

## Las Vegas WFWP Built from Heart fundraiser for the Schools of Africa

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February 2, 2019



The Las Vegas Chapter for Women's Federation for World Peace was very excited to hold a fundraiser for the Schools of Africa on February 2nd, 2019 at the International Peace Education Center. Entitled "Built from Heart", this fundraiser was a great success. We had a program of talented singers and entertainers interspersed with professional motivational speakers, many of whom we as a chapter have had the privilege of working with over the last few years. We had a goal to send as much needed funds to Africa as we could, so we charged an entrance fee of \$25, and we are also very grateful to our local donors, who enabled us to put on this event.

As guests entered the building and walked through the white marble lobby, they were met by the beautiful decorations and lovely African fabric hanging down full length like tapestries from the staircase above, drawing everyone's attention to the educational African Art Exhibit. One wing of the lobby was transformed with delicious food and colorful vendor tables with African keepsakes, jewelry, transformational books, and dynamic music CDs. As guests roamed the spacious area and leisurely made their way to the other wing, they admired the beautiful Nicaraguan ceramic pottery, silver jewelry, paintings and other excellent silent auction items. At the center of it all was the large circular mosaic that served as the performance area. Seating extended until the fountain and the large digital screen in the back. There was a small stage where Patrick Hogan's Jazz Ensemble treated the guests to outstanding music throughout the program.

Ms. Stephanie Thompson started off the program with a lovely rendition of the song 'From a Distance' and Ms. Veronica Lopez brought everyone the patriotic 'America the Beautiful'. Our first speaker was Ms. Katherine Duncan, who gave a moving presentation of the difficulties and victories of the African American people and communities and the end of the 400-year period of slavery in America from 1619 to 2019. This was a very beautiful and fitting tribute to February, Black History Month.

Little Jay Gambino followed with a comedy routine that had great audience participation, and that high energy continued with the West African dance team Nondi Wantanara giving a vibrant performance that got everyone out of their chairs and dancing to the powerful beat of the drums.

After these lively performances, the program continued with more inspirational words from our speakers. Ms. Judi Moreo was fantastic as she engaged the audience with her experiences working at the Soweto Newspaper in South Africa and meeting and speaking with Nelson Mandela.

WFWP USA Special Liaison Officer Ms. Aimmee Kodachian shared powerful words, as always, speaking from experience about the role that WFWP can play in people's lives when they connect to us and become a friend; through us they can make a difference. And she brought a world level friend with her, Maestro George Pehlivanian, the current highest-ranking conductor in the world. He offered a brief

but heartfelt message about his own mother, her pioneering career and about the equality that men and women should share to mutually support each other's gifts.



*Speaker Aimme Kodachian*

Next we had a wonderful musical selection: two lovely ladies Sylvie Boisel and Stephanie Thompson each sang a couple of songs, and 15-year-old Aslan Davis played a wonderful classical piece of Chopin on the grand piano. This set the stage for the words of love and encouragement from our national headquarters. The message from Ms. Fannie Smith, the WFWP USA Schools of Africa Coordinator, was read by Kiyomi Schmidt, our WFWP USA outreach coordinator. And Mrs. Mary Hida, our local chairwoman, read the beautiful letter from WFWP USA President Mrs. Angelika Selle.



*Speaker Moriko Hori*



After listening to Ms. Lopez sing once more, this time performing her original song 'Humanity', it was time to introduce our keynote speaker Mrs. Moriko Hori, president of WFWP Japan, who flew all the way from Tokyo just to be at this event. Her incredible testimony about WFWP's work in Africa and the Japanese volunteers who founded the Schools of Africa struck such a deep chord with the audience and truly captured the heart of dedication, service and love. It is this heart that WFWP is committed to bring to people, countries and cultures around the world through the vision and example of WFWP's founders, worldwide leadership and local chapters. Mrs. Hori also encouraged the audience to continue to support our greater human family by recognizing those in need and sharing our resources ([watch video of her speech here](#)).

Ms. Boisel and Ms. Thompson then gave their hearts again with more uplifting music and Little Jay Gambino came back to give away some raffle prizes. He opened the way for two stunning dance performances from the youth at the Diamond Dance Studio.

Coming towards the end of our program, our local Las Vegas chapter briefly shared about our work with dynamic women leaders throughout the city and our own programs for feminine leadership coaching; the target audience ranges from young girls to young women professionals to seasoned women entrepreneurs.



There was then one more raffle, and to everyone's surprise, a flash mob dance of three. This excellent performance was given by young leaders of the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP), who won the hearts of everyone in the audience with their exuberance, energy and awesome dance moves. Bringing it down to a calmer finish, Ms. Thompson led all those present to form a large circle and, holding hands, sing together 'Let There Be Peace on Earth', our WFWP mantra. This was a very "chock full" of "let's love every minute of our life" program and it was just a beginning to help further bring our community together to make a difference in Las Vegas, America and very specifically this time, to each child that we can reach out to at the WFWP-Schools of Africa! Please be sure to check back with us for more information on our Facebook page: [Women's Federation for World Peace USA- Las Vegas](#) and our national website: [www.wfwp.us](http://www.wfwp.us) for some great videos coming out soon.

We are so grateful to our extended Las Vegas community for their support and confidence in our chapter members to bring together an event that our friends and neighbors can be happy to have been a part of.

Each one of you MADE A DIFFERENCE!