ALISO VIEJO, Calif. – Over the past weekend, Soka University participated in the Cal State University, Los Angeles Twilight Invitational as well as hosted their 9th annual Soka Peace Invitational Track & Field meet on April 19th partnering with UCSD who held the hammer/discus portion of the event on April 18th.

Senior distance runner Nick Spector ran a blazing 5k setting a new PR and finishing 1st with a time of 14:52.24 during the Twilight Invite and earned himself a bid to outdoor Nationals which will be held in Gulf Shores, Alabama on May 22nd through the 24th. This will be Nick’s 3rd time qualifying for outdoor nationals. Fellow teammate and first ever marathon qualifier for the Lions, senior Aaron Perry finished 3rd in the same race.

Sophomore sprinter Drake Alvarez-Cates followed suit at the Soka Peace Invitational securing himself a ticket to Nationals posting a qualifying time of 21.65 in the 200m. Drake also qualified for indoor Nationals earlier this year.

Overall, the meet was a great success reinforced by positive feedback from officials and coaches. Attending teams included Cal State San Marcos, UCSD, Vanguard and a variety of track clubs and unattached athletes. Two hundred and fifteen athletes were in attendance.

Other standout performances from the weekend were junior Chanel Calhoun who posted a 200m time of 26.13, over a half a second faster than her former best of 26.72. While freshman Kelly Quinlan found her speed this week running a 26.91 in the 200m (her best by over one second) and bettered her 100m time to 13.00.
On the men’s side, Senior Yoshi Hara brought his 200m time down from a 24.00 to a 23.27. Coach Gigi Freeman’s response to her team’s performances was “This is the time of year when the sprinters finally start to feel their speed and those times begin to drop. It’s encouraging and satisfying for them to see their hard work pay off. The meet went well, small fields but very good competition made for an exciting day!”

The Lions will have two more chances to compete in their 2014 season with a meet at UC San Diego on the 25th and the Oxy Invitational on May 10th.