

WFWP USA: Rejuvenating Peacemakers for Spring Awakening

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Merly Barlaan, International Vice President and CAO Deputy Director at the WFWPI's Office for UN Relations, welcomed participants from New York

From March 9 to 11, 2022, as part of our Annual Fundraising Campaign, the Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) Office for UN Relations in New York hosted a virtual three-day, wellness event titled "[Spring Awakening.](#)" The purpose of the "Spring Awakening" was to create a place to help pace our peacemakers and changemakers, on this journey to healing the Earth and empowering women through incorporating sustainable practices in our own lives.

Day one was centered around the theme: Food for the Soul. In the morning, we had a presentation on "[Permaculture: Path to Health and Planetary Healing](#)" by Yani Amores Dutta and Raoul Amores, Founders of the Regenes Project, which is the first and only Ecosystem Restoration Camp in the Philippines. The Regenes Project has a mission of "Healing Nature through People, and Healing People through Nature. In this refreshing talk, Ms. Yani shared the importance of learning from nature as nature always serves a greater purpose. She closed her remarks with an inspiring message stating "If we go about our day thinking of others, about the greater whole, we are on the right path."

What better way to reconnect to the Earth, than cooking a meal that tastes like home, using earth-based ingredients from the soil? In the afternoon, a [Healthy Cooking Class](#), hosted by Burgi Ennis and Arehta Fortune was offered to the public. The mother and daughter duo prepared a hearty quinoa salad, while sharing their own practices of healthy eating and sustainability tips in the kitchen. They also shared a bonus recipe with us, for a chocolate quinoa drink!

Day two was centered on the theme: Bridging Divides. The day began with an interactive dialogue on

["Peace and Reconciliation through Climate Action](#) - Case Study on North and South Korea," by Dr. Anna Grichting. In this conversation, Dr. Grichting explored the idea of co-creating ecological landscapes for peace, justice and reconciliation at the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to foster healing and bridge divides. Throughout the session, the audience had a chance to engage in conversation with Dr. Grichting, as well as post on a virtual pinboard with their ideas. She also highlighted WFWP's work in bridging divides at the Korean Peninsula and introduced the Women's DMZ Peace Zone Project, which aims to co-design a space for women, peace and the environment in the Korean DMZ.



In the afternoon, Ms. Yun-A Johnson, a sustainable designer and the Founder of Your Aesthetic Style Creators Collaborative, hosted a workshop on a ["Guide to Sustainable Fashion."](#) In this session, Yun-A challenged the participants to dig deeper in understanding what we truly want when we have the urge to buy something new. In this engaging presentation, participants learned more about how to discover their personal style over 'must haves' and trends, which come and go and are far from sustainable. Yun-A's guide bridges the divide between fashion and sustainability, with the belief that the sustainable lifestyle shift "has to be something fun, it has to be together, and something accessible."

Day three was centered around the theme: Action for Sustainability. We know how it can be difficult to give to others, when you are feeling burnt out and exhausted yourself. In the morning, an [Inner Peace Yoga Class](#) took place, led by Dr. Marin Kitamura. After a quick explanation of the anatomy of the body, Marin began a 40-minute healing and meditative yoga flow, focusing on light movement and breathwork. This peaceful session helped participants to get in touch with their mind-body awareness and feel more grounded to begin the day.

The Spring Awakening culminated with a [special fundraising program and celebration](#), featuring testimonies from [Giving for Good International](#) (GFGI) projects, giving a shoutout to our major supporters, entertainment and revealing the anticipated Art Book, as we worked to raise our fundraising goal to support our work in 2022. It was an evening filled with inspiration and hope. The program came to a close with a quote from Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, the co-founder of WFWPI, "I have one life goal - to live in utmost gratitude. Today I will be more grateful than yesterday, tomorrow, I will yet be more grateful."

With over 1,200 attendees who registered for the three day Spring Awakening, we hope our changemakers and peacemakers found it a perfect opportunity to learn, reflect and reset, as we continue to make world peace a reality!

If you missed this live event you can still refresh and get inspired by watching the recording [here](#).