



UPF USA BRIDGEBUILDER NEWSLETTER

April 2026

A monthly snapshot of peace stories, insight, and inspiration.

A Nobel Call for Peace: Dr. Hak Ja Han's Global Legacy

The nomination of Dr. Hak Ja Han for the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize by Ján Figel' has attracted international attention. Figel', a former Slovak minister, EU Commissioner, and Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, is widely known for his work in human rights and religious liberty. The nomination highlights Dr. Han's decades of peacebuilding, interfaith cooperation, and humanitarian work, including her role as co-founder of the Universal Peace Federation and its global network of Ambassadors for Peace.

Dr. Han has also long advocated for peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula. Supporters note that her nomination comes amid concerns about her legal situation in South Korea and broader issues of religious freedom in Japan. They view the nomination as recognition of her peace efforts and a broader call to uphold freedom of religion and belief worldwide.



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A New Vision for Peace Emerges in Washington, D.C.

On April 25, 2026, UPF USA hosted its first Ambassadors for Peace Assembly in Washington, D.C., bringing together leaders from government, faith, business, and civil society to promote shared values and collective action. The program featured remarks from UPF leaders, the appointment of several distinguished new Ambassadors for Peace, including youth leaders and representatives from diplomacy, human rights, and community organizations.

The event also included an inspiring presentation by UPF USA President Kaeleigh Moffitt on “Shared Humanity in an Age of Fragmentation,” followed by a panel discussion on overcoming division and building a culture of compassion. With 67 guests in attendance, including 35 first-time participants, the Assembly marked a strong step forward in advancing peace through cross-sector cooperation.



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Ambassador for Peace Spotlight

Velevia “Vee” Mays



Velevia “Vee” Mays, a longtime Minister of Music, educator, and community leader from Lonoke, was recently appointed an Ambassador for Peace in recognition of her outstanding life of service. With more than 35 years of ministry and public leadership, Vee has founded youth and community initiatives, supported families in need, organized women’s conferences, and mentored children through music education.

Vee also made history as the first Black female manager in the Arkansas Auditor of State’s Office, where she served under six administrations and was honored as the 2021 Most Outstanding Employee of the State of Arkansas. Her life reflects the UPF values of living for the sake of others, strengthening families, and building peaceful communities.

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Peace in Action: Los Angeles Hosts Inspiring UPF Dinner

Los Angeles continued its strong tradition of hosting UPF dinners, bringing together Ambassadors for Peace, community leaders, and new guests for an evening of fellowship and inspiration. Six new Ambassadors for Peace were appointed, joining current ambassadors and KEA representatives in a warm atmosphere of networking and meaningful dialogue.

Following dinner, guests viewed a presentation on UPF's international work and were invited to support upcoming National Parents Day events or organize celebrations in their own communities. Many participants expressed gratitude for the gathering and enthusiasm for continued cooperation.



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A Nobel Call for Peace: Dr. Hak Ja Han's Global Legacy

The nomination of Dr. Hak Ja Han for the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize by Ján Figel' has drawn significant international attention. Figel', a former Slovak Cabinet minister, European Commissioner, and the first European Union Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, is recognized as one of Europe's leading advocates for human rights and religious liberty. His support gives special weight to this nomination.



The nomination recognizes Dr. Han's decades of global leadership in peacebuilding, interfaith cooperation, and humanitarian outreach. As co-founder of the Universal Peace Federation with her late husband, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, she has inspired an international network of Ambassadors for Peace that includes current and former heads of state, parliamentarians, clergy, educators, and civic leaders. Through global summits, peace forums, and educational initiatives, she has advanced dialogue and cooperation across national, religious, and cultural boundaries.

Dr. Han has also been a consistent advocate for the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula. While political leaders have struggled to resolve tensions, she has continued to promote reconciliation, mutual understanding, and long-term peace in Northeast Asia.

Her nomination comes at a time when supporters have expressed concern regarding her current legal situation in South Korea, where many believe she has faced unjust treatment. It also comes amid broader concerns over religious freedom in Japan following legal actions against the Family Federation, developments that many observers see as raising serious questions about the protection of faith communities in democratic societies.

Honoring Dr. Han with the Nobel Peace Prize would recognize not only her lifelong contributions to peace, but also the importance of defending freedom of religion and belief worldwide.

Adapted from an article by Massimo Introvigne, Italian sociologist of religions, founder of CESNUR, and former OSCE representative for combating intolerance and discrimination against religious communities.

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Ambassador for Peace Spotlight: Velecia "Vee" Mays

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A New Vision for Peace Emerges in Washington, D.C.

On Saturday, April 25, 2026, UPF USA hosted its first Ambassadors for Peace Assembly, a gathering created to help bridge divisions in today's fragmented social landscape. More than a traditional networking event, the Assembly brought together leaders from government, faith, business, and civil society to promote a culture of leadership grounded in shared values and collective action.



The program opened with an invocation by Rev. Zagery Oliver, Vice President of UPF North America, and was moderated by Nestor Bayasgalan. Mr. Fortune Winter, Secretary General of UPF USA, introduced UPF's "Five Principles of Peace," outlining the organization's global vision. Dr. Michael Jenkins, President of UPF North America, followed with remarks on UPF's initiatives and the high standards expected of Ambassadors for Peace. During the ceremony, several distinguished leaders were appointed as Ambassadors for Peace, including Dr. Leyla Mammadli, CEO of the Cultural Diplomacy & Development Foundation; Ms. Fatma Yolchuyeva, Counselor of the Embassy of Azerbaijan; Ms. Lima Anwari, youth and women's human rights activist; Dr. Chaima Amari, Human Rights Consultant for the U.S. Institute of Diplomacy and Human Rights; Ms. Porscha Lee Taylor, President of the Washington, D.C. Chapter of Youth for Human Rights International; and four Youth Ambassadors for Peace: Mr. Ameer Hamza Panjri, Miss Juniyah Bowe, Miss Azaniah Asif, and Miss Azaliah Asif.

Following the appointments, UPF USA President Mrs. Kaeleigh Moffitt delivered a compelling presentation titled "Shared Humanity in an Age of Fragmentation." Drawing inspiration from the lives of Nelson Mandela and George Washington, as well as the vision of UPF founders Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, she emphasized the importance of viewing the world through a parental lens that sees humanity as one family under God.

The assembly concluded with a thoughtful panel discussion featuring Rev. Dr. Sucharitha Cole, Minister Seemab Asif, and Mrs. Aparna Madireddi. Addressing the meaning of seeing others as one human family, panelists highlighted the need to recognize the inherent dignity of every person and move beyond religious or national labels through God-centered compassion. They also discussed challenges to living out shared humanity today, citing division amplified by the digital age, and proposed active listening and embracing differences with a parental heart as essential solutions.

With 67 guests in attendance, including 35 first-time participants, the event marked a vibrant and meaningful step forward in translating the vision of peace into practical, cross-sector cooperation.

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Marc Magloire Germain 9 hours ago · 0 Likes

Hi Universal Peace Federation I say you thanks to share the different s events with me, where I learn a lot from your knowledge on the Peace. I am very happy to follow you especially on my email in hoping a day I can be a donor when my country is stabilized and PEACE is growing.CONGRATULATIONS to Dr to be named for the Nobel of the Peace. Dr Marc Magloire Germain, CASAC International Credential in Physical,Mental and Spiritual Education and Prevention

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Ambassador for Peace Spotlight: Velecia “Vee” Mays

Velecia “Vee” Mays is a devoted Minister of Music with more than 35 years of experience, a gifted songwriter, and a passionate educator whose life reflects service, faith, and compassion. In 2008, she released her worship album *Worship* and has continued to develop her musical gifts while teaching piano and drums to children. In recent years, she has focused especially on working with youth with autism, where her patience, kindness, and encouragement have made a meaningful impact.



A respected community leader in Lonoke, Vee founded the Lonoke Community Youth Choir, launched the city's first Black History Parade, and established LCYC Ministries to support local families and shelters, including the Dorcus House in Little Rock. She has also organized women's conferences, led prison outreach ministries, and coordinated trips to major faith-based events such as T.D. Jakes' *Women Thou Art Loosed* conferences.

In public service, Vee broke barriers as the first Black female manager in the Arkansas Auditor of State's Office, serving under six administrations over a distinguished 35-year career. She was honored as the 2021 Most Outstanding Employee of the State of Arkansas and personally recognized by Asa Hutchinson. Though officially retired in 2022, she continues to serve part-time with both the Arkansas State Senate and Auditor's Office.

An ordained minister and proud member of Sigma Tau Sigma Sorority, Inc., Vee holds degrees from Capitol City Junior College, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and the ABJ School of Theology. Her journey—from overcoming childhood shyness and a speech impediment to visiting the White House and U.S. Capitol—demonstrates perseverance, faith, and courage.

Because she exemplifies the Universal Peace Federation ideals of living for the sake of others, strengthening families, serving the community, and promoting harmony across society, Vee was appointed an **Ambassador for Peace**. She is also an active member of Peace Starts With Me, which she joined in 2024 and immediately embraced as family.

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Peace in Action: Los Angeles Hosts Inspiring UPF Dinner

Los Angeles has a strong tradition of hosting UPF dinners, which help maintain ongoing relationships with Ambassadors for Peace while welcoming new participants. These gatherings are consistently joyful occasions, and guests are often eager to return and bring friends, despite busy schedules and the challenge of Los Angeles traffic. Although confirmations came in slowly at first, attendance increased significantly as the event approached. The evening before, the organizing team met to finalize strategy and prepare a schedule, which required some adjustments during the program. While we had hoped to provide time for several guests to share about their activities, time constraints limited us to brief introductions.



During the program, six new Ambassadors for Peace were appointed: Mr. Avinder Chawla, a Sikh leader from Orange County; Dr. Hossein Farrokhi, film director and artist; Ms. Jennifer Zhu, Miss Asia runner-up; Mr. Asghar Eftekhari, longtime public servant; Mr. Franciscus Huijbregts, veteran and public servant; and Mr. Amir (Alex) Alaghemand, assistant professor and teacher. In addition, 19 current Ambassadors for Peace and five KEA ambassadors attended, creating a warm atmosphere of fellowship and lively interaction, as many participants already knew one another or came with guests. Dinner followed the appointments.

After dinner, guests viewed a video highlighting UPF's international activities, followed by Pastor Joshua Holmes' presentation using the new PowerPoint program. The main action step focused on National Parents Day, encouraging attendees to support events in Pasadena on July 25, 2026, Monterey Park on August 1, 2026, or to organize related celebrations within their own communities. This message was warmly received. A time of questions, answers, and comments followed. Participants were especially moved when Ambassador Dr. Kridikel TruthBey spoke in support of True Mother and requested prayers. Another first-time guest asked Pastor Holmes for guidance regarding personal family challenges. Two Scientology leaders also attended, setting aside other commitments to join the event and deepen their connection with Pastor Holmes.

Several meaningful connections emerged throughout the evening. Pastor Martin Wilson, a National Parents Day alumnus who leads a church in Beverly Hills, expressed great enthusiasm, donated \$40, and invited UPF representatives to speak to his congregation. Former Upland Mayor Ray Musser and his wife, both Ambassadors for Peace and former national-level Parents of the Year honorees, made the drive to attend despite their advanced age. Mr. Ron Weightman, an Ambassador for Peace and Family Federation member, contributed a generous \$500 donation. Interestingly, he attends Pastor Wilson's church and was surprised to learn that Pastor Wilson had independently been invited to the UPF dinner by another Ambassador for Peace, Dr. Shahnaz Ghazali.

Jeremy McNally, Aiden McNally, and their guest Sweta Gupta, all visiting from Florida, participated fully in the event and attended Sunday Service the following day. They shared plans to organize a Fundraising/Ambassador for Peace event at the Governor's Mansion in Florida, as well as a National Parents Day celebration in Fort Lauderdale on August 1, 2026.

Overall, the event generated strong inspiration for continued follow-up with many promising guests who are active and influential in their respective fields. Numerous participants

expressed gratitude for the gathering and enthusiasm for future cooperation.

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Universal Peace Federation USA is a 501(c)3 non-profit dedicated to achieving world peace by bringing together representatives from the religion, government, civil society, and private sector. An NGO in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, UPF supports the work of the United Nations, particularly in the areas of interfaith peacebuilding, peace education, and the strengthening of marriage and family.

We invite you to join our effort, share your ideas, and contribute to this global effort to build a world of sustainable and lasting peace.

For inquiries about donations, please contact the UPF USA team at info@us.upf.org.

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