

Universal Peace Federation Honors 18 Community Leaders from New Jersey and Pennsylvania

Lourdes Swarts
May 7, 2012



On Saturday, April 28, 2012 the Universal Peace Federation hosted a luncheon honoring outstanding civic leaders from New Jersey and Pennsylvania. This event was held at the Sheraton Parsippany Hotel in Parsippany, NJ.

Among the 18 honorees was the featured speaker, Kay Hymowitz, a scholar at the Manhattan Institute, a respected think tank. She writes extensively on childhood, family issues, poverty and cultural change in the United States and is the author of four books, including her latest, *Manning up: How the Rise of Women is Turning our Men into Boys*, published in 2011. She addressed the current trends in American culture in her keynote address.



Admiral J. Robert Lunney

Mr. Joel Austin, the founder of Daddy Universe, City of Philadelphia, passionately addressed the issue of the need for parenting skills. He works to empower men to become good dads. According to a Center for Disease Control CDC report, 77 percent of all African-American babies are born without a father in the household. Among all Americans, 42 percent are born without a father in the house. To Austin, this trend is increasing at an alarming rate, threatening the very well being of our society. He also mentioned that since he became an Ambassador for Peace, an honorary title created by the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Universal Peace Federation, many doors have opened for him. He attended the luncheon

with his wife, Jill, and two teenage sons.

Mr. Jim Gavin, Mr. Robert Beebe, and Dr. Richard Panzer gave introductory presentations on the upcoming lecture series on *Freedom, Faith and Family*. During Gavin's presentation, titled "Freedom is not Free," he showed the Little Angels world tour video, which sparked a warm reaction from the audience. Reverend and Mrs. Moon, also known as the True Parents, were featured in the video in which they gave a donation of \$10 million for the 16-nation tour to honor Korean War Veterans.



This presentation was followed by a speech by Admiral J. Robert Lunney, a Korean War Veteran, who spoke about his profound respect for Rev. Sun Myung Moon and his vision for a world of peace. Admiral Lunney served on the *S.S. Meredith Victory* during the Korean War and assisted in a rescue mission to the city of Hungnam, which is known as the "greatest rescue operation by a single ship in the history of mankind."

He said, "This is the story of a miraculous voyage. 14,000 refugees were rescued, not one life was lost and five babies were born; it tops everything else in sheer drama." In reflection of this experience, the ship's captain, Leonard LaRue said: "I think, the clear, unmistakable message comes to me that on that Christmastide, in the bleak and bitter waters off the shores of Busan, Korea, God's own hand was at the helm of my ship."

Following the main event, Swarts and Gavin hosted an Executive Committee meeting to draft a plan of action for future work. Dr. Richard Panzer, the senior advisor together with Dr. Ann Iparraguirre, Mr. David Eaton, Mr. Robert Beebe, Mr. Alan Thibideau, Mr. Bill Dillinger, Mrs. Linda Haft, and Mr. Sam Sharma were among those who came forth to offer their help in the development *Freedom, Faith and Family*, America's most fundamental virtues. These lectures will serve as the main content of UPF's educational effort in dealing with the core issues affecting society today, such as freedom and security, the purpose of life, the existence of God, evolution, the defense of marriage and more. This program would not have been possible without the help of all volunteers and Ambassadors for Peace. Thank you!