

IAYSP USA: Summer of Service: Caring for Each Other and the Environment

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From coast to coast, it's been a busy summer for the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) USA, a Unificationist youth service organization. The national chapter of the nonprofit founded by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon recently partnered with a team in the Philippines to plant one million trees this year. But did you know they've also cleaned up a major river in New Jersey, helped distribute healthy meals to cancer patients, and assisted a Las Vegas shelter with food, water, and care services? And that was in just three weeks.

"The vision of Youth and Students for Peace is to create a culture of peace in every part of the world where it becomes a norm to seek the benefit of others even above myself," said Dr. Robert Kittel, YSP international president.



On July 10, national staff, including YSP President Rev. Miilhan Stephens and YSP Program Coordinator Naria Gaarder, led a team who picked up trash along the Passaic River in Paterson, New Jersey. The river cleanup, organized by city officials, involved some 30 volunteers from various nonprofits and environmental groups such as the Passaic River Coalition, Paterson Green Team, and Appalachian Mountain Club.

Rev. Miilhan said YSP was able to connect and network with leaders of other volunteer groups, paving the way to potentially collaborate with them on future environmental projects. The YSP New Jersey team also joined other volunteers for the HealthBarn Foundation's "Healing Meals" initiative in Hawthorne. The program provides healthy meals for families with children undergoing treatment for cancer, serious blood disorders, and sickle cell anemia, as well as seniors in need of care.



"The experience was meaningful," said one YSP volunteer. "Especially because those preparing the meals came from basically three generational ages. Regardless of the age difference, the shared activity created a strong sense of working for a common cause."

Dr. Moon established IAYSP in 2017 to advance world peace by empowering youth and students to become global citizens through character education and a range of peace and service projects. In its vision statement, IAYSP is "a global family of young people building a culture of peace with true love" and exercises values of responsibility, integrity, service, and empathy (RISE).

"While we may identify with a particular nationality, ethnicity, religion, or culture, we should affirm our common humanity, a value that transcends our individual backgrounds," said the founder's daughter, Dr. Sun Jin Moon, during her inaugural address of IAYSP in Thailand.

Across the country, in Nevada, another YSP team was hard at work at the Las Vegas Rescue Mission (LVRM) in recent weeks. The team has previously volunteered at the shelter, a Christian nonprofit organization that focuses on serving those in need with food, shelter, addiction recovery, and spiritual support.

"Founded in 1970 by a pastor and six businessmen who had a calling to help those who were homeless and hungry... LVRM is more than just a shelter, we stand as a beacon of hope," says the LVRM website.

The shelter, which provides roughly 30,000 meals every month to hundreds of men, women, and children daily, leans on the generous support of the greater community. About a half dozen local YSP volunteers staffed a community dinner service and assisted with check-ins, temperature checks, and distributing food trays. The Las Vegas team also participated in farm service work and weekly park cleanups throughout June - putting IAYSP's global vision and values into practice.

You can learn more about IAYSP USA [here](#).

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Sun Jin Moon, IAYSP Thailand Inaugural Address

FEATURED EVENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS



WHAT WE DO





Character Education



Peace Designer Seminar



Intercultural Activities

TAKE ACTION

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