

## Unification Church's First National Council

Ariana Moon  
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*From left to right: Walter Frank, Mapolo Buessing, David Burgess, Dr. Michael Hentrich, Justin Fong, Hero Hernandez, Dan Fefferman*

A Unification Church USA National Council of 18 elected policy advisers has been approved by National President Rev. Hyung Jin Moon and will hold its first meeting by conference call on Monday, January 21, 2013, according to Rev. James Edgerly, a senior aide to Rev. Hyung Jin Moon in New York. These 18 representatives on the National Council, each of whom were nominated by the District Council in his/her district, were officially approved on Sunday, January 6, 2013. In addition, the Vice President of the Unification Church USA, Dr. Michael Balcomb is the chairman of the National Council. Rev. Edgerly explains the election process in an interview.

“The Divine Principle explains that the model for organizational structure is the human body – the body has a brain but that brain has full give-and-take action with every cell that composes the body,” said Rev. Edgerly. “Along the same lines, Headquarters needs to be guided by a growing and healthy community of Blessed Families. We continue to have good communication between the field and national leadership, but to improve the effectiveness of Headquarters, we need to utilize the expertise that exists in Blessed Families in the United States. We hope to achieve this through a National Council. Therefore, the purpose of the National Council is to provide that feedback, guidance and information to our National Headquarters and National President.”

In what was their second task, as their first task had been to elect a District Pastor, the 12 District Councils were asked to select a nominee for the National Council.

“We had 12 very excellent nominations, one from each of the 12 Districts, but there was one huge problem,” said Rev. Edgerly. “All of the nominees were male. Everyone was unsatisfied with this feature because we absolutely believe that governance has to express both the masculine and feminine voice of God. We then spent two weeks trying to figure out how to correct this problem – we didn’t want to do anything that would disempower the authority of the district councils – and finally, we decided to ask each of the Districts to select a female ‘at large’ representative to serve on the National Council.” Districts were allowed the option to have the wives of their National Council nominees serve as their female representatives for the National Council, yet none chose to do so.

“The caliber of the women nominees was more than impressive,” said Rev. Edgerly. “Each had tremendous amounts of both professional and spiritual qualifications. Because of the quality of these women, there was initially a strong opinion that they should all be on the National Council.

“Personally, I took a strong stand against this viewpoint, because I believe that a national council with 24 members is unwieldy. Also, a yet-to-be-determined group of four representatives from Headquarters is planned to be added to the National Council, which would expand the number to 28. In a council this large, individuals will lose their chance to have intimate participation. Second, we want the National Council members to meet periodically, and the costs of transporting 24+ people to one place are too prohibitive. Third, at the beginning of the process of electing female representatives, we told the districts that we were going to take only six from 12, and we wanted to stick with what we said we would do.”

In response to this issue, Rev. Hyung Jin Moon formed a committee of five advisors, including Rev. Edgerly and Dr. Tony Guerra, to select these six women from the 12 nominated.

“If one were to ask what criteria was used by this committee to choose the women, I would say what was most important was geographic diversity,” said Rev. Edgerly. “We are trying to avoid an imbalance in our geographic representation. Therefore we wanted to include representation from the East Coast, the Midwest and the West Coast. We also wanted generational diversity, and chose two of the three young Unificationist women nominated. The voting process took a long time, as it was really difficult to choose from such a distinguished group of women.”

He continued: “Some people have been wondering what is taking so long in the various election

processes, but we are dealing with important issues of governance and fairness and we have to take our time. I do believe we're in a new era where we want more authority in the hands of our Blessed Families. At the same time, we're trying to approach it in a way that is thoughtful and that will not create unforeseen consequences, involving both the authority of our national president and our Blessed Families."

#### **Male National Council Members**

- Dan Fefferman
- Tyler Hendricks
- Hero Hernandez
- Justin Fong
- Richard Sapp
- Garrun Abrahams
- Steven Jares
- Ke Sung Anderson
- D. Michael Hentrich
- David Burgess
- Mapolo Buessing
- Walter Frank



*From left to right: Sarah Nishioka, Gina Sato, Cindy Pfeiffer, Lena Yasutake, Kathy Winnings, Libby Mitchell*

#### **"At-large" Female National Council Members**

- Libby Mitchell
- Kathy Winnings
- Lena Yasutake
- Cindy Pfeiffer
- Sarah Nishioka
- Gina Sato

#### **Additional Female Nominees**

- Marion Miller
- Teresa Yamane
- Lucy Park
- Marjorie Swenson
- Peggy Yujiri
- Sarah Nishioka