

## HJ Youth Academy Europe and the Middle East: EMPOWER x UPA Cadets in Tirana, Albania with Shin-chul Moon and his wife

Bogdan Pammer  
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EMPOWER meets UPA Cadets in Tirana, Albania

Hey there! EMPOWER is taking over today's HJYA Blog

The EMPOWER program (if you didn't know already) is EUME's year-long missionary and faith development program for young adults ages 18-30 designed to help participants find and live their life of faith in the Unificationist community through fundraising training, witnessing, participating in service projects, and going on a pilgrimage in South Korea to grow their hearts and character towards Heavenly Parents, True Parents, and others.

EMPOWER has completed 40 days of the witnessing portion of the program. We have one team in Fier, Albania, and another in Pristina, Kosovo. Participants have had the chance to get accustomed to their country, reach to people on the streets with "Anketës" (surveys), host exciting cultural and language courses (in Spanish and Korean!), and teach the Divine Principle. It has been a busy 40 days and a very meaningful time learning to work together as a team to support one another.

We gathered together for a midterm witnessing workshop in Mullet, Albania, to take a breather and assess how we are doing. We spent time reflecting, debriefing our witnessing experiences, having heart-to-heart sharings with one another, receiving inspirational witnessing guidance from Martine Masner, and even hosting our vigil prayer in the evenings! Vigil prayers were a core component of our workshop, where we heard testimonies from each other, sang our hearts out, and prayed together as we launched into the next 40 days of our witnessing program.







Upon a sudden turn of events, EMPOWER went to Tirana to attend the Sunday service and welcome the Albania UPA team! EMPOWER performed the song 'No Matter Where You Are' (which sounded amazing, by the way for the community).



EMPOWER participants Kristian and Alena shared their testimonies about their witnessing experience in Fier, Albania. Here is Kristian's part of the testimony:

"In witnessing, whenever I honestly and sincerely wished for my witnessing partner to achieve great results, they could approach people who would come to our center and receive the lectures and, in some cases, even keep coming back. I would like to share an experience while witnessing with Alena [my witnessing partner]. It was right after a long night of True Parent's birthday and Holy Day celebrations online. Alena and I felt incredibly grateful and joyful on that day for connecting with True Parents because of their birthday and the celebrations.



That day, I could feel a sincere desire for Alena to bring a guest back to the center who could be maybe even her spiritual child. At the beginning of that session, we set a clear intention to bring one person back

to the center. One of the first people we approached was a girl named Estrela and her friend- and they came to the center! And I was given the opportunity by Alena to give the Introduction to her, which was an extremely nice experience. In one moment, she also taught me about the Divine Principle in some ways, which was amazing. I'm very grateful for this experience."



We felt energized and honored to greet the 6 UPA missionaries, including Shin-chul Moon and his wife, who will be doing a mission in Tirana for two years! Together, we will be a wellspring of pure flowing water: inspiration and hope for our True Mother, who has so much hope for the upcoming generation. Now, EMPOWER is off to its final 40 days in Fier and Pristina.



If you or someone you know is interested in participating in EMPOWER 2024-2025, our application is now LIVE!

Check out our social media @ Empower Program on Facebook or our website for more information:  
[empower-eume.org](http://empower-eume.org)

Stay tuned for more updates!

Sincerely,

Your favorite European missionary program;

EMPOWER



## WELCOME TO EMPOWER

EMPOWER is a missionary and faith-based development program for young adults ages 18-30 to help them find and live their faith by growing their hearts and love for God, True Parents, and others. EMPOWER offers opportunities for participants to have strong and mature characters through fundraising training, witnessing training, participating in service projects, and going on a pilgrimage in Korea to experience the history and heart of True Parents and the Unificationist movement. EMPOWER encourages its participants to become active in their communities and grow their hearts to become global citizens.

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## Testimonies

"I remember before going into EMP that I was a bit nervous about the amount of time I would be spending away from home, with a very new group of people and very different circumstances. At the same time I had such a strong feeling that I had to do this and I'm so grateful I did. [...]"

EMP really deepened my connection to our movement, the core of it and my love for true parents. [...]"

In Korea I could really find my answers and my peace. My connection to prayer has improved tremendously in Lebanon but when we did vigil prayer here for the first time and we started chanting "abeoji" and "eomeoni" it made me so emotional because for a split second I felt the desperate hearts of everyone and the reaching hand of true parents towards us as their children. From that moment on I felt like I could be truly one with my prayer every time I prayed.

I can sincerely say that the Shinae starting EMP and now standing here at the end are not the same people and I'm so happy to say that. [...]"

**Shinae M.**

NETHERLANDS

"I also learnt how to expand my heart to try to love anyone. I feel like it is easy to say that you love everyone when you barely have to see the people that you struggle with. But with EMP we were a small team so we couldn't just avoid people that we had struggles with. I really struggled at times with certain members, not because they were necessarily doing anything wrong, but we just had such different personalities and ways of going about things. But we had an emphasis to invest and love the people that we struggled with. [...]"

Being in Lebanon also really helped me to develop my faith. This was thanks to the influence of so many things such as getting to witness, teaching the Divine Principle, experiencing the heart of our central



things such as: getting to witness, teaching the Divine Principle, experiencing the heart of our central figures in Lebanon and taking part in Vigil Prayer every week. I am now at the most stable point I have ever felt in my life of faith, even though, of course, there is still a lot to work on. [...]

All these things helped me to think about how I want to prepare for the Matching and Blessing. I also feel like I am ,internally, in a much better place to go to university than I was at this time last year, when I wasn't planning to take a gap year."

**Sophia N.**

UNITED KINGDOM

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Being a team leader made me feel God's heart more in different moments. It was not always easy for me to relate to or reach everyone, but still always trying to do so and praying for them and watching them and how much they were investing in different situations, and trying to encourage them and sometimes having a glimpse of how God sees them was a very precious and moving experience, now that I look back on it. I remember many moments when I was very moved by each member of the team and could realize that really everyone has such a precious core, and that God loves everyone so much. I'm very grateful for my team and their efforts and heart.

**Talia P.**

GERMANY

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