

Michael Balcomb's Headquarters Staff 'Go Fish' on the Hudson

Krista Moon

May 6, 2013



Jaga Gavin (far left) reels in the 35.5 inch striped bass caught on Yukari Takashima's fishing rod.

This year's Peace King Cup Fishing Tournament, which is held annually on the Hudson River to commemorate the Holy Wedding Anniversary of Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon, was kicked off on Friday May 3, 2013 and will continue for 21 days until May 23rd.

On Monday May 6, 2013, a boat of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) employees from New York City travelled to the waters near the Statue of Liberty and Sandy Hook, New Jersey. For Yukari Takashima, executive administrative assistant, it was her first time going out on the boat to fish.

"The day before going out I asked Dr. [Michael] Balcomb, [president of FFWPU-USA], if it was okay for me to go out fishing, and he had jokingly approved for me to go as long as I caught a *big* one!" Takashima told Unification News. The team on the boat included four headquarter members: Jaga Gavin, Koichi Nakai, Victoria Roomet, Yukari Takashima and Captain Kensaku Takahashi, the captain of the boat and a key manager of the fishing tournament.

When the staff members all settled on the boat, Captain Takahashi explained that this was the boat True Father used to fish on when he was in New York. When the boat left the dock and started off out onto the Hudson River Takashima asked God to show her what is was like for True Father to fish.



Headquarters staff, from left, Jaga Gavin, Yukari Takashima, Victoria Roomet and Koichi Nakai, proudly show off their catches from the day.

After Captain Takahashi anchored the boat, he brought out the bait. "Honestly, I was expecting to see huge amounts of worms, but I was surprised to see that the bait was smaller-sized fish," Takashima said. She added: "We hooked the bait on our line and while I was practicing how to fish and connect with my fishing rod within five minutes my rod started to wiggle. This fish gave me *no* time to connect with my rod, and it was so strong I almost fell off the boat. But thanks to Jaga he grabbed my rod and grappled with the fish for up to ten minutes. When he reeled the fish closer to the boat, Captain Takahashi was ready with the net to catch the fish, Koichi prepared his camera, and Victoria and I cheered on for Jaga."

"The fish was finally brought to the boat and it was a *big* strong striped bass that measured 35.5 inches long and weighed 15 lbs! The fish was almost as big as me. I like to think that this was not only *my* fish but a fish caught through team work," Takashima explained.

Takashima described her experience so far: "Being on the water is a completely different experience than on land. When you are on land, there are just so many things happening, but out on the ocean it is so calm. I realized that when you are on a boat in the middle of the ocean, not knowing what is beneath you or around you and not having any control of the weather; it is only God that you can really trust to guide you through this. I was grateful for the opportunity to understand a little of why Father enjoyed being out in the ocean."

The four headquarters team members caught five striped bass and six blue fish. Takashima's fish was the largest caught that day, but still not long enough to enter for a prize in the fishing tournament.