

## YAYAM hosted the first subregional winter workshop for high school students

Denthew Learey  
December 31, 2018



The Youth and Young Adult Ministry (YAYAM) hosted their first subregional winter workshop for high school students in Subregion 1 at the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) from December 27 to 31. This series of winter workshops will be hosted in each subregion and is geared toward high school students from each subregion.

A total of 95 participants gathered at UTS to learn how to add faith into their everyday lives and to become individuals who want to include God and their faith into everything they do through intense activities, deep discussions and plenty of guidance. The core staff wanted to ensure participants return home with a feeling of love and connection.

The theme for the workshop was Demigod. This gave the participants an opportunity to go on a quest to discover themselves, and how their lives relate to their relationship with God. This theme was chosen to encourage the youth to fight and discover what their faith is and how it can play into their lives. The objective for the first few days was for the teams to get close and feel comfortable enough with each other to share their own personal stories.

On day one, Heather Thalheimer, the parent figure for the workshop, shared the heart that Jesus and True Father had toward sharing their lives with God. After her talk, one participant stated, "I was never able to truly relate to Jesus until understanding that he and I are in a similar position and both of us are struggling to attain the same goal." Later that evening, several students shared testimonies about how their personal struggles and challenges eventually brought them close to God.

The following morning, the activities began at 5:00 a.m. to test the students when put in a difficult situation and to see if they would include God at the beginning of their struggles. The activities pushed the teams physically and emotionally in order for them to open up and be vulnerable with God and with each other.

After all the excitement and intensity at the beginning of the workshop, the core staff wanted to end it on a positive note. Several older second-generation Unificationists came to speak on a panel where participants could ask questions and receive advice about how to include God and their faith in their families, careers and everyday lives.

At the end of the workshop, the students opened up about their struggles and challenges and were able to include God in their lives to help overcome those challenges. The understanding of owning your connection with God and working to create a better relationship with Him was realized by most of the students. "After the workshop, I felt confident in the future of our movement and ready to support and help guide these brothers and sisters into a brighter future," said Denthew Leary, Workshop Director.