

UPA Returns to Korea after Two Months in USA

Michael Balcomb
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The Universal Peace Academy (UPA) spent January and February visiting historical places in the legacy of True Parents' work in the United States. During the first half of their trip, they visited the East Coast including 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. Then, the group of cadets made their way to the West Coast where they visited Las Vegas and embarked on a Holy Ground pilgrimage before they split into two teams, some staying in Las Vegas and others heading up to Los Angeles for a week of outreach activities.

They have shared their reflections each step of the way, hoping to open a window into their experiences abroad as well as give Unificationists in America a new perspective of their country from fresh eyes. The following are the cadets' personal reflections from West Coast this month:

"I waited for my guests to meet me today, but one hour passed, then two, then three, and nobody came. That kind of situation really makes me sad. I can feel how Heavenly Parent waited for us over the thousands of years from Adam's time to now. What a huge wait. I can't image the deep sorrow He had. We really have to give Him back His smile."

-Kashin Kim, Los Angeles, Jan. 26

"Today I met Korean, my new guest. We talked for two and a half hours. It was hard for me and I felt a lot of pressure. Through this experience, I came to know that the spiritual word is moving while I am witnessing."

-Yoshika, Las Vegas, Jan. 26

"Today, before starting witnessing, I read True Parents' words that we have to have a serious experience to save people. At the beginning of today I didn't focus on the witnessing, but as soon as I read True Parents' words I realized I am doing outreach together with Heavenly Parent and True Parents, not by my self."

-Tomomi, Las Vegas, Jan. 26

"Today, something miraculous happened. When I went outside to witness, I noticed that David, a guest who had not answered my text messages nor showed up, was sitting on a bench. So, I approached him and said hello to him. He said that he had not been able to reply because he didn't pay for his cell phone. Actually, I wanted to see him again, so I came to realize that God sent him, for I miss him. Witnessing is longing for the person."

-Gookhyeong Lim, Los Angeles, Jan. 27

"Today we attended Discussion Night at the CARP Learning Center. It means a lot to me because the student who I witnessed to participated, and also Korea CARP members visited. I felt the spiritual world

is helping us and I hope Korean CARP, Las Vegas CARP, GPA and UPA can unify through this period.”
-Kazumi, Las Vegas, Jan 27

“Today we went to Fremont street for a culture experience. I feel hope in this place. There were lot of bad things, but also a lot of art. If we changed these bad things to good things, Las Vegas can be the best city for God. I think we can express God through art.”
-Yoshika, Las Vegas, Jan. 28

“Today our team had time to think and discuss about our whole experience witnessing so far. We came to know that there was a lack of communication. Our team including me all have to learn how to communicate with others. We are going to exceed our limitations and win as a team.”
-Su Young Cho, Las Vegas, Jan. 28

“Witnessing is becoming a parent. I heard about this a lot of times but I didn’t understand exactly. Today I met Baile, who wants to give inspiration to a neglected class of people through film. Through him, I came to realize Heavenly Parent’s mind for how He wanted to love us and His earnest desire to take His people back from Satan. We have to know that we are receiving a lot of love from Heavenly Parent and True Parents.”
-Kashin Kim, Los Angeles, Jan. 29

“Today our UPA cadets have been to the coast of LA. There, we rode on a boat to see whales. But, the most memorable thing was the waves. The height and width of the waves looked so tremendous and dangerous. There I came to think about True Father’s words. He said if we follow the flow of the waves, then we don’t need to be afraid.”

-Gookhyeoung Lim, Los Angeles, Jan. 30

“Today we participated in a half-day seminar at the Peace Education Center. The goal of the lectures was to convey the significance and value of the Marriage Blessing. Rev. Andrew Compton gave lectures focused on true family. The lectures were compact and impressive.”
Kenta, Las Vegas, Jan. 30

“There was a promotion time for UPA at a meeting with local Unificationists in Pasadena. Two cadets shared their testimonies. It was a valuable time for me to listen, too. It reminded me of the motivation I had in when I first came to UPA.”
-Yoshihide, Los Angeles, Jan. 31

“Today I joined Sunday Service in Las Vegas. The pastor told us about True Parents and the providence of Las Vegas. I was glad to hear it. It is not easy to accept the problems that are happening in our Unification movement. I came to think about how to improve the church and encourage our families.”
-Tomomi, Las Vegas, Jan. 31

“Today I met three people and tried to invite them to learn more, but they rejected the offer. I feel a little bit disappointment, but I found that most important is the understanding of people’s background. And during the outreach, even though I could not make any appointments, I didn’t give up. I tried to find another person chosen by God to be ready to learn about True Parents. Finally, I met a person who is interested in the Divine Principle.”
-Yoshika, Las Vegas, Feb. 2

“Today was the third meeting with my guest, Jay. As we connected more I can feel that he is opening his heart.”
-Yoshihide, Los Angeles, Feb. 3

“As usual I went witnessing today. I felt nervous talking to people, for it is not easy to give love to others. I truly pray to Heavenly Parent to lead me to His love. After that, surprisingly, I met a lot of people who were interested in CARP.”
-Tomomi, Las Vegas, Feb. 3

“In the morning, Mrs. Mihoko and I went outside to the campus to approach people. For an hour, I was rejected by about 10 people, so I was a little bit down, and I didn’t have much time left, so I approached one last person. He was really interested in my questions and introduction of the Divine Principle. After arranging an appointment, I thought that on the foundation of 10 rejections, I was able to meet the one person. That’s God’s providence.”
-Gookhyeong Lim, Los Angeles, Feb. 4

“Spirit world really moves. I had a special experience. Today in the morning I went witnessing with So Hoon. As usual, before starting, we had a time for praying. After the prayer I found someone looking at us. He asked us if he could join us and pray together. We prayed together again. He was interested in our

activities and was touched by our prayer. So, we read the Divine Principle together and had a great time."

-Kashin Kim, Los Angeles, Feb. 4

"I went to Hollywood and Santa Monica today. Someone played the violin along the sea of Santa Monica. I felt that the music has the power to overcome everything and touch a person's heart."

-Yoshihide, Los Angeles, Feb. 6

"Today, our UPA cadets and I helped the LA Family Church to prepare the True Heavenly Parent's day celebration at 6am. It was a little bit hard to set everything up before starting the service, but it was meaningful to support them. I was able to feel the True Parents' love from everyone there."

-Gookhyeong Lim, Los Angeles, Feb. 7

"Today we finished a two-day workshop for our guests. Through this workshop I learned about the importance of communication. We worked with UPA, CARP and Japanese missionaries, so communicating was necessary but it was not easy. It took a lot of efforts to unite and we have the mission to make it. I felt we need a lot of practice and we have to know how to unite peacefully."

-Yoshika, Las Vegas, Feb. 7

"In the afternoon, I met two people with Mrs. Kazumi. Actually, they were really interested in my questions and the Introduction of Divine Principle. One of them is a Mormon. He said that he is not Mormon anymore, because he was not able to understand the Bible. So, when he listened to Mrs. Kazumi's experience and read the introduction, he became really fascinated by True Father's words. I thought that if we prepare well then God will guide us to meet the prepared persons."

-Gookhyeong Lim, Los Angeles, Feb. 8

"Today we did outreach at Pasadena City College. My guest and I read the section of the Divine Principle about the Human Fall. His reaction was good and he understood. I was relieved and I wanted to study the Divine Principle more together."

-Keiko, Los Angeles, Feb. 8

"Today, I have a meeting with Kara, one of my guests. We were able to share a lot during our last talk. I really enjoyed being able to get to know a lot about each other. Divine Principle study is important, but I think it is also important to know about each other. Not much time is left to meet but I hope to share and talk more as much as we can."

-So Hoon, Los Angeles, Feb. 9

"Today, Mrs. Kazumi and I met a special person who is a veteran. He was discharged about two years ago and now he is a student in PCC. He said that he had killed people in Afghanistan for his self-defense, but after that he went through a lot of confusion. So, he said his purpose in life is to live a normal life. After meeting him, I came to think about what we can do for him in terms of God and True Parents."

-Gookhyeong Lim, Los Angeles, Feb. 10

"Today we focused on taking care of our guests. There was a surprising news that one of our guests bought a copy of the Divine Principle. I feel that the spiritual word is moving so much. I always try to focus on the spiritual world and try to believe God. Until the end I will never give up!"

-Yoshika, Las Vegas, Feb. 10

"Today was a holiday at PCC, so there was no class. But I had an appointment. Thankfully my guest said she can come, even though it's a holiday. That was definitely an amazing time to me. Furthermore, she was interested in the Divine Principle and wanted to read more even though she had another meeting to go to. I can't believe it happened in such a short time. There were many guests I met one or two weeks ago, but only this one came to the second appointment."

-Kashin Kim, Los Angeles, Feb. 12

"I was impressed today because my guest Cody read the Divine Principle until page 68 by himself. He is really interested in the Divine Principle and he became to understand Heavenly Parent more. Also, he is a quick learner of the Divine Principle and he has a passion for studying it. He wanted to study every week so we made a schedule for him. I can feel he has a good and pure mind."

-Su Young, Las Vegas, Feb. 12

"Today, we had a goodbye party at the Gordon Center. Many guests came to the party and had a really good time with CARP members. After finishing all the programs, we said goodbye to each other. We only got to know each other for a short time, but we will miss them. I believe that someday we will meet again, for we are living in God and True Parents' world."

-Gookhyeong Lim, Los Angeles, Feb. 13

"Witnessing is really amazing. We could not predict even one day. Until two days before, I didn't have a

guest to come to our goodbye party. I didn't give up until the last minute. I think that's why I was able to meet my guest. We just met one time and she accepted to come to our party. Today we talked a lot and became more close. I hope she will keep on studying the Divine Principle even when I am not here. "

-Kashin Kim, Los Angeles, Feb. 13

"Bye-bye LA. Today is the last day we are staying in LA; we are going back to Korea tomorrow. Doing witnessing in LA was such a great time for UPA. Of course, not only great things happened; there were also painful memories. But because of all these experiences we have grown and felt Heavenly Parent and True Parents' heart. I am so thankful to Heavenly Parent and True Parents for sending us here. We will always remember this time. "

-Kashin, Los Angeles, Feb. 15