

## US national witnessing activities in Hawaii

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*True Parents with Norman Keanaaina, a descendant of Hawaii's King Kamehameha I, and his wife*

*True Mother mobilized Korean members to Las Vegas, Nevada, in a focused fourteen-day witnessing campaign. She then asked the US church to bring volunteers from around the nation to witness from January 18–February 8 in Honolulu, Hawaii.*

Over a hundred people from around the nation came to Honolulu, answering True Mother's invitation and challenge to renew themselves through testifying to God and True Parents and to gain momentum for work in their communities back home. Modeled on the recent successful Las Vegas outreach, the three-week initiative had its kickoff on Sunday, January 18. What better place to inspire and touch people's hearts than the beautiful island of Oahu?



*Members talking to locals in a park*

True Parents have invested a great deal in Hawaii, and the new outreach team has been reaping the fruits. Much of the investment until now has been in Kona. True Father began coming to Kona, Hawaii, in 1989 to fish for Pacific blue marlin, the prized trophy fish of the Pacific. True Father's boat, *Kona Concept*, is still berthed in the city and is used as a charter fishing boat.

In 2001, Father made Kona a primary spot for outreach, requesting Japanese missionaries to come to support witnessing efforts there. Fourteen years later, missionary groups continue to come to Kona for three months at a time.

The Pacific Rim Education Foundation, a non-profit corporation that seeks to promote peace and healing, was formed two years later, in 2003, and continues to promote and develop programs in Kona on a monthly basis. Kona is also home to the Hawaiian Queen Coffee Farm that boasts over 150 acres of coffee trees and produces award winning coffee sold mostly in Hawaii and in Japan.

In 2007, Father spoke about the significance of Hawaii. An audience member noted that Father spoke of Hawaii as blessed and central in the Pacific Rim era and as the center of the ocean culture, which Father connected to True Mother and the women's era. Father went on to speak of love and healing emanating from Hawaii.



*A Divine Principle lecture in a University of Hawaii classroom*

Now, with True Mother's leadership, outreach has expanded to Honolulu, the state's capitol. With the success of the efforts in Kona, Honolulu is an area that holds much promise, as already demonstrated by some of the early results of the three-week outreach initiative that was held there. A young team member from New York said, "For once in my life, I feel inspired to learn about the Divine Principle, not as an obligation but

voluntarily. I want to be able to set a strong foundation, especially through our efforts here."

At the kickoff, local Unificationists, the visiting outreach team and several guests came to hear short messages from Rev. Ernie Ho and Mr. Hiroshi Inose and to enjoy a barbecue. They got to work right away at a nearby park, and during the first hour of the first day the team met two wonderful guests who listened to introductory presentations. One stayed for several hours and the other for the entire afternoon.

Both were young adults seeking future direction in their lives. The team met about twenty other people that day and set up appointments with six.

The response was so enthusiastic that several guests continued to listen to Rev. Ho's lecture until well after sunset. The team used flashlights to illuminate the flip chart. "We were reminded of the early days of True Parents' ministry, when guests would stay late into the night to receive God's word," one of the participants said. Immediately everyone was energized and felt a sense of victory and confidence from the day's efforts.



*Kona Concept*

Most of the young adults had never done any outreach work in a public setting, and they were grateful for their first experience.

The team contained an exciting mix of ages. With new participants arriving every week from all over the country, the group continued its dynamic development.

Every day the team spoke with people they met at the University of Hawaii and in the beautiful Waikiki Beach area. Team leaders presented Divine Principle lectures to which the team members invited passersby.

Each day began with morning devotions and prayers for God's blessing on the Hawaiian people and on the outreach work. Truly inspired and dedicated to their task, some team members awakened at 4:30 AM every day for prayer at Waikiki Beach.

"We all need our Heavenly Parent's word to understand God's heart in one way or another," said a senior team member from New Jersey. To build a family atmosphere on the team, shared responsibilities were encouraged, as well as daily Hoon Dok Hae (study of scripture) together, and outreach partners were continuously rotated so that everyone had an opportunity to bond.

The team members spent as much time being inspired by the beautiful scenery as they did inspiring the people they met with the Divine Principle.

On January 19, the group went on a tour of the Honolulu Holy Ground and the famous Diamond Head

peak. Five young adults from the local community acted as tour guides to the spectacular views of Honolulu.



*True Father in Queen Garden with a swordfish he had caught*

Within the first two days the team members gained great momentum and camaraderie and looked forward to the next few weeks on their journey with its new experiences and challenges.

Every week the new teams spent one morning learning how to present a simple introduction to the Divine Principle and then headed out to the University of Hawaii campus. During the first week, students were very receptive and the team made a total of twenty-eight contacts.

They gave introductory presentations to six students and set up appointments with others. The younger members of the team worked in pairs as they sought to connect in a meaningful way with their peers. The Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP), which is established on campus, made meeting rooms available for Divine Principle presentations. The team also had success at Waikiki Beach, which has been a wonderful spot to talk with people in the late afternoon before catching a glimpse of the breathtaking sunsets.



*A witnessing team of US members from Hawaii and the mainland*

As the participants were learning and growing, they also took time to reflect on their experiences and to make new goals. Many felt challenged to find a way to explain their faith clearly. Others were striving to engage in more meaningful discussions in order to form authentic relationships. All were committed to investing themselves in everyone they met as a way for God to work through them.



*Preparing for outreach activities on the University of Hawaii campus*

One girl from New York City who was participating with her mother de- scribed her unique growth experience in Hawaii. "I'm glad that I had my mom by my side so I could hear how she got through to people. Learning and listening to her was pretty hard in the beginning,

because I wasn't into meeting people all day for eight hours.

By the time I actually started opening my mind and participating, it got a lot better. I loved listening to other people's thoughts. I feel that they inspired me, when I thought I was supposed to be the one inspiring them!" To celebrate the end of the first week, the Honolulu Family Church prepared a special dinner to thank the participants. Each person gave a brief personal introduction, and both local Unificationists and members of the outreach team provided entertainment.



*Meeting guests near Waikiki Beach*

One guest, who also attended the program, commented, "Everyone here is wonderful!" The second week of outreach activities began on Sunday, January 25, with Sunday service at the Honolulu Family Church and an inspiring message from the Reverend Ernie Ho. The team said goodbye to some of the first week's participants and welcomed seven new people from around the country. After lunch with the community, the new team headed to Waikiki Beach for brief outreach activity. Later that evening they had the opportunity to snorkel in Hanama Bay and enjoy a leisurely dinner before gearing up for a new day of outreach.

The successful first week of outreach created much excitement for the second, so much so that on the first day of Week Two they already met half as many people

as they had in the entire first week. The team gave eleven one-on-one introductory presentations, four overviews of the Principle of Creation, and made twelve appointments for future presentations and discussions.

As in Week One, all members of the team were encouraged to learn how to deliver their own one-on-one Divine Principle presentations. A few began giving introductory presentations on a regular basis, while the rest of the team continued to train and practice. Many participants said they felt invigorated as they shared their faith, and much of the feedback was positive and inspiring.

This enthusiasm has allowed the team to capture the attention of some wonderful guests, one of whom met with the team every day to hear a quick Divine Principle summary, starting from the Introduction to the Second Advent, all the way to the Meaning of the Holy Marriage Blessing.

He said, "What I have heard here is more complete and thorough than any other Christian explanation I have received from the different churches I've attended in the past."

It has been a truly transforming experience for guests and participants alike. One of the guests who heard a lecture on the Human Fall remarked, "I always thought that the fruit in the Bible was a literal fruit. I didn't think about the deeper meaning behind the symbolism."

After hearing the Mission of the Messiah lecture, another guest commented, "I went to Catholic schools and never heard the priest talk about John the Baptist. I never considered that he may not have fulfilled his mission."

Another student was so fascinated that she stayed to hear the lecture on the Human Fall. "It has become clear to me that everyone I approach is looking for something," said a twenty-one-year-old participant from New Jersey.

"Everybody is searching for something more. We are all on this earth together, and now my life is intertwining with people I would have never known otherwise. I am learning about the power of conviction, the power of the word and the power of the spirit world. I know that I still have so much

ahead of me and so much more to learn and discover."



*A member looking at the outreach manual*

It has been exciting to see the transformation of the team members as they invest themselves sincerely. Their confidence and sense of identity have grown. The most profound development, however, is their increasing desire to bring others to God and True Parents and make a lasting impact in Hawaii. Through these efforts, outreach on campus continued to grow day by day. Senior members of the team have even begun training three young members to give introductory lectures with PowerPoint in order to keep up with the demand for presentations.

The team celebrated the end of Week Two on Friday, January 30, with a pizza party among their guests. Over forty people attended, heard a short talk, played games and enjoyed one another's company. The evening was filled with such interesting discussions that many were reluctant to leave. The event was a wonderful closing to an inspiring week, one that the outreach team would use to continue to propel them forward in their third and last week of activities, as well as in their respective communities around the nation.

All of the participants agreed with the response of one senior team member from New York City who said, "I am grateful from the bottom of my heart to be called to this Pacific island which bears such great significance in the providence of our Heavenly Parent and True Parents!"