

## CARP USA: Establishing CARP Chicago at Harper College

R. Schmidt, Z. Konno, S. Masuyama  
March 26, 2022

Efforts for the establishment of CARP Harper started back in November 2017. CARP alumni Z. Konno returned to her home city of Chicago after some years on a faith-based leadership training program called [STF Europe](#); she had a desire to establish a positive environment for the youth in her local community to come together.



Z. joined a few established CARP chapters, particularly the ones in [Los Angeles](#) and [Las Vegas](#), to gain some experience. After that, she met with Harper College alumni Soogin Ogden, and they discussed how they can establish CARP on the local college campus. Neither were students there at the time, but as there were plenty of people in the community who attended Harper College, they felt it was the perfect campus for CARP. "We wanted to create something not just for our new friends but for our brothers and sisters in our community," said Z.



Throughout the semesters, Z. and Soogin found more and more people who wanted to support CARP. There were young people and parental figures from their [Family Federation](#) community of Chicago, and new students that they met on campus. Z. specifically thanked Soogin Ogden, Chung You, Sumika Yee, Shizuka Kato, Helena Moreno, Diego Moreno, and Eiko Horibe for their support; she said, "I couldn't have done it without them."

They gathered all their necessary paperwork and sought to find a faculty member who would be willing to be their advisor. Finally, they found an enthusiastic professor and with his support, they turned in their official club application. However, before the scheduled meeting with the Student Council for final approval could take place, the pandemic hit, which put all application processes for student organizations on campus to a halt.

Despite this challenge, the students were determined. Even throughout the pandemic, they consistently hosted online events and invited more people in the community to step into leadership roles.

In Fall 2021, schools opened up for in-person classes once again. Their originally intended advisor was planning to retire so the students acted quickly. Harper student S. Masuyama, CARP supporter Mune Nakamura and R. Schmidt, determined to find a new advisor. After taking time to pray about it, they were inspired to reach out to people from the department for international students as CARP was attracting many international students. They ended up visiting one faculty member, Mrs. Jill Izumikawa, who is the coordinator for international student services.

The CARP representatives shared with her what CARP stood for - its values, its emphasis on relationships, and faith - things that usually don't get taught in class. They had a rich conversation, and the CARP members explained why they decided to join this club and their personal commitment to its vision. After discovering that there were no interfaith, non-denominational groups on campus, she agreed to be the faculty advisor! The only requirement that Mrs. Izumikawa had was that she wanted to be involved in the club. She wasn't joking, as she has come to almost every CARP Talk so far.



*From left to right: Sumika Yee, S. Masuyama, R. Schmidt, Mrs. Jill Izumikawa, Mune Nakamura, Jinil Fleischman*

And, thus, CARP Harper was officially established in early February 2022. Their first and current chapter president is S. Masuyama. Their hope is to provide service work opportunities and host Divine Principle retreats, which they are planning this semester!



The establishment of CARP Harper College was an amalgamation of so many dedicated people. CARP Harper wants to extend their thanks to their local community pastor Rev. Hiro Sagisaka and his wife Maria for their consistent support, being in many meetings with them and praying for them to become an official club on campus. They would also like to thank many of the mother figures in the community. Congratulations to all the hands and hearts involved in establishing CARP Harper College, especially to their core team, R. Schmidt, Sotetsu Honda, Sumika Yee, Mune Nakamura, and S. Masuyama!

