

Generation Peace Academy finishes its two-week kickoff workshop

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September 19, 2014



The Generation Peace Academy (GPA) is reaching the end of its two-week kickoff workshop, and the newcomers to GPA feel prepared and inspired to begin their year of study and service. This summer, the new GPA brothers and sisters were already in the hearts of the staff and returning participants. Along with prayers, training and preparation, the second- and third-year participants showed their love for their newly arriving peers by making them reflection notebooks. A few days ago, they presented their beautiful notebooks to the new participants through a ceremony that represented the sentiment that we are finally all together and, as the singer Natasha Bedingfield said, “Today is where our book begins...the rest is still unwritten.”



However it seems that a lot has already been “written,” because a lot has happened already! Ice breaking activities have been a big part of the kickoff program, to ease relationships and form teams for going forward. The entire group shared many laughs and their hearts were moved as they showcased skits—hard work and creativity coming to life on stage. From Disney princesses to the hobbits of Lord of the Rings, the skits were heartfelt, hilarious and to say the least, a hit. On the field, teams represented their nation of ancestry in a volleyball competition. Chants and cheers filled the calmness of Unification

Theological Seminary in Barrytown, New York. Along with the excitement, the competition brought together great support, teamwork and unity.



Most important of all, GPA received a great deal of powerful internal guidance throughout each day to awaken their hearts and minds for this upcoming year. They received presentations on the topics of commitment, identity, a relationship with God and True Parents, prayer, living a public life and many more. They also had the privilege of inviting the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) president Naokimi Ushiroda to give a head start on goal setting and living each day with the intention of becoming the person God created us to be and sharing that with those around us.



One of the greatest highlights of GPA so far was the blessing of welcoming the continental director of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU North America), who is also their biggest fan, Dr. Ki Hoon Kim on Thursday, September 18. He shared that GPA is providing great hope for America and the world as well as providing youth an opportunity to have intimate experiences with God and True Parents. With his warm smile and encouraging words, GPA participants felt they received so much love on behalf of True Mother through him.

On September 19, they held an open mic night where GPA brothers and sisters showed off their talents on the stage. It was a night filled of national anthem singing, ocarina playing, breakdancing and piano grooving. It was a great opportunity to see the amazing and unique qualities that God put within each of them and bring them together as a family.



GPA recently attended and performed at the National Memorial Service for the second anniversary of True Father's Seonghwa, and is in the midst of preparing for the upcoming kickoff fundraising condition, during which the participants will be raising funds for their future projects.



Yes it's true, the year kicked off just a few days ago, but GPA is already coming together as a family of brothers and sisters ready for an amazing year ahead. Feel called to help make that happen? Make a donation, and keep up with their photos and blog posts. You can expect great things to come!

