

CARP LA's annual Turning Point Workshop at the IPEC in Las Vegas, Nevada

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From December 26 to January 1 (2019!), CARP LA hosted their annual [Turning Point Workshop](#) at the International Peace Education Center (IPEC) in Las Vegas, Nevada. This year's retreat was lead by co-MC's Joshua Holmes and Kengo Kawa.



About 100 high school and college students attended this week-long deep dive into Divine Principle. While most attendees were from Los Angeles, few came from New Jersey, Indiana, Las Vegas, and Bay Area. After setting clear intentions on the first night for what they would each like to gain from this retreat, the workshop rolled out in full force.



"It's been a great experience being in this wonderful, energetic environment where everyone can come together to share our heart with one another. I hope to come closer to God's heart." - J. Kawa, Graduate



Rev. George Kazakos was the opening presenter.

Every day was packed with four presentations. The first two days, Rev. George Kazakos of the Los Angeles Family Church (LAFC) presented on the Ideal of Creation and the Fall of Man. The next two days featured Rev. Andrew Compton of IPEC presenting on the Parallels of History.



Rev. Andrew Compton gave compelling and exciting presentations on history.

Finally, Rev. Young Tack Yang of the LAFC shared about the founders of CARP, their life, and how they discovered the Principles shared at the beginning of the workshop. This last portion was an especially detailed look into how Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, also known as Father and Mother Moon, who, upon hearing the calling from God, gave up their entire lives to fulfill that calling.



Rev. Yang shared about Father and Mother Moon's life.

While championing a lifestyle of self-sacrifice and service to others, Rev. and Mrs. Moon endured judgement, ridicule, imprisonment, a concentration camp, and extreme poverty. In spite of these things and throughout their ministry and other organizations and movements they established, they continued to show love and compassion for humanity and strongly advocated for God-centered men and women to build healthy families and societies.



"Thinking about CARP in New Jersey, I don't know what we're going to do or how we're going to do it, and I felt fear in my heart. But listening to [Father and Mother Moon's] life course, I have gained some confidence and am thinking about how I can keep going. Father Moon's course was so clear always, since the beginning. Because it was so clear, Father and Mother Moon never wavered. If [New Jersey] has a clear goal and vision and if we continue to strive for it, then it will absolutely happen as long as we don't give up on the goal." - S. Okon, CARP NJ

"I came to really admire [Father and Mother Moon]'s characteristics. When Father Moon decides to do something, he goes all the way. For me, it's hard sometimes to keep up with what I decided to do and my commitments. He has a much more difficult time to accomplish his goals. I can't even imagine how hard it is, since it's already hard enough for me to do my small conditions. I came to a deeper understanding that their life course is something I want to treasure. I want them to feel joy from now on. They experienced so much pain and sorrow throughout their life. I want them to experience more joy, that they can forget how much they went through. I want them to feel love from me and us, and appreciated for what they've done." - M. Hiraki, CARP PCC



CARP continues their mission to share these Principles, and, during this retreat, students had an opportunity to see them in depth. Students had teams to discuss the content they heard and share their own personal experiences.



Dr. Ki Hoon Kim gives encouraging remarks to the studious participants.

On the second day of the workshop, the participants were visited by Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, Vice President for Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) International. Dr. Kim works closely with Mother Moon and gave a message conveying her heart and hope for all the young people attending the workshop.



In the afternoons, various fun activities and sports were scheduled to get some bodies moving after long days of sitting and to have fun bonding time. The evenings consisted of internal activities including a brother/sister night to discuss the importance of sexual integrity, end of year reflection and goal setting, and life of faith training.

CARP LA leaders J. Holmes, K. Nagai, and T. Hiraki also took time to share with the participants three

main focuses of CARP LA for 2019:



One of the evening activities was a group prayer activity.

The first is spiritual renewal. To understand our purpose, each of us has to reconnect ourselves to our eternal spirit and God. Naoko Hiraki, CARP LA Mentor, shared her own experience with faith and spirituality during a morning session.



Naoko Hiraki shares her life testimony and turning point.

"The Turning Point for me was me asking God what is it that He wants for me. And He said Love. Love was the one thing He had throughout it all. I realized throughout my life I felt so much love, but how many times did I really give that love to people and express gratitude toward God and Jesus? My determination going back home is to share God's love. I want to be a vessel for God's love. I always want to think about God." - K. Nakamura, CARP NJIT



The high school group eats together.

The next focus is moral commitment. To become people of integrity who can make a positive change in our communities, we have to become people of character and a strong ethic. A. Lazar, a volunteer and older sister for CARP LA, gave her testimony and insight into how sticking to a moral way of life can help you succeed.

"I'm so glad I came here because I can feel that I'm growing every day. The one thing I want to fix from today is my impatience. [And] I want to face my struggles and not run away." - M. Shigeta, HARP LA



The final focus is ideological resistance to Marxist-Leninist Theory. While communism as a movement has passed, remnants of their ideology remain. Their ideology fans the flame of conflict by capitalizing on the anger and hatred of people and turning them against each other. In order to realize a world of peace, harmony must be encouraged. National CARP Staff Member, Jennifer Pierce, shared about Godism as a counter-proposal to this ideology.



Also scheduled during Turning Point was a CARP chapter leaders' meeting. As CARP LA is home to eleven chapters in various stages including HARP, having the leaders' meeting was valuable for chapter leaders to make plans for 2019. Also present in the meeting was CARP NJIT leader, K. Nakamura, (future) CARP Montclair leader, S. Okon, and CARP UC Davis leader, S. Tamura.

On December 31st, we had five participants give testimonies about their experience. After the testimonies, we had Open Mic night and a special performance by the LA Family Church Band until midnight where all the participants watched the fireworks ring in the New Year.

Determining to become people of integrity and make a positive impact in 2019, the retreat ended in high spirits and a familial bond amongst participants. Here's to a successful 2019!