

National Parents' Day Celebrated on Capitol Hill

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A Virginia couple and eight other couples from around America were honored on Capitol Hill on Tuesday, July 21, 2015 in honor of the 21st National Parents' Day this Sunday.

"Families are the foundation" of human society, and parents become "the first image of love to our children, and the first image of God to our children," said the Rev. Keith A. Savage, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Manassas.

Two of the best pieces of advice for parents, he added, are to "eat together" as families and "talk with each other," even if sometimes you are talking "at each other."

Mr. Savage and his wife Bonita were named National Parents of the Year at a ceremony in the U.S. Capitol. Eight other couples who attended received Excellence in Parenting plaques.



Former Indiana Rep. Dan Burton (center) stands with Rev. Dr. Keith A. Savage, who with his wife Bonita were named National Parents of the Year 2015 on Tuesday at a Capitol Hill event. Mr. Burton was instrumental in passing the federal law designating the fourth Sunday in July as Parents' Day.

All the finalists had distinguished themselves not only as parents of their own families but in tending to families in their communities, said Dr. Michael Jenkins, president of the The Washington Times Foundation, one of the co-sponsors of the event.



The nine finalists were chosen from 50 nominations by a national selection committee, which included political leaders, clergy and leaders of the National Organization for Marriage, Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Georgia, and the Rev. Willie and Sherion Weston, the 2014 National Parents of the Year.



“You parents are so important,” said former Rep. Dan Burton of Indiana, a lead sponsor of the 1994 law that enacted Parents’ Day as a federal holiday, celebrated on the fourth Sunday in July. President Bill Clinton signed the law.

Mr. Burton recounted a childhood that included an abusive father, but also a stepfather who taught him about working hard and a mother who taught him to “never, ever give up.”

“Tell kids they can climb that mountain and they will do it,” said Mr. Burton.



“Being a parent is not a simple word,” said Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, chairman of the Universal Peace Federation in America, another sponsoring organization.

Lifting up good parents and becoming one family—specifically, one family under God—is key to addressing family breakdown, said Dr. Michael Balcomb, president of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification in America.



Honorees included the Rev. Floyd and Carolyn Blair of Atlanta; Hector and Elena Castillo of Bronx, New York; Alonzo and Pearl Forbes of Raleigh, North Carolina; Bruce Stephen and Christine Foster of Oceanport, New Jersey; elder Don and Janet Garrick of Huntington Beach, California; Khenukyah and Yaqaryah Holeman of the District; Bishop J. Bernard Richardson of Bridgeport, Connecticut; and pastor Bucas and Carolyn Sterling of Kettering, Maryland.

Sponsoring organizations included the National Organization for Marriage, Universal Peace Federation, American Clergy Leadership Conference, The Washington Times Foundation, Women’s Federation for World Peace, and the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification.