

## CARP Las Vegas celebrates its first anniversary at its own Learning Center

Naokimi Ushiroda  
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On Thursday, September 24, the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) Las Vegas celebrated its first anniversary at its own Learning Center near the campus of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). The main meeting room was packed with over 80 guests, including Rev. Ken Doo, district pastor for Las Vegas, his wife, Mrs. Songhee Chi, CARP friends and supporters, and local Unificationists.

Among the guests were FFWPU-North America Continental Director Dr. Ki Hoon Kim and his wife, Mrs. Tamme Kim, FFWPU-USA President Dr. Michael Balcomb and his wife, Mrs. Fumiko Balcomb, and CARP-USA President Mr. Naokimi Ushiroda, who had just finished the National Leadership Conference in Las Vegas.



During the social hour, guests enjoyed a “mocktail” bar and made new friends over refreshments that were both donated by local restaurants and also prepared by Las Vegas Family Church members.



The main program started with a toast and a video presentation with an overview of CARP activities from the past year. A close contact of CARP LV, singer Megan Silva, and the CARP band gave an uplifting musical performance. Then CARP LV President Jinil Fleischman gave an introduction to CARP, speaking about True Parents as the founders and explaining the CARP Las Vegas vision and mission statement. Jinil also spoke about the six Core Values of the Divine Principle, which resonated deeply with the educators and community leaders in the audience. When he talked about the fourth Core Value of purity before marriage and his own personal commitment to this, many applauded loudly and showed their support.



Three unique testimonies were given that evening. The first one was from a teacher from Southwest Behavior School, a continuation high school for those who have dropped out of high school. The teacher related that, over time, many of the students felt the genuine care and support of their local CARP chapter and learned to trust their mentors as they looked forward to seeing them each week.

The second testimony was by a couple who sincerely expressed how their lives had changed since meeting CARP, with the quality of their relationship significantly improving.

The last testimony was by one of the three CARP Las Vegas founding members, Angelica Moraes. She explained how grateful she was to God, the founders of CARP, and all of her CARP friends for all the growing experiences she had had this past year.

CARP USA President Naokimi Ushiroda was invited to give a congratulatory message. He explained the vision of True Parents for a CARP chapter in Las Vegas – re-creating “Sin City” into “Shine City.” He said he was very impressed by all the work the Las Vegas chapter had done in this one year.



Education Center Director Akira Watanabe gave a special recognition to Professor Jared Keene, the CARP UNLV campus advisor; Mrs. Jacqueline Silerio, a new CARP member and also the mother of CARP member Jeffrey Silerio; Ms. Kaori Kinoshita, a missionary from Japan; and Kobe Neuhaus, one of the newest CARP members.





They strongly and sincerely recognized the parental support and love behind the contributions that Jeffrey and Kobe had made this past year. Jeffrey's parents and Kobe's father were deeply moved to tears as their sons handed the certificates to them. They are yet to study the Principle, but had a heart-opening experience on this occasion.



Kailey Teo, who recently moved to Las Vegas, outlined the CARP LV plan for this semester, including the upcoming monthly Divine Principle retreat schedule, and invited all to participate.



The concluding remark was given by Akira Watanabe, who thanked all for their contributions and expressed his determination to keep God's viewpoint and love others with God's parental heart.

"We all felt hope and conviction that we could do more to change the lives of more young people in this coming school year," said Mr. Watanabe after the event.



The benediction was offered by the director of a local meditation center and interfaith clergy, Rev. Bryan Neely. He said he could not help but mention how joyful and excited he was to get to know such a wonderful organization as CARP, and to say how hopeful he felt to know that there were such conscientious young people.



To top it off, the CARP members introduced the Korean tradition of the “Eog Mansei” victory cheers to all the guests, and Dr. Ki Hoon Kim led the final “Eog Mansei” to lift up the already high-spirited guests.



The evening was like a big family get-together, with everyone enjoying each other's company. After the event finished, the young people stayed for another hour, talking and singing. Many thanked the CARP LV staff as they were leaving, and several guests expressed excitement about attending upcoming DP retreats.

