

UPF Puerto Rico's 2nd Conference: Cooperation to Address Social Problems

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November 12, 2016

San Juan, Puerto Rico – The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) in Puerto Rico held its second conference of the year on November 12, 2016. The theme was “Need for Global Cooperation and Harmony Among Cultures to Address Social Problems”. The conference was co-sponsored by the IYTA Wellness & Health Center, and Connecting Paths, P.R.

Rev. Angel L. Rivera, yoga teacher and Ambassador for Peace, gave the invocation while Mrs. Conchita García, UPF PR Executive director gave the welcome remarks and explained the purpose of UPF and about its founders Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.

The audience was composed of about 40 participants including four (4) Ambassadors for Peace and new guests. Four (4) panelists were invited representing four different countries: Puerto Rico; Costa Rica; Dominican Republic; and Cuba

One of the panelists was Dr. Edna Vazquez Bonnet from Puerto Rico, is an Ambassador for Peace since 2013 and a businesswoman who owns an insurance corporation. She is also the President and Founder of a non-profit organization that advocates for the needs of disadvantaged children. She mentioned the problems facing Puerto Rico and how important it is to educate women, the role of mothers, and good governance to solve problems.

Another panelist was Dr. Mauricio Conejo Hernandez from Costa Rica who completed a doctorate degree in Applied Cognitive Neuroscience in Mindfulness Therapy. As a zen master, he explained that applied knowledge without a heart serves no purpose. He also emphasized the importance of daily meditation for self-awareness, reducing stress and generating neurobiological changes. After which, he gave us a meditation session.

The third panelist was Ms. Diara Velez Vera from the Dominican Republic. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Psychology. She works with children with disabilities. She shared the importance of education, solidarity, and dialogue to address social issues.

And the final panelist, Engineer Francisco R. Mirades from Cuba is a business strategist of Coach of life. He is also the senior leader of the program, Anthony Robbins Research International. He mentioned the importance of becoming aware of oneself to get things done. He gave so much emphasis on the value of the family and how to be good examples for our children.

After a very enthusiastic discussion, Mrs. Conchita Garcia shared about some of the UPF initiatives such as the Ambassador for Peace (AFP) program and further explained the five universal values and principles that AFPs need to know and adhere to. UPF selected two people from the community who received their certificate of appointment as Ambassadors for Peace. Mr. Pedro Morales, UPF PR adviser handed the certificates and in turn, the recipients gave words of appreciation for having received the honor.

To conclude the conference, Mrs. Conchita García shared Father Moon’s words, “Peace is undeniably the highest value of our era. Peace becomes possible when we recognize the existence of other people, nations, and cultures, that is, when we do not exclude but accept and embrace people who are different from us”, then Mr. Pedro Morales blessed the gathering with benediction prayer.

The conference ended with music and snacks. The overall mood was an environment of fraternity, solidarity, and harmony.