

## UPF Buenos Aires, Argentina -- Celebrates UN International Volunteer Day 2019

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Buenos Aires, Argentina -- To celebrate UN International Volunteer Day 2019, UPF-Argentina held the seventh edition of its "Volunteer and the Common Good" recognition ceremony on December 4, 2019. The event was held in the main hall of the Universidad de la Marina Mercante (UdeMM) under the theme "Let's Say Together: Thank you!" This year, the UN marks this day, officially celebrated on December 5, with the theme "Volunteer for an Inclusive Future," highlighting Goal 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals: "Reduce inequality within and among countries."

In the "Common Good" category, those recognized were the Cooperative of Municipal Employees (Vicente López – Buenos Aires Province); Transit House Cura Brochero (Olivos – Buenos Aires Province); Hospice San Camilo (Olivos – Buenos Aires Province); Pangea Foundation (Carlos Paz – Córdoba Province); Payasólogos Sociales Argentina (City of Buenos Aires); and the Rotary Club Ituzaingó (Ituzaingó – Buenos Aires Province). In the "Volunteering" category, those recognized were Adriana Boccalandro (San Vicente – Buenos Aires Province); Claudia Fishman (City of Buenos Aires); Gustavo Mendoza (City of Buenos Aires); Gustavo Oliva (Santa Fe City – Santa Fe Province); Miguel Puertas (Tapiales – Buenos Aires Province); Stella Maris Sandoval (San Lorenzo – Santa Fe Province); and Karina Vimonte (Rosario – Santa Fe Province) (1).

During the celebration, a welcoming speech was given by Silvia Gabriela Vázquez, secretary of the university extension of the UdeMM, director of the University Social Responsibility Committee at the UdeMM, and Ambassador for Peace (2). She delivered the certificates of recognition along with Laura Correa and Carlos Varga, director of UPF-Argentina and president of the Argentina chapter for the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (3); and Miguel Werner, secretary general of UPF-Argentina. Meanwhile, Mariana Fenoy, from E-Club Oeste José Luis De Laurente, gave a Rotary medal to each one of the awarded guests. He did so on behalf of Ambassador for Peace Constanza Sena, elected governor of Rotary Club District 4905, who could not attend the event (4).

At the end, Carlos Varga touched upon UPF's work with its worldwide network of Ambassadors for Peace, congratulated volunteers and wished them well. The event closed with an artistic performance as a tribute to volunteers for their contribution to the common good, coexistence and peace. This was another way of saying "Thank you!" for their work and service. The artistic number was performed by the dance couple "El Triunfo," a cultural project of social integration that has exhibited their art and solidarity spirit across the country for more than 20 years (5). This group is directed by the teacher of native dances and Ambassador for Peace Silvia Olgún. A surprise presentation appeared, a dynamic participation offered by Social Clowns, a recognized entity that brings together volunteers who provide humor and love, visiting homes of children and the elderly, feeding stations, native peoples' communities, nursing homes, and psychiatric facilities. This organization received the Universal Peace Flag by the Pacis Nuntii Movement.

Emcees of this event were Ambassadors for Peace Rosa Holgado and Julio Nardini, who cheered the audience with a reflection: "We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others" (from the book *A Return to Love*, by Marianne Williamson). At the end, they read a phrase from the book *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen*: "We will only find happiness when we live our lives for the

sake of others."

During the celebration, we received toys for the Christmas Solidarity Campaign promoted by UdeMM's University Social Responsibility Committee and Sebastián Mellino's singing academy. These toys will be delivered to rural schools through Ceremonialistas Solidarios (CERESOL) – CIDEDEC. Supporters of the event were SIPEA Buenos Aires, directed by Ambassador for Peace Marta Olga Palacio, founding member of SIPEA Argentina; and the Collectivities Union in Argentina for Development (UCADE).

It is worth remembering that the International Volunteer Day was established by the United Nations on December 17, 1985, by the UN, with the intention of "raising awareness about the important contribution of volunteers, thus encouraging more people from all social backgrounds to offer their services as volunteers." The estimated number of volunteers around the world is about 970 million people, who offer their time and abilities in solidarity and constructive actions that cause a positive impact in their lives and communities.



#### Quotes:

1) UPF-Argentina organizes every year the Solidarity Contest "Volunteering and the Common Good" in order to "identify and recognize organizations and volunteers who invest their time and resources to develop projects related to "common good." It is an opportunity to encourage volunteering and public service, as a seed of social, community, and global peace." As it says in this contest's banner in words of Mahatma Gandhi: "You must be the change you wish to see in the world;" and Mother Teresa: "We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop."

Volunteers and entities nominated through the Solidarity Contest were voted on by a committee of Ambassadors for Peace consisting of Sergio Castellón, Eduardo Corales, Rosetta Conti, Adrián De Angelis, Liliana Hernández, Andrés Melgarejo, Julio Nardini, Orfa Pérez, Constanza Sena, Gabriela Vázquez, Faiza Yahia, and Miguel Werner. Those who nominated entities and volunteers were Mabel Padilla, Horacio Catcoff, Favio Ceballos, Matías Benetti, José Antonio Hiro Froman, and Ambassadors for Peace Juan Andrés Maffioli, Elena Paniagua, Eduardo Borri, Jackeline Giusti, Federico Binnes Erbach, Cristina Mirabelli, and Daniel Aldasoro.

2) Silvia Gabriela Vázquez - [Click here](#)

3) Carlos Varga - [Click here](#)

4) Every winner received a framed certificate; a Rotary Club medal (courtesy of Constanza Sena, governor of Rotary International – District 4905), and the autobiography of UPF's Founder "As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen."

5) Ballet "El Triunfo" - [Click Here](#)