

UPF and CARP LV's Forum on Creating Community beyond Race and Religion

Leslie Rigney
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Las Vegas, NV – Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Las Vegas held a peace forum at the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principle (CARP) Learning Center on Thursday evening, July 27th. Eleven guests were welcomed by five UPF members and five CARP members who had just returned to Las Vegas. A light supper and refreshments were served as people became acquainted and reacquainted.

Mrs. Leslie Rigney of UPF Las Vegas welcomed all guests and participants. CARP members participated by leading the pledge of allegiance and the prayer. An introduction about UPF, including a video and a slide show on some of the peace principles, was given by Mr. James Rigney. A distinguished panel, including Deandre McGee, a millennial African-American activist and motivational speaker, Dr. Reeta Thukral, a medical doctor who founded and leads a non-profit that tutors at risk youth, Mrs. Aimme Kodachian, an author, motivational speaker and survivor of the Lebanese civil war, was moderated by Ms. Claytee White, who leads the Oral History Project at UNLV.

The topic of the Panel was “Creating Community Beyond Race and Religion”. A very lively and passionate discussion included some interesting points: The need and value of good family life which gives support, direction and good example to children; that we need to be aware that we ARE our brother’s keeper, and need to support young mothers, educate and support parents, especially supporting young fathers, as well, and care about those in pain and suffering. One panelist emphasized the need to be non-judgmental of others, another emphasized the need to evaluate ourselves in each situation, that we can only change ourselves, but can lead with love and compassion, and listen to others. Comments were also entertained from the guests. Two police officers from the Office of Community Engagement spoke about their appreciation of the variety of cultures in our community and the need to listen and hear their story. Many spoke about what a ‘Melting Pot’ of cultures that Las Vegas represents, and what we do here can affect the nation and the world!

Following the panel presentation, was an informal sharing and conversation, with many new connections and friendships forming.

Future events include an American Leadership Conference on September 18, from 9:30AM-3PM and a Peace Forum on September 19, from 6-8PM.