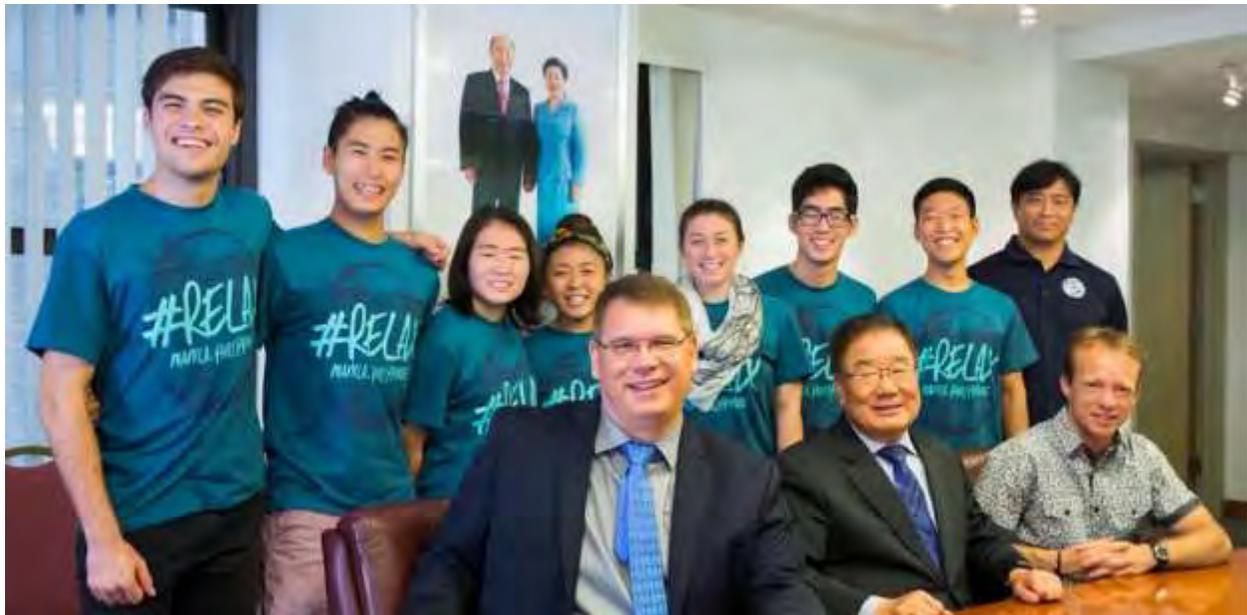


GPA's CIG Missionary Trainees Return Home after nearly four months abroad

Roland Platt
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Welcome home Cheon Il Guk Missionary Trainees! We officially ended our four-month journey with a bang on May 23! In total, we spent about 115 days overseas, traveling to Korea and to Bohol and Manila, Philippines.

If you have been following our updates, you know that this mission was not short of its challenges and rough patches. But we were never alone. First of all, we would like to express our deep gratitude to Heavenly Parent and True Parents! Secondly, we would like to thank all Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) USA and Philippines staff as well as the directors of Generation Peace Academy. And finally, we would like to express our gratitude to all of you, for blessing us with your sincere love and support both physically and spiritually. Thank you so much!

We concluded our mission with one last Seven-Day Divine Principle Seminar at the Asian Leadership Peace Academy (ALPA). It was a huge success! Although we only had 22 participants, we all agree that this seminar was far more successful than the last one! The students received lectures all the way through the sixteenth chapter of the Divine Principle and were introduced to the life course Rev. Sun Myung Moon.

The participants were alive with the power of the Divine Principle. On one occasion they even refused to go on break, insisting that the lecturer keep going while drumming the tables in anticipation for the next chapter! The theme of the seminar was “Find Your Purpose, Change Your Life.” So we guided the students to venture deeper into their hearts and helped them realize that they hold a responsibility to bring about the Kingdom of Heaven here on Earth by sharing the messages of living with purity and for the sake of others. They all ended the seminar determined to work together to be the change they wish to see in the world.

But there was more. Once we arrived at the airport preparing to depart, the seven-day seminar participants came with a surprise farewell! It was a beautiful moment—everyone was moved to tears as they presented us with gifts and we exchanged last words and embraces with one another. Sunkook Iwasaki, team leader for the Cheon Il Guk Missionary Trainees, shared that he saw “a testament of the culture that our Heavenly Parent, True Parents, and the Divine Principle brought through the American Cheon Il Guk Missionary Trainees.”

Through all the blood, sweat, and tears we shed in the Philippines, we know this to be true: we shared a culture of sacrifice, purity, and inspiration with everyone we met. We fought to make True Mother proud and to take ownership over building Cheon Il Guk. We were not perfect—far from it—but we held firm to our responsibility as American missionaries-in-training to serve the world. We left behind a legacy of love and took with us precious experiences. So, thank you and *salamat* Philippines!

It has been a few days since we arrived back at the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) in Barrytown. We have caught our breaths, settled down, reflected, and debriefed about our experiences as CIG Missionary Trainees in the Philippines. We are now preparing for to join the God Bless America Family Festival with True Mother on June 5 and GPA's conclusion workshop. It is all wrapping up so quick. And though it may be the end of our time as Cheon Il Guk Missionary Trainees, we know our journey together is actually just the beginning.

With love, and thank you,
The CIG Family