

## Universal Peace Academy spends January visiting historical United States places

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The Universal Peace Academy (UPA) is spending the month of January visiting historical places in True Parents' work in the United States. So far, they have been to the New Yorker Hotel and Manhattan Center in New York, the Washington Times in the nation's capital, the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut, the Unification Theological Seminary, East Garden and Belvedere. Now, the group of cadets are in Las Vegas where they will embark on a Holy Ground pilgrimage before heading up to Los Angeles for a week of outreach activities.

The following are the cadets' personal reflections along each stop of the way during the East Coast portion of their trip:



### FFWPU USA Headquarters

On January 6, the UPA cadets got a tour of the National Ministry Team's offices and met with Continental Chairman, Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, who shared encouraging words with these aspiring ministry leaders. They also took the opportunity to explore Manhattan, including the Rockefeller Center and Times Square.

"I could recognize the position and responsibility of UPA through Dr. Kim's words," said Kenta Gishi. "Then, while sightseeing, I walked while thinking about the time when True Father was in New York, loving the people who had lost a sense of family culture and have been abused by individualism. I felt strongly the need to meet and witness to these people, people who True Father needs to save America."

"Through this visit could realize once again True Parents' greatness of foresight in leading the providence," said Sohoon Jun.

UPA cadet Yoshika Sakamaki shared, "Today I got a chance to feel True Father's heart when he came to America. Through meeting leaders and members of the National Ministry Team, I could feel True Father's heart and love directly. We are so grateful for the warm reception and the love they have given us! We will study hard and endure intense training to become good leaders and give happiness to our Heavenly Parent and True Parents."

"The tour of the New Yorker Hotel and the Manhattan Center made me realize that the efforts of True Parents' leadership were realized both internally and substantially," said Soo Ho Kim. "I hope to inherit their big, loving heart through this trip and seeing the changes that they have made in the U.S."

### Washington Times

The following day, the cadets rode down to the Washington Times and met staff members who recounted the history and current activities of the Washington Times. After their meeting, they took a tour of Washington, D.C. including the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial and White House.

“True Father founded the Washington Times and helped save the United States from communism by spreading the values of freedom, faith and family in the United States,” said Su Young Cho. “I was touched, because I could see the marvelous history of True Father.”



Yoshihide Nakagawa shared, “It was a valuable experience for me to learn the background of the founding of the Washington Times. While hearing that the Washington Times played a big role in finishing the Cold War, I felt the spirit of True Father, who always led the providence considering the future.”

“Visiting the Washington Times and the Washington Monument, I came to understand True Father’s love toward America and its greatness,” said Kashin Kim.

“I felt True Father’s strong passion for God’s providence and the huge love he gave to the United States, through this visit. Moreover, we should also have a big passion and heart just like True Father to become leaders who can move great countries like the United States,” said Kzumi Kawakubo.

### **University of Bridgeport**

On January 8, the group went back up to Connecticut and stopped by West Point, a U.S. Military Academy, and the University of Bridgeport.

Gookhyeong Lim said, “After visiting, I came to realize why True Father invested tremendous resources to education. Many graduates from West Point became great leaders in the United States, and I came to think that, similarly, UPA is really important to achieve Cheon Il Guk (God’s kingdom).”

“West Point nurtures people as a military and national leaders and educates them both in studies and physical training,” remarked Tomomi Fukuda. “I was touched at the cadets’ spirit for dedicating their whole life for their country. Through this I came to know what is a leader.”

Keiko Shimoda said, “I look forward to fulfilling True Mother’s hope that UPA can be a better place than West Point, by doing our best every day to create an even higher standard than them.”

### **Unification Theological Seminary**

On January 9, the cadets visited UTS. They viewed Heung Jin Moon’s car, toured the campus, heard a presentation from Professor Dr. Michael Mickler and a history review of UTS from Dr. Andrew Wilson. Then, they visited Belvedere and East Garden where they also toured the grounds.

“UTS, Belvedere and East Garden are three of the most important holy places in America,” said Kenta Gishi. “At East Garden, various items which True Parents and their family used were exhibited, each one a precious treasure.”

Yoshika Sakamaki said, “It was the first time I felt True Father so close to me. It made me think about how to become a Cheon II Guk leader. It was a wonderful day of following True Father’s footprints.”

Keiko Shimoda said, “I could feel True Parents’ heart at the Holy Grounds. Especially at East Garden, it made me recall True Father and I really miss him. I truly appreciate all of those who maintain the Holy Grounds. Because of them, I had a special experience today.”

Yoshihide Nakagawa said, “I was touched at the Unificationists who take care of Belvedere and East Garden. Their heart and attitude toward True Parents was truly pure and dedicated, one hundred percent.”



### **Clifton Family Church**

On Sunday, January 10, the UPA team joined Sunday Service in New Jersey. That day they also visited Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty.

“Everyone welcomed us; it was so pleasant,” described Kazumi Kawakubo. “I was surprised to see so many other Japanese people at church. While meeting them, I thought about the Japanese missionaries who dedicated a lot to developing the American church. When we start witnessing in Los Angeles and Las Vegas, we have to show the same passion that they did!”

Cho Su Young said, “Everyone welcomed us gladly. This kind of family atmosphere made me feel like home. It was a great experience feeling that we are one family under God even though our country, race and language are all different.”

“In New Jersey I was able to feel the vivid heart of Unificationists in America, and I had a really good time talking to other young people,” said Gookheong Lim. “I also got to see the Statue of Liberty, a symbol of America. It firmly stands for the freedom in America, including the freedom of religion.”

So Hoon Jun said, “Church service was a good opportunity to meet and have conversations with the American family members. Everyone was so close with one another and the atmosphere was really warm and comfortable. It feels like one big family. I was glad to be here and meet these wonderful people.”

Over the next couple of weeks, the UPA cadets continue their journey along the West Coast. Stay tuned for more updates as they finish their USA pilgrimage.