

Roland Platt: Vision 2020 to guide Generation Peace Academy

Katherine Lincoln
June 18, 2013



Every year, Generation Peace Academy (GPA) holds a kick-off workshop at the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) in Barrytown, NY to start the new GPA year. GPA director Roland Platt (above) gives a message at the kick-off workshop in August 2012.

The upcoming year for Generation Peace Academy (GPA), 2013-2014, will have a completely different format from the previous years in response to Mother Moon's direction for Vision 2020, the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification's (FFWPU) church growth program for the next seven years. "We took this opportunity to take a fresh look at our program and to start from the very beginning by finding what we really want to see graduates of the program come out with," said GPA Director Roland Platt in an interview with Unification News.

The three outcomes for participants for the next year are the following: 1) to improve the participant's personal relationship with God, 2) to gain confidence in the Divine Principle and to be able to apply and to share it and 3) to prepare for a public life and to advance the skills needed to better serve the church community at home.

Instead of the module system, all 100 participants will partake in the program as a whole, rather than in smaller groups as in past years. This change will help assess how positively the program affects the participants as they transition into life at home and in college.

GPA organizers say they are aiming at a "family-oriented" culture. "We believe as we spend more time together, the staff and the participants, that we are going to become more of a family. We want to go back to the core and tradition, and we want to go back to the heart of spending much time together," said Louise Honey, GPA assistant director.



The 2013-2014 year will begin in September with a 21-day kick-off workshop at the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) in Barrytown, New York, where exploring individual paths to God and learning the Divine Principle will be the main focus. Following the kick-off workshop will be a fundraising portion until Christmas break. Upon returning from break, participants will gather at UTS once again, their home base for the year, for a True Parents-themed workshop which will focus on the life and accomplishments of True Parents, including a pilgrimage to True Parents' holy sites in America.

The next stage is focused on service in developing countries, which will be selected from the list of the Vision 2020 nations True Mother appointed. The last of the fundraising will take place in the spring after

the overseas service trip.



GPA participants passionately sing before a Sunday service given by Dr. Michael Balcomb at the Families Workshop, a weekend spent with families in Estes Park, Colorado. The Families Workshop will continue in 2013-2014.

“The first half of the year is about discovering ourselves and our relationship to God and True Parents, so the second half is going more towards outreach and getting confidence to share our faith; even as they go out fundraising, one of the focuses will be to share and create a foundation for outreach. They will be encouraged to go out fundraising with bookmarks or pamphlets,” said Platt.

The Families Workshop, a weekend spent with families in Estes Park, Colorado, will return again and will be open not only to family but to alumni as well. Special activities for alumni to reunite and to meet current participants will be planned.



In front of a finished mural, designed and made by GPA in Honduras, during the overseas service. For 2013-2014, GPA will travel to countries that have been appointed by True Mother as part of Vision 2020.

Following time in Colorado, participants will concentrate on community-based evangelism. Five or six open- and willing-local communities will have the chance to have GPA as a part of their crowd for a few weeks. According to the director, they are taking the best practices of the New York City Leadership Program from 4 West 43rd Street and applying them to the field. The purpose of this integration is not only for the participants to learn how to make their learned skills applicable but also to give the communities the fuel they need to sustain their programs. This direction correlates with True Mother’s vision of increasing evangelization across the world.

During the final stretch of the year participants will return to home base at UTS. Two one-week programs titled “specialized ministry” will be offered. Participants will have a chance to select topics that inspire them – such as Unification Thought, adventure training, internships, preparing for college life or exploring career paths. The conclusion workshop and graduation will take place in June of 2014. GPA is still accepting applicants until July 15th; to apply, please visit GPAfamily.com