

FFWPU USA: End of an Era: Farewell Unification Theological Seminary, Barrytown

Demian Dunkley
August 16, 2023



Photos courtesy of Tomo Torikai

"My testimony to this property is that it's holy grounds, because the hand of God has been present here, influencing the United States and the world," said Dr. Michael Mickler, a Unification Theological Seminary ([UTS](#)) alum and professor for 34 years. "This property is very tied up with the providence of America and the providence of the world."



Michael Mickler at the event

Dr. Mickler shared highlights from the Barrytown campus' long history and the seminary's founders, True Parents, during a special "Farewell UTS" Sunday service held at the school property on Aug. 13. The Barrytown campus is being sold under structural changes within the Unification movement. Dr. Mickler

said when the doors to UTS, first opened in September 1975, there were stages of great historical preparation that made it possible. He spoke of the property's significance and its original owners, the Livingston family, who held vast amounts of land throughout the Hudson Valley in the 1700s and 1800s.



Founding Stage

"Robert Livingston was one of America's Founding Fathers," Dr. Mickler said. "He was one of the five who worked with Thomas Jefferson to draft the U.S. Declaration of Independence. He later became the highest judicial official in New York state."

In 1789, Livingston gave the Oath of Office for America's first president, George Washington. He also served as the U.S. Ambassador to France from 1801 to 1804. "[In 1803], he, along with Benjamin Franklin, negotiated the Louisiana Purchase, which tripled the size of the United States from the Eastern seaboard all the way to nearly the West Coast," Dr. Mickler said.



Livingston also connected with Robert Fulton, the inventor of the steamboat, and together they created

the first commercially successful steamboat to travel the Hudson River and open up trade. Later, the Barrytown property was purchased in 1860 by the Aspinwall family - relatives of the Roosevelt clan, who produced two U.S. presidents during the early 20th Century.

Presidential Stage

"At eight years old, Theodore Roosevelt came to the property and started his lifelong diaries here," said Dr. Mickler. "He also began his collection of animals, insects, birds, and reptiles on this property ... His collection was later housed in the Museum of Natural History in New York City, which his father established." With his great love for nature, Theodore Roosevelt implemented America's national parks system during his presidency. "If you look at it, that whole development began on [the Barrytown] property," Dr. Mickler said.



Faith Stage

In 1929, John D. Rockefeller built a school on the Barrytown property for the Christian Brothers Monastery. They ran it for about 40 years until 1970, when the school closed. "At that time, the Unification movement purchased the property," said Dr. Mickler. "The providence for the property [then] moved beyond the national level to the world level."



World Stage

Missionaries - largely from Japan, Europe, and America - prepared to support True Father's "One World Crusade" and trained for world missions at the property, initially called the Barrytown International Training Center. Then, in 1975, the era of UTS began - a time of "sacrifice," Dr. Mickler said, when many of the movement's leaders were pulled from the front lines of mission work to attend the seminary.

"When that first class was graduating in the spring of 1977, True Father wanted to give them an experience that they would never forget," Dr. Mickler said, "and that was the great CARP fishing campaign at Tivoli Bays north of campus ... It was an unbelievable experience ... where he baptized the seminarians symbolically as they went out into the field."



Dr. Mickler recalled the "big battle" of the seminary's early days to be recognized by the state with a school charter permitting them to issue graduate degrees. "That was a 15-year battle," he said, "and we later had a battle to get our accreditation." But public recognition from theologians, as well as other faith and civic leaders, helped UTS achieve victory.



The seminary produced many of the movement's affiliate organizations as well, such as the Universal Peace Federation ([UPF](#)), and has long been at the forefront of preparing many young Unificationist leaders. "The youth spent so many winters and summers on this property for workshops," said Resfred Arthur, FFWPU-USA Northeast secretary general, as he noted the recent 19th Annual Blessed Culture and Sports Festival ([BCSF](#)) held there attracted about 600 young participants.



"STF and GPA [have trained at UTS]," Dr. Mickler said, as the property quickly became a hub for many of the movement's activities and events for people of all ages and backgrounds. "This has been the most important development on this campus in the 21st Century," he said.

Other Unificationist leaders shared their personal stories about the school and how the property has touched their lives in various ways. FFWPU-USA Northeast Director Rev. Naokimi Ushiroda, a UTS graduate, recalled participating in "at least 40 different workshops" at UTS over the last 20 years, and how he met his wife during a workshop there and later got married on the property.

For BCSF Director Denthew Learey, "[UTS] has really become a spiritual home for me," he said. As a teen, "the first time I met God was here," he shared. "It's been such a meaningful place for so many of my generation."

As Unificationists bid farewell to the Barrytown property, a new chapter emerged with the HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership (HJI) name change, 43rd Street Manhattan campus, and evolving educational tracks.

You can learn more about the Hyojeong International Graduate School [here](#).

Unification Theological Seminary is now HJ International [Learn More](#)

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HJ International
GRADUATE SCHOOL for
PEACE and PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

OPEN HOUSE

Friday, August 11
2PM ET | 8PM CET

Called to HJI: Heaven's Path to Leadership



Dr. Thomas G. Walsh
President
Program Host



Dr. Thomas J. Ward
Provost



Dr. Michael Balcomb
FFWPU Continental
President of EUME,
HJI Class of 1994 &
2009



Manjola Vasmatics
HJI Class of 2021



David Wurzer
Graduate Student



Jacques Marion
Graduate Student

[Click here to register](#)



Doctor of Ministry



Master Degrees



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HJI NEWS



HJI Annual Retreat for Faculty and Staff
East Garden - Irvington, New York
August 3, 2023

[HJI Annual Retreat for Faculty and Staff 08.03.23](#)

HJI Communications

HJI faculty and staff participated in a one-day Annual Retreat convened at East Garden in Irvington NY.



Institutional Name Change

Letter from Dr. Walsh
WITH BACKGROUNDER AND FAQ



[Letter from the President: Institutional Name Change](#)

UTS Communications

Following months of consultations with our Founder, the Board of Trustees, faculty, alumni and other stakeholders, UTS submitted, to the New York State Department of Education and the State University of New York Board...

Announcements

- ["Never Defeated": Father Moon in Danbury](#)
- [A Big Thank you to Robert Pumphrey and a Warm Welcome Ken Sohn!](#)
- [Dr. Drissa Kone Named Director of Doctor of Ministry Program](#)
- [Steven Boyd to become Director of Enrollment Management and Student Life](#)



[Congratulations to the Class of 2023!](#)



2023 RESEARCH DAY

Recent UTS Scholarship in Religion, Science, Peace, and Diplomacy



Dr. Michael Mickler
Distinguished Professor of
History Studies



Savjola Konja
Student in the Master of
Arts in Religious Studies
Program

HOSTED BY THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

[2023 Research Day: UTS Faculty and Students Recognized for Recent Scholarship in Religion.](#)

Other News

- [Dr. Perrottet Visits Albania and Kosovo](#)
- [Letter from the President: Annual Report and Fundraising Campaign](#)
- [UTS Hosts the 19th Annual Interreligious Prayer Service for Peace and Justice](#)
- [Kaeleigh Moffitt First to Complete Peace](#)

UTS Communications

On Saturday, May 27, 2023, Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) held its forty-seventh Commencement in New York City to celebrate the class of 2023.

Science, Peace, and Diplomacy

UTS Communications

On Saturday, April 22, Unification Theological Seminary recognized the winners of the Research Day competition, in which current seminary students, as well as faculty, were invited to prepare an academic poster or visual description of...

Studies Internship

Recent Videos



HJ International
GRADUATE SCHOOL for
PEACE AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

New York City Main Campus:
4 West 43rd Street
New York, NY 10036
Phone: **(212) 563-6647**

Barrytown Campus:
30 Seminary Drive
Barrytown, NY 12507
Phone: **(845) 752-3000**

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DAYS HOURS MINUTES SECONDS

THE END OF AN ERA

After 15 beautiful years of creating memories alongside the UTS property, we are now embracing the next chapter of our growth and possibilities.

This year will mark the final BCSF held at the UTS property, register now to participate in this historical moment.

[REGISTER](#)

BCSF XIX

August 9-
13, 2023

BCSF strives to create a hub for Unificationists and their friends to connect and celebrate the values of our community through sports and culture.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

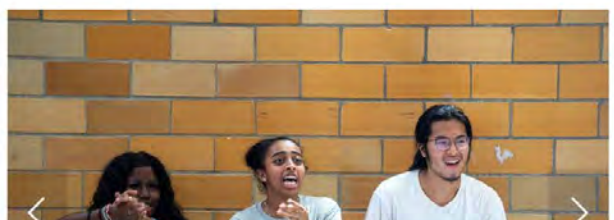


"We need to graft the authentic spirit of sports onto a foundation of the truth that teaches us to live, like God, for the sake of others, and we need to put this spirit and truth into practice."

-Rev. Sun Myung Moon



About



The Blessed Culture and Sports Festival (BCSF) is traditionally 5-day culture and sports event that was started in 2005 and has taken place every year since.



BSCF is a grass-roots lead project of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification. All staffing, program design and management is done by unpaid volunteers. There is a core team of about 10 people who work with dozens of volunteers around the world each year.

BCSF is usually held at 30 Seminary Drive, Barrytown, NY 12507.



District Map

Each number represents a district, find out which district you belong to. Then you can reach out to your district coordinator to help you figure out logistics during BCSF such as food, and transportation etc.

If you have any questions, please email infobcsf@gmail.com

Join our [Facebook page](#) or [follow us on Instagram](#) for regular updates, videos, photos and more.





Vision Statement:

Positively influence the culture of the world by:

- Creating a hub for Unificationists and their friends
- Infusing the belief that individuals and communities can impact the world
- Empowering those people to share their talents, skills and values

Culture

The cultural aspect of BCSF involve various expressions and venues for fine art, cinema, dance, and music. Cultural elements include:

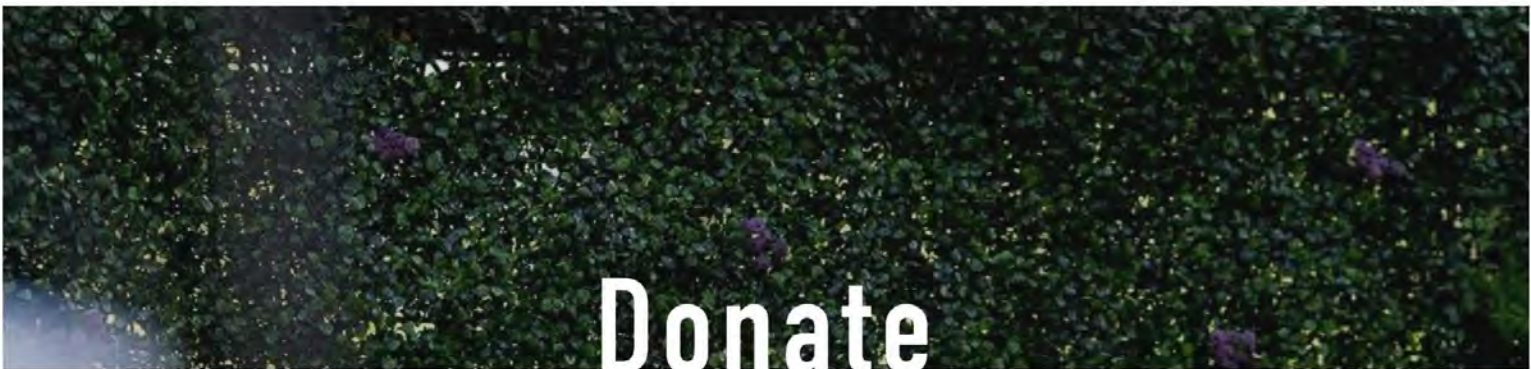
- Evening programs
- Social gatherings
- Artistic avenues
- and more...

Sports

The sporting aspect of BCSF involves multiple competitive and intramural sports tournaments with teams from around the world coming to compete.

- Frisbee
- Volleyball
- Table tennis
- Basketball

[SPORTS RULES](#)



Because of your contribution, participants will walk away with new friends and a positive and healthy perspective of their faith community. Our hope is that they can leave BCSF more confident and connected in their faith than ever before.

YOU CAN MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

HSA-UWC
C/O FINANCIAL OFFICE/BCSF
481 8TH AVENUE, BOX A12
NEW YORK, NY 10001

Please note that the BCSF is a grass roots led and funded event supported and fiscally sponsored by HSA-UWC, a 501-c3 non-profit group. We appreciate any donations which are used directly for the event and are tax deductible.

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TERMS & POLICIES

BCSF