

Japanese Missionaries learn about True Parents' investment in America

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A team of Japanese Unificationist missionaries spent the beginning of January visiting historical sites in Washington D.C. and New York and learning about True Parents' investment in America. The group has been part of the outreach team in Las Vegas since 2009. They are a team of Unificationists ages 18-25 who spend an average of three months creating programs, inviting guests and doing service projects in the local community.



The group has earned substantial recognition on the University of Las Vegas Campus with its involvement in CARP and the creation of "Shine City Project," a successful organization focused on cleaning up the city. As Las Vegas continues to grow, these projects are drawing in many students and volunteers. Recently, the missionaries attended the Christmas celebration with True Parents at the South Point Hotel, where they volunteered with registration, preparation and ushering. They were also integral to the 14-day outreach workshop for Korean and American participants that followed the Christmas party.

The recent trip to the East Coast was a chance for these missionaries to experience the rich history of New York and Washington, D.C. These locations hold special significance for the founding of America and are places that True Parents invested much of their time in developing the American movement. Team member Ho-young expressed the excitement of most of the group: "It was so fun, because it was the first time I've been to New York, and it was one of my dreams to come to New York. I didn't expect to go to Washington, D.C., but it was so good because I got to know American history."



Dr. Balcomb, President of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU USA), greeted the team at the National Ministry office at the beginning of their trip. Dr. Balcomb shared words of inspiration after a beautiful breakfast on the 39th floor “Sky Lounge”. He also gave a challenge to the missionaries to reach out to at least one new person during this trip.

The group then had the chance to visit East Garden and Belvedere, where they were given guided tours. The tours were a beautiful opportunity to further understand True Parents and their work in America. Yuka, one of the participants, said, “Through this trip, I felt that New York is really the center of America, and especially at East Garden I felt such a strong spirit and my heart got so warm. We were able to meet the people who work there, and their love for us is very moving. I felt very grateful for it, and I learned from them how to love people.”



Local Unificationists guided the group on a tour of Manhattan to some of the most famous sites, including the 43rd street learning center, Bryant Park, Times Square and the St. Patrick’s Cathedral. The team had deep experiences at several of these locations, where they knew many Unificationists had spent so much time testifying to True Parents.

The trip to the nation’s capital, Washington, D.C., was just as memorable. The excursion began with an emotional tour of the city. The tour guide, a talented Unificationist woman from the area, explained the historical significance of all the monuments in relation to the country’s history and Unificationist history. The team took time to pray at the Lincoln Memorial, the WWII Memorial, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, the Washington Monument, the Capitol Building and the White House. “Seeing the footprints of True Father at the Washington Times, East Garden and everywhere we went led me to really feel True Father’s heart,” said Hana, another participant.

After the tour, the group visited the Washington Times building where they were given a very gracious welcome by Tom McDevitt. Mr. McDevitt explained the rich history of the Times and the invaluable roles it played in the downfall of Communism and being an honest source of thought and leadership in America and the world. He also explained the genius of True Father’s vision for the importance of the media in shaping history and moving the providence forward.

The pastor of the local Maryland community and newly appointed Vice President of FFWPU USA, Miilhan Stephens, took time to dine with the group and share words of gratitude, support and encouragement for the work that the outreach team members do. He took time to listen to each member's personal story and reason for why they joined the program. The group left Maryland inspired.



On the drive back to Manhattan, the group made a brief stop at the historical convent in Newark, New Jersey where Mother Teresa spent several months serving impoverished children and families. Back in Manhattan, the participants took a tour of the Manhattan Center Studios. They learned the historical and providential importance of the New Yorker and Manhattan Center buildings. In the studio, the team had the exciting opportunity to record two songs, "Lean on Me" and "Tongil."

The team got in some more sightseeing in New York before the end of their stay, making stops at Chelsea Market, the Statue of Liberty, Wall Street, the 9/11 Memorial and the Brooklyn Bridge. They also were able to spend valuable time with local Unificationist families and youth groups.

The missionaries were deeply inspired by the providential history in New York and Washington, D.C. It helped reinvigorate their dedication to God and True Parents and True Mother's call for outreach. Many of the participants expressed a deeper appreciation for the work of the Unificationists that came before them, and a determination to do great work themselves. "Now I feel the [next] generation has to take responsibility," said Hana, "to really have that heart and work for the world."