FFWPU USA: 17th annual Blessed Culture and Sports Festival (BCSF XVII)

Naokimi Ushiroda
August 16, 2021

"There are so many lessons we can learn from playing sports," said Rev. Naokimi Ushiroda, national president of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU). "Many times in sports, with all the training and preparation on top of what you're already doing, you may wonder, 'Is it worth it?' But we need that kind of indomitable spirit and perseverance in order to do well."

Rev. Naokimi was among a number of FFWPU USA leaders who attended the final day of the 17th annual Blessed Culture and Sports Festival (BCSF XVII). The program wrapped up August 15 after five days of friendly competition in a variety of sports, gaming, musical performances, and a fashion show.With the pandemic still looming, the program was a hybrid of online and in-person events.

BCSF aims to empower young Unificationists and their friends to share their talents, skills, and values to positively influence the culture of the world. A highlight for many, participants from across North America came out to the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) property in Barrytown, New York, for the long-held summer tradition founded by Jin Kwon Kim in 2004.

"Many of the athletes here weren't even born at that time," joked Rev. Naokimi as he addressed the participants. A former high school athlete himself who ran cross country, Rev. Naokimi shared about the importance of sports and its influence on our lives.

"For me, running outdoors and just being able to reflect and challenge my own limitations was part of the joy," he said. "But [BCSF] is about sharing our values through culture and sports; it's not just any sports festival… Athletes work really hard to win the medal, but the same discipline applies to our own life of faith."

Unificationist Patrick Stinard, a volleyball player, said he was grateful for the opportunity to reconnect with the community while enjoying the competition of his sport. "It was great to play volleyball for seven hours on the first day," he said. "We played very well despite being a new team, and we played with a lot of team spirit which I appreciate."

Stinard, who also helped welcome registrants, was happy to see in-person activities after BCSF went virtual last year due to the pandemic. BCSF Director Denthew Learey said his team was committed to creating a fun program for all young people to engage in.

"We've created this atmosphere and environment for anyone to come and experience love, friendship, and family," he said. "We want to keep that going for our younger brothers and sisters so that they have something to help find themselves and their unique value - whether it's through sports, songs and music - we want them to really be able to express that."

Dr. Chung Sik Yong, regional president of FFWPU North America, also greeted participants while on a short break from his national tour to revive the spirit of America.

"I was so happy to see so many young people and their families," said Dr. Yong. "I really want to encourage this BCSF program… It's very important to create unity between the mind and body and to create team spirit. This helps us to develop a heartistic relationship among all of our brothers and sisters."

You can learn more about the Blessed Culture and Sports Festival here, and check out updates from the 2021 program here.

09 Aug 2021

Regional President Stirring the Spirit of America

Dr. Yong meeting with local Indianapolis official | FFWPU-USA

A national tour is currently underway by Dr. Chong Sik Yong, regional president of Family Federation for World and Unification (FFWPU) North America, as he seeks to revive the spirit of America. Dr. Yong is visiting a number of major cities throughout the US, meeting with community leaders and members while delivering a message of hope and peace for America.

"I was happy to see so many [FFWPU] leaders and members in person," said Dr. Yong, who recently visited Dallas Family Church. "It was really great to see each one of them... My desire is to see and meet each of our members and embrace them; this is like the Kingdom of Heaven."

Dr. Yong's trip to Texas follows a stop in Indianapolis last week, where he joined the local Unificationist community in announcing Rev. Josue Kisile as the new pastor of Indianapolis Family Church. Pastor Kisile previously led Grand Rapids Family Church in Michigan.

Dr. Yong and FFWPU-USA leaders also met with new Indianapolis Deputy Mayor Judith Thomas. "I gave her Mother Moon's memoir," said Dr. Yong. "It's the first time I've met a politician since I came to America."

It's been a challenging year for many as the nation faces a range of issues amid the ongoing pandemic.

Dr. Yong aims to connect with more government leaders on his tour—in addition to faith leaders and American Clergy Leadership (ACLC) pastors—who can help revive the spirit of America's people. He also plans to meet with as many couples and families as possible, which comprise the backbone of society and the nation's future.

"I've had great meetings with members regarding all of their activities," said Dr. Yong. "They have shared from their hearts and it was really beautiful."

Community members have been delighted to receive Dr. Yong, too, with some even calling him "family" due to his loving, parental nature. "I was grateful to connect with Dr. Yong and his recent Sunday service message of how important it is to bring restoration to our parents and our lineage," said one young Unificationist from Dallas.

For many, it's the first time they've met Dr. Yong in person since he began his role as regional president last October, when much of the US was still under heavy pandemic restrictions.

"He has really emphasized raising up and supporting the younger generation in America," said Rev. Miilhan Stephens, FFWPU national vice president. "He has a great heart that conveys Mother Moon's deep love for us."

FFWPU's co-founders, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her late husband, the Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, have long spoken about God's hope for America and its critical role in leading the rest of the world toward lasting peace and unity. "Humanity is currently in a position that is not completely aligned with our Creator," warned Dr. Moon during a virtual rally in September 2020, among more recent events. She said the Covid-19 pandemic is a call for us to pay attention; and that America must take initiative and humanity must work together to resolve its problems.

Sharing Dr. Moon's message, Dr. Yong's speaking tour is inspiring more people to respond with urgency. "I feel very encouraged because I really believe that we have power in pioneering a way for others to take action in the world," said a Dallas Unificationist. "I'm determined and feel grateful for Dr. Yong's words of hope."

Stay tuned for updates on Dr. Yong's national tour. You can learn more by also joining Morning Devotion here.

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BCSF XVII ONLINE

August 11-15, 2021

BCSF strives to create a hub for Unificationists and their friends to connect and celebrate the values of our community through sports and culture.

REGISTER NOW

BCSF XVII IS STREAMING LIVE

FACEBOOK LIVE

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About

The Blessed Culture and Sports Festival (BCSF) is traditionally 5-day culture and sports event that was started in 2006 and has taken place every year since. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we are hosting BCSF XVII 2021 at our virtual UTS (via gather.town).

BSCF is a grass-roots lead project of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification. All staffing, program design and management is done by unpaid volunteers. There is a core team of about 10 people who work with dozens of volunteers around the world each year.

BCSF is usually held at 30 Seminary Drive, Barrytown, NY 12507.

Join our Facebook page or follow us on Instagram for regular updates, videos, photos and more.

Vision Statement:

Positively influence the culture of the world by:

- Creating a hub for Unificationists and their friends
- Infusing the belief that individuals and communities can impact the world
- Empowering those people to share their talents, skills and values

Culture

The cultural aspect of BCSF involve various expressions and venues for fine art, cinema, dance, and music. Cultural elements include:

- Talent Show
- Fashion Show
- Social Hub and Events
- Graphic Design Contest
- Village Sessions
- ...and more...

Sports

The sporting aspect of BCSF involve multiple competitive and intramural sports tournaments with teams from around the world coming to compete. In our online environment, sports and active events might look a little different from our normal in-person sports, but we'll always strive to keep the same spirit.

- E-Sports Tournament
- Amazing Race
- Poker & Chess

Donate

Because of your contribution, participants will walk away with new friends and a positive and healthy outlook of their faith community. Our hopes is that by you, leave BCSF more inspired and energized in their faith than ever before.

YOU CAN MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

HSA-UWC
C/O FINANCIAL OFFICE/BCSF
48 16TH AVENUE, BOX A13
NEW YORK, NY 10001

Please note that the BCSF is a grass roots led and funded event supported and fiscally sponsored by HSA-UWC, a 501-c3 non-profit group. We appreciate any donations which are used directly for the event and are tax deductible.

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