

Governor Sandoval Proclaimed July 24th as Parents Day in Nevada

Leslie Rigney
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Las Vegas, NV – Parents Day 2016 was celebrated on July 31st at the International Peace Education Center. Pictures of the families celebrated were displayed on the large screen as the families arrived. There were children as well as grandparents. Pictures were taken of the families at the fountain, as they arrived. Flower corsages made with loving hands by 2 sisters were given to each parent and speaker. One Ambassador for Peace made balloon animals for the children.

Japanese drums were playing upstairs to call people to the ballroom for the start of the program. All the tables filled up. There was not an empty seat in the place, altogether 120 participants. Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, Chairman, UPF North America, Dr. Michael Balcomb, President, FFWPU-USA, Rev. Richard De Sena, President UPF-USA, Rev. Ken Doo, Senior Pastor Las Vegas Family Church and Rev. Zagery Oliver, UPF USA Ambassador to Africa and Caribbean were present to give support to our event. There were beautiful programs prepared that had articles of each participating family, with the logos of all 10 organizations participating and nominating parents.

After a beautiful prayer offered by an elder Muslim man, the Pledge of Allegiance was led by a father and daughter together. There was sharing and conversation as people lined up for a delicious buffet dinner. The program started with a beautiful acapella singing of the Star Spangled Banner by Kinesha McDaniel. She sang beautifully with much heart and hit all the right notes followed by a beautiful Gospel Hymn sung acapella by 3 Choir from our honored parents' church of Rev. Bill and Faye McDonnell.

Katherine Duncan and Leslie Rigney greeted the guests, emphasizing we are all here as one family under God. A proclamation was given by Governor Brian Sandoval of the state of Nevada proclaiming July 24th as Parents Day in the state and the content was read by Richard DeSena who later spoke about Parents Day as a designated day celebrated every year and how important it is to recognize good parents in our communities. He praised Katherine Duncan for attending a 7 day Divine Principle Workshop, and encouraged everyone to do so! He then introduced Dr. Ki Hoon Kim. Dr. Kim gave a wonderful message to the families about True Parents (my parents, he said!) and about the family centered on God being the starting point of the Kingdom of Heaven. He spoke of ownership and taking responsibility in our families, our communities, our schools and government. It was very well received by everyone.

A video was shown with the children from each family speaking about their parents and how much they appreciated them and what they did for them. Some were little children, others were teenagers, and another a middle aged man who appreciated his father still giving to others, even with Alzheimer's. One brother, so inspired by Father's words, offered his time and effort to make the videos without compensation, at a sacrifice to himself.



Awards and gifts were then given to each parent couple. Each couple came on the stage to receive their Certification of Recognition with their children and a family picture was taken. After each family received their certificates, a group picture of all recipients with the children in front, holding the banner

In the effort of UPF Las Vegas to bridge the divide in the faith community, we successfully brought together representatives of the Mayor's Faith Initiative, The Interfaith Council of Southern Nevada and the Churches of Southern Nevada.

The program ended with wonderful Japanese Drums by a group of 4 ladies. Participants spoke with each other, had more pictures taken downstairs, while visiting. Some gathered around the piano where a wonderful piano player/tenor played and sang joyful Italian songs. The music reverberated throughout the hall! May Heavenly Parent be comforted by these happy families, and our sharing this evening together!