

Honorary Degree Recipient

Daisaku Ikeda
Global Peacebuilder and President of Soka Gakkai International

December 28, 2016

Daisaku Ikeda, your prolific career in education and peacekeeping is a shining example that achievement can flourish despite adversity. Impelled by enduring firsthand suffering during war as a child, you have fearlessly dedicated your life's work to finding peace, advocating for education and eradicating the fundamental causes of human conflict. As president of Soka Gakkai International, a socially engaged network of more than 12 million peace activists, you led an era of innovation and inspired global citizenship that transcends religion, ethnicity and politics. You have also contributed countless scholarly works to society and founded 15 educational institutions around the globe that have inspired students and educators alike to follow in your footsteps. With profound appreciation of your work, DePaul created the Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies in Education, the first such university-affiliated institute in the United States, to research, share and bring awareness to the educational ideas of Japanese educators such as yourself, and your mentors Josei Toda and Tsunesaburo Makiguchi. Like the schools you founded, the institute follows the Japanese educational model called Soka, meaning "value creating," which complements DePaul's Vincentian values, most notably in serving urgent human needs and informing socially responsible graduates. The impact of your actions has been felt deeply, not only by DePaul, but by Chicago as well. Exactly 50 years after your first visit to the city, the Chicago Park District commemorated your peacebuilding and work to eradicate racism by constructing the Peace and Justice Monument in Lincoln Park. In addition, the City of Chicago created the Daisaku and Kaneko Ikeda Peace Grove on the South Side of Chicago and most recently, a quarter mile of Wabash Avenue was named the Honorary Daisaku Ikeda Way. Your exemplary accomplishments have been recognized by many, including being awarded the prestigious United Nations Peace Award and Rosa Parks Humanitarian Award. For these reasons and more, DePaul University is privileged to confer upon you the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa.