

ALISO VIEJO, CA, October 06, 2013 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- Soka University of America (SUA) will hold its ninth annual Peace Gala, "Celebrating a Vision of Peace," at the picturesque Soka University of America campus on Saturday, October 12, 2013. Guests will enjoy a cocktail reception and silent auction in the acclaimed new Soka Performing Arts Center at 6 p.m., and then proceed across Peace Lake to the main venue for dinner, entertainment, live auction and dancing.

Featured guest artists for the evening include three-time Grammy winning jazz bassist, cellist and singer Esperanza Spaulding, nine-time Grammy winning jazz saxophonist and composer Wayne Shorter, Grammy winning jazz drummer Terri Lyne Carington, and acclaimed jazz pianist Leo Genovese.

Spaulding's Chamber Music Society in 2010 won multiple awards including the Best New Artist Grammy. Her latest release, Radio Music Society, won the 2013 Grammy for Best Jazz Vocal album and along with Thara Memory, she won the Grammy for Best Instrumental Arrangement Accompanying Vocalist(s) for the song "City of Roses."

Wayne Shorter's music transcends genre while keeping the improvisational genius and surprise of jazz burning at the center. Regarded as one of the most significant and prolific performers and composers in jazz and modern jazz, Shorter received Grammys in 1979, 1987, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2003 (two) and 2005 - including best album, best instrumental performance and best composition.

For the third year, actor Ron Glass, best known for his role as Detective Ron Harris on the TV sitcom "Barney Miller," will serve as master of ceremonies. Joan May and Dita Shemke return as event co-chairs for the seventh consecutive year, and Carolina Shorter is the 2013 honorary chair.

"We're looking forward to stellar entertainment this year," said Co-Chair Joan May. "Our amazing entertainers are recipients of a total of 13 Grammy awards, which is quite exciting for us. But the real joy will be the magic created by the heartfelt presentations and participation throughout the evening by students of SUA, who are the beneficiaries of the funds raised for scholarships by the Peace Gala."

The ever-popular DawnMarie Kotsonis will lead the live auction following a gourmet dinner provided by The Resort at Pelican Hill. For those who like to prepare, guests can preview the

live auction selections by going to the "Celebrating a Vision of Peace" fan page at <https://www.facebook.com/CelebratingAVisionOfPeace>.

Tax-deductible tickets to this elegant evening are \$300. Proceeds from this year's gala will help provide full tuition scholarships for admitted students whose families make \$60,000 or less a year.

Each year, the gala raises funds for scholarships for Soka University students who come from around the world to experience Soka's unique educational experience founded upon the principles of peace, human rights and the sanctity of life. SUA founder Daisaku Ikeda said, "The ultimate goal of a Soka education is to foster people of character who continuously strive for the greatest good - that of peace."

Information on attending the gala is available at <http://www.soka.edu/peacegala>, info@soka.edu; or by contacting Linda Kennedy (lkennedy@soka.edu) at 949.480.4072.

Soka University is a private, four-year liberal arts college and graduate school in Aliso Viejo, CA. The university is ranked in the top 50 liberal arts colleges in the nation by US News and World Report's "Best Colleges 2014." Soka University offers a 9:1 student/faculty ratio and study abroad for every undergraduate student. Founded upon the Buddhist principles of peace, human rights and the sanctity of life, SUA is open to top students of all nationalities and beliefs. About 60% of Soka University's students come from the US and 40% have come from more than 40 other countries. Admitted students whose annual family income is \$60,000 or less may be eligible for Soka Opportunity Scholarships which cover full tuition. Additional scholarship opportunities are available for higher income levels.