securely using your credit card? Check out the Undergraduate Program website at www.soka.edu.

Jim Merod, 'The Jazz Man'



David K. Smith/Visio Video News

SUA Professor of American Literature, Jim Merod's true love is jazz. As an instructor of jazz appreciation classes at SUA, and creator of the "Jazz Monsters" concert series, Merod states, "This is something I love." In addition to his work as a teacher, critic and writer, Jim has been a jazz and blues re-

recording and mastering engineer for more than twenty years. Merod's recording credits include Tito Puente, Joe Lovano, Tommy Flanagan, Sarah Vaughan, Eddie Palmieri, Wynton Marsalis, Ella Fitzgerald, Stan Getz, Tolu, Los Lobos, Ozomatli, Luciana Souza as well as many others. Jim is the co-author of legendary composer-saxophonist Benny Golson's autobiography. Influences on Merod's intellectual career include a series of remarkable teachers: R.P. Blackmur and Walter Kaufman at Princeton; William Arrowsmith and Harold Bloom at Middlebury College; David Halliburton and Bliss Carnochan at Stanford; and A. R. Ammons, his friend and colleague at Cornell. Merod's passion for jazz informs his excellent teaching, and he is assuredly one of SUA's many treasures.

See 2006 Calendar, Page 15 for Jazz Monsters concert dates.

Q: How did the Jazz Festival come about?

The idea was put forward my first year when I was talking with the Dean of Faculty, Ed Feasel and expressed how great it would be to have a Jazz presence here in Orange County at SUA. Ed was very supportive, along with SUA's Provost, Tomoko Takahashi, a Jazz fan also. We discussed on ways to make this happen, and started by setting a budget and from there it began to have legs.

Q: What is your most memorable experience with the Jazz Festival?

Probably each of the four concerts with highlights. Guests who attended expressed how thankful they were. One guest said with a twinkle in her eye, "you can only go to Starbucks so many times".

Q: What direction do you see the festival taking in the future?

We started in a high powered way. This spring the concerts will be more intimate, melodic with a soulful aspect. We have recently honored some of these legendary musicians that have performed here at SUA by creating the "Jazz Monsters Hall of Fame". We will continue with this tradition by bringing some of the greatest musicians here to the campus and honoring their unique talent. We intend to show our appreciation for all they have done towards the growth of American music and providing a greater understanding of its heritage.

SUA's 5th Annual International Festival

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR MAY 6, 2006 ...YOU'RE INVITED!

Come celebrate the 5th annual International Festival at Soka University of America on Saturday, May 6, 2006, from 10:30 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. The campus will come to life with musicians and dancers representing various cultures from around the world. Enjoy events such as storytelling, art exhibit openings, games and inflatable rides, demonstrations, and local non-profit and business exhibitors...and, of course, international food!

Cost: Admission free for children under 18 and \$5 for adults.

Proceeds benefit the Soka Education Fund.



New Academic Leadership at SUA



Edward M. Feasel, Ph.D.

Dean of Faculty and
Professor of Economics

The new Dean of Faculty Edward M. Feasel, Ph.D., joined SUA in 1998 as a Professor of Economics. While at SUA, Ed served as the Dean of Students for the first four years of the undergraduate program. He has

taught courses on Principles of Economics, Macroeconomics, Econometrics and International Economics, as well as Learning Clusters on Financial Crisis and Local Economic Issues. Feasel graduated Magna Cum Laude from Yale University in 1988, and, went on to receive his doctoral degree from the University of California at Berkeley, where he received Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor recognition in 1992. Most recently, Feasel received the Soka Education Award from Soka University of Japan in 2000.

"It is a true privilege to serve as Dean of Faculty at SUA. I believe we have an exciting curriculum which fosters world leaders for the age. We also have a world class faculty with outstanding credentials and accomplishments, professors who truly care for the students. This is the best group of colleagues I have had in my career."

Feasel's research interests include Economic Outcomes and Societal Values; Regional Economic Issues, emphasizing the Orange County economy; and Economic Growth: Effects of Monetary and Fiscal Policy. His published work includes "Understanding Unemployment across California Counties" in 2002 in *Economic Inquiry* (with Mark Rodini), "A VAR Approach to Growth Empirics: Korea" (with Yongbeom Kim, the Ministry of Finance, Seoul, South Korea and Stephen Smith of George Washington University) in *Review of Development Economics* in 2001. Currently, Feasel is working on final submissions for the *Journal of Development Economics* and the *Eastern Economic Journal*.



John M. Heffron, Ph.D.

Dean of Students and
Professor of History

The current Dean of Students, Jay Heffron, joined SUA in 1996 as a Professor of History and Director of Educational Research Programs for the Pacific Basin Research Center (PBRC), a research unit of the University.

He was active in the early planning and development of the Aliso Viejo campus, which opened to students in August 2001. A graduate of Princeton University and with a doctoral degree from the University of Rochester, Heffron has been an active scholar and teacher for over twenty years. Most recently, he co-edited with Dennis A. Rondinelli, *Globalization in Transition: Forces of Adjustment in Asia and the Pacific* (forthcoming 2006).

In addition to being Dean of Students, Heffron remains a Professor of History and Associate Director of the PBRC. "Although I still enjoy something of a learning curve," says Heffron, "working in the Office of Student Affairs has been revelatory, involving me in student lives – in their residential experience, in sports and recreation, and in the whole round of extracurricular student activities – in exciting new ways and with a deeper appreciation for the vital connection between their academic and non-academic pursuits."

"I am also constantly reminded of the professionalism and level of dedication of the staff of Student Affairs, who work with and for our students day and night to make their tenure at Soka as positive and as value-creating as possible. I feel very fortunate to be able to work together with all of them. The Office of Student Affairs has a critical mission, I believe, to support the development of the whole student, thus enabling them to better succeed in the classroom and to become the capable young adults and leaders for which the University was founded."

Please remove this calendar and use as a handy reference for SUA events.
All events open to the community.

2006 calendar of

Events

JANUARY

Jan 2-30 Dreaming of Peace for the love of it! Art Exhibition

Monday-Friday 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. in Founders Hall

FEBRUARY

Feb 1 Dreaming of Peace for the love of it! Art Exhibition

9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. in Founders Hall

Feb 10 Jazz Monsters Concert Larry Koonse' Darek Oles Quartet – Classic Jazz

7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. in Founders Hall,
3rd Floor

Feb 16-28 Fourteen Stations/Hey Yud Dalet Art Exhibition

Monday-Friday 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. in Founders Hall

Feb 16 Opening Reception: Four- teen Stations/Hey Yud Dalet Art Exhibition, featuring the work of Arie A. Galles

5:30 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. in Founders Hall,
1st and 2nd Floors

MARCH

Mar 1-31 Fourteen Stations/Hey Yud Dalet Art Exhibition

Monday-Friday 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. in Founders Hall

Mar 9 Poetry Reading by Jerome Rothenberg

Exhibition Event in conjunction with
Fourteen Stations/Hey Yud Dalet Suite
Art Exhibition
7:00 P.M. in Founders Hall

Mar 10 Jazz Monsters Concert Greg Douglass & Pete Harrison – Blues

7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. in Founders Hall,
3rd Floor

Mar 12 Film Screening: Fourteen Stations

Offered in conjunction with Fourteen
Stations/Hey Yud Dalet Suite Art
Exhibition
5:00 P.M. in Founders Hall

Mar 23 Symposium – Thoughts, Words and Images: Portrayals of Holocaust and Genocide

Moderated by Professor Stephen
Feinstein and Professor John K. Roth,
Claremont McKenna College,
7:00 P.M. in Founders Hall

APRIL

Apr 3-28 Fourteen Stations/Hey Yud Dalet Art Exhibition

Monday-Friday 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. in Founders Hall

MAY

May 6 Soka University's 5th Annual International Festival

10:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. all campus event
Free for children under 18, \$5 for adults

For more information on these events,
please contact Soka University of America
at (949) 480-4000 or visit www.soka.edu.

SUA Receives WASC Accreditation

MAJOR MILESTONE ACHIEVED

On June 16, 2005, the Western Association of Schools & Colleges Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges (WASC) and Universities granted Soka University of America accreditation for five years.

Dr. Tomoko Takahashi, SUA Provost, Vice President for Academic Affairs and WASC Accreditation Liaison Officer, noted that it is a remarkable achievement for a new university to become regionally accredited so quickly. In the official accreditation letter, WASC Executive Director Ralph Wolf wrote that WASC skipped the candidacy vote for SUA and proceeded directly to initial accreditation. Among SUA's achievements, he noted, was that "the list of graduate school acceptances by members of the first graduating class is impressive."

When asked what the next milestone might be for the university, SUA President Daniel Y. Habuki smiled and said, "Every fine university owes its reputation to the achievements of its students." He continued, "SUA students have a heart for creating peace, and I'm looking forward to seeing what our graduates will achieve to help make this world and their communities a better place. Soka means 'to create value' – and that will be our most important milestone."

Did you know?

All 32 SUA seniors who decided to attend graduate school were accepted by schools, such as the London School of Economics, Yale, Columbia University Teacher's College, New York University, University of Pennsylvania, Carnegie Mellon, Georgetown, Vanderbilt, University of California at Berkeley, UCLA, UC San Diego, UC Irvine, UC Santa Barbara, University of Southern California, Claremont Graduate University and University of Hawaii Law School.



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Have You Moved Recently?

We would like to keep you informed of the wonderful news from SUA, so if you have a new address, please let us know by sending an email to cscherfghara@soka.edu or contact Coleen Scherf-Ghara directly at (949) 480-4073. If you know someone who has mentioned they no longer hear from SUA, please make sure they contact us so we can update their information.

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