

IAYSP USA: An Indomitable Spirit - IAYSP Celebrates Its 5th Anniversary

Katherine Anglin
February 25, 2022



"We are creating the future of God's kingdom of Cheon Il Guk to fulfill God's dream," wrote True Mother in her memoir, *Mother of Peace* (2020). "The International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) must serve the highest heavenly purpose in this time, with an indomitable spirit, never yielding to any difficulty."

[IAYSP](#) is now celebrating five years of countless initiatives and projects bringing new breakthroughs for peace in communities around the world. Established by True Mother on February 23, 2017, at the HJ International Cultural Foundation in Gapyeong, IAYSP is designed to advance world peace by empowering youth and students to become global citizens through character education and peace projects supporting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)). It stems from True

Parents' Youth Federation for World Peace (YFWP) first created in 1994, which laid the foundation for its core messages and intercultural activities.

"We inaugurated YFWP's successor, IAYSP, to be the special forces that build God's kingdom of Cheon Il Guk," wrote True Mother. "In June of that year, 12,000 young people took part in the IAYSP Youth for Peace Rally in Bangkok, Thailand, where I implored them to 'become the leading figures of the culture of filial heart and the light of the world.'"

"Then in September of 2019, at the Africa Summit and Blessing Ceremony in Sao Tome and Principe, 40,000 young people gathered at the Festival for Youth and Students," she continued. "The capital city's wide plaza, with its view of the beautiful sea, was packed with young people... The First Lady of Sao Tome and Principe, Nana Travoada, and the leaders of each cabinet ministry participated in celebrating the revitalization of their nation's youth. It was the largest nationwide Youth and Student Festival to date. I spared no effort to give the young people hope and encouragement."

Today, IAYSP, including the [U.S. chapter](#), has implemented a range of service projects addressing climate change and [reforestation](#), to poverty, homelessness, and supporting those affected by [natural disasters](#). Its annual [S!NERGY](#) competition - held nationally, regionally, and internationally - also serves as a platform to engage and promote the ideas of young leaders seeking to bring about a more peaceful and eco-friendly world.

"IAYSP members stand in the position of God's kingdom's loyal citizens and filial sons and daughters," wrote True Mother. "They are the True Parents' pride and the protectors of Heaven's Will. No matter what difficulties emerge in their time, such young people will meet those challenges and emerge victorious. They are the ones who own the future."

"IAYSP is an umbrella association bringing together all the youth-based organizations of our global family," said IAYSP President Dr. Robert Kittel.

From [youth festivals](#) and conferences, to [peace designer training](#) and celebrating young "[heroes](#)" making a difference in their communities, IAYSP chapters in nearly 50 countries worldwide remain steadfast to the vision of a global family of young people building a world of peace with true love.

You can learn more about IAYSP and its service projects [here](#).



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International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) is a non-profit organization. Our goal is to be able to host and coordinate events and activities youth and students can participate in for little to no cost.

When you become a member, You can join a network of peace makers from around the world striving to better communities and bring about sustainable peace together.

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Supporting SDGs

IAYSP promotes projects supporting the United Nations in two ways. First, service projects are directly linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. This connection is both by design and in the project reports. Secondly, many international days, such as the International Youth Day, the International Day of Peace, and the World Interfaith Harmony Week, are celebrated by our chapters throughout the world.



Supporting SDGs Project

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Sharing the Culture of

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IAYSP IS A GLOBAL FAMILY OF YOUNG PEOPLE BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE WITH TRUE LOVE.

"While we may identify with a particular nationality, ethnicity, religion, or culture, we should affirm our common humanity, a value that transcends our individual backgrounds."

Sun Jin Moon, IAYSP Thailand Inaugural Address

FEATURED EVENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS



WHAT WE DO





Character Education

Peace Design Seminar

Intercultural Activities

TAKE ACTION

Do you know what the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are? In 2015 the member states of the United Nations created goals to address poverty, environmental issues, and how to ensure prosperity in all aspects for the people of the world. Each of these 17 areas have a specific goal to achieve by 2030 and it's up to each of us to learn and be aware of what they are in order to help with these global goals.

[Find Out More →](#)



International Association of Youth and Students for Peace supports the Sustainable Development Goals

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





Planting Seeds of Hope



Courtesy of IAYSP

More than half a year later, the “Billion Trees Project” organized by IAYSP last spring and summer is still going strong in the Philippines. The [project](#), which brings together volunteers and resources from multiple IAYSP chapters including the U.S., has seen great progress with thousands of tree seeds and saplings planted to combat the effects of climate change across the archipelagic nation.

“We have seen significant and promising growth of mangrove trees we planted with our partners last spring,” said Emman Abuton, project lead of the Misamis Occidental province chapter. Abuton inspected the Southern Poblacion neighborhood of the Plaridel municipality where many saplings were planted for Earth Day 2021, stating that, “the growth outcome is very encouraging to see.”

From September to November, more saplings were planted with the help of IAYSP members from chapters in San Pablo City, Laguna, Lucena, and Bohol who worked alongside volunteers from YSP USA. The American team contributed donations through an online [fundraiser](#) in order to cover the cost of various saplings, as well as defray transportation and food expenses for volunteers.

“In October, we planted 647 trees at Barangay Ibabang Palale and 300 mangrove seedlings at the designated coastal areas of Barangay,” said Abuton. “In November, the IAYSP Rizal chapter planted more than 250 seedlings.”

National resource officials determined mahogany, mangrove, bamboo, narra – the national tree of the

Philippines – and various fruit trees were the best to plant throughout the country. Abuton credits the project’s burgeoning success to the international and local partnerships of IAYSP chapters, in addition to support from several organizations and groups, including the national Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office and the city of Tayabas police force.

The large-scale tree planting initiative gained momentum after the Philippines government passed the “One Billion Trees” bill last year calling for widespread tree planting to address climate change through reducing carbon dioxide and our ecological footprint. Other nations like the Ukraine and New Zealand have adopted similar legislation.

“This project aims to empower the youth to take responsibility for planting their own trees in their area,” said a local IAYSP organizer. “It was also created to further the mission of the government to protect, preserve, and restore the forest.”

Nearly 26 percent of the Philippines is forested, according to the United Nations. However, only about five percent of the nation’s land area is under some form of protection. True Parents, founders of [IAYSP](#), have long advocated environmentalism and, in 2021, during the founders’ 27th International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences ([ICUS](#)), scientists examined reforestation measures, among other innovations to ease environmental stressors.

“Proper stewardship and care for the environment is absolutely essential,” said True Mother in 2014. “Climate change, rising sea levels, deforestation, desertification, a lack of clean water supply, malnutrition and the rising cost of food products require our immediate attention. God created us to love and care for the Earth and all its blessings.”

With that vision, IAYSP continues to empower youth and students to become global citizens through character education and peace projects supporting the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. Projects like mass tree planting continue to advance the primary goal of a more peaceful world. IAYSP will monitor the growth of the new trees with follow-up visits through May.

You can learn more about the national chapter of IAYSP [here](#), and donate to the Billion Trees Project [here](#).

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13 Service Projects were conducted for 2,000 victims of typhoons in the Philippine

2020/11/12



The IAYSP-Philippinas, in partnership with Universal Peace Federation-Bicol, HJ-Youth Leadership Training International (HJ-YLT International), Tong-il Moo Do-Bicol. Besides, YSP- Bicol and in cooperation with the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Brgy. Daraitan and Local Government Unit of Municipality of Baggao, Cagayan Valley Region, conducted 13 service projects with 150 volunteers.

This project and community service were conducted to give love, offering aid and support to the affected families of Typhoon Ulysses (Vamco), which hit the Philippines last November 12, 2020.

There have been 2000 direct beneficiaries from the areas





Service Project

#BangonDaraitan
"True Love is Giving Action:
Tulong-tulong sa Pagbangon"

Thank You So Much
for your donations.

they went to, such as Barangay Naga, Tiwi, Albay, Brgy. Kasiglahan Village Elementary School, Rodriguez, Rizal, Brgy. Daraitan, Tanay, and more.

They had different titles for the project, which would show their focus every time they held the program. Some of them were: True Love is Giving, Tulong-tulong sa Pagbangon: Recovery Assistance, True Love in Action: Tulong-tulong sa Pagbangon.

They initiated a call for donations for the ones harmed by the recent typhoon,

distributed relief, made operations to give food packs and essential utilities, and did community services. That involved cleaning the houses which got vastly destroyed by the typhoon, a Food Feeding Program for the children who lived in that evacuation center, giving aid and support.

Rice, basins, and pails were given to, at least, help them provide their basic needs for days. HJ-YLT International took the initiative so that twenty families could receive a mini stove and galvanized roofs to help them start restructuring their houses.

Categories: **Peace Projects**



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S!NERGY

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S!NERGY: STUDENTS X IDEAS X ENERGY



S!nergy is an event initiated by International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP or YSP) in Japan and has started to spread to the other countries IAYSP is working in. It is a platform for students to share their projects and ideas in a professional setting. A group of judges made up of distinguished leaders of the community vote along with the audience on the best idea and presentation. The winner receives a grant to help further their idea or project.

UPCOMING S!NERGY EVENTS

FEATURED



REGIONAL

**SINERGY
EVENT**

January 22, 2022 6pm EST

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One Korea One World Initiatives (OKOWI) Festival (Benin & São Tomé e Príncipe)

28 days ago



IAYSP Africa held the One Korea One World Initiative (OKOWI) Festival on January 29, 2022. **The event was to promote the Korean culture to the people in Africa and show the importance of unifying the Korean Peninsula through cultural performances.**

Some of the IAYSP national chapters prepared the cultural performances expressing the Korean culture and history by dance, song, poem, and skit. Five teams performed during the event. Mr. Koji Matsuda, International President of IAYSP, gave his remarks as the head of judges that African youth can inspire many young people in the world and Korea.

The result of the contest was as follows: 1st place was IAYSP Benin, and 2nd place was IAYSP Sao Tome and Principe.





Categories: **Networking**

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INTRODUCTION CONFERENCE OF IAYSP (BURKINA FASO)

Burkina Faso



PEACE HEROES SERIES – HELEN KELLER (AUSTRIA)

Austria





STUDENT GATHERING DAY FOR A NEW RESOLUTION (FRANCE)

France



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Peace Designer Training (Austria)

2022/01/14



This winter, 14 students at the ROSE high school in Linz went on the journey to design their first peace projects.

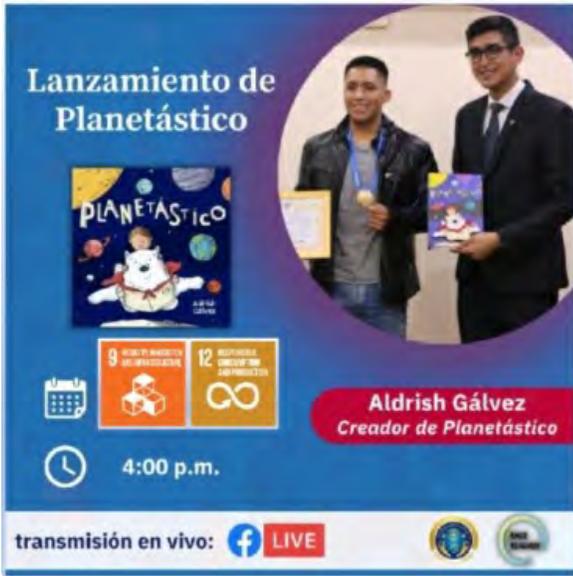
In December, January, and February, they held a total of six sessions, with content ranging from the UN's SDGs to project development and teamwork. Students were allowed to get in touch with their desire to make a difference in their community, in whatever way is important to them.

"The peace designer course strikes a great balance between empathy, fantasy, and analytical thinking. We love how our students got involved in the very practical tasks," a teacher commented.

The final project plans will be presented on February 11th. Everyone is looking forward to seeing how they will develop!



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LAUNCH OF THE AWARDED PEACE DESIGNER PROJECT IN PERU

Peru



SDGS STUDY THAT PARENTS AND CHILDREN CAN EASILY LEARN! (JAPAN)

Japan



PEACE DESIGNER FES 2021 (JAPAN)

Japan



National S!NERGY Competition to End the Year 2021



At the end of 2021, International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) USA co-hosted the National S!NERGY presentation competition online on December 29th. Also co-hosting were the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) and the Unification Theological Seminar (UTS).

The event theme for this national competition was “Bridging the Divide Between Nations and Communities”. The young presenters for the day were from both the east and west coast, with Iris Wojtowicz, a local IAYSP coordinator for the Chicago area, as the master of ceremonies.

Presentations were on various subjects pertaining to the event theme and brought a diverse view of what kind of things in our society and in the world has division that needs to be addressed.

PRESENTERS





Ricardo C. De Sena, 27



Tiffany Gao, 17



Madoka Tsuchihara, 25 and Kengo Kawa, 25

Taking 3rd place with \$200 was Ricardo De Sena of New Jersey. His presentation was on the corruption Latin American countries experience and the qualities and possible solutions needed to help reduce it based on a case study of one Latin American country.

In 2nd place with \$300 was Tiffany Gao of New York. She presented on the topic of environmental racism and how many minority communities in the US statistically live in more urbanized and polluted living environments.

1st place with \$500 went to Madoka Tsuchihara and Kengo Kawa of California. Working as a team to represent their college club, CARP, their presentation was on the historic division of the Korean Peninsula and how this split was also a division of philosophies that has influenced the world. Their solution to reunite North and South Korea included the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone), the voice of youth, and the influence of key countries and entities.

GUEST JUDGES



Dr. Thomas Ward



Dr. Lisa M. Brady



Mr. Miilhan Stephens

As guest judges, IAYSP was able to invite and host Dr. Thomas Ward, President of the Unification Theological Seminary; Dr. Lisa M. Brady, Professor and Department Chair of History, Boise State University; and Mr. Miilhan Stephens, President of IAYSP North America and USA.

Dr. Thomas J. Ward serves as President of Unification Theological Seminary and Professor of Peace and Development Studies. Prior to his current role, he served for eighteen years as Dean of the University of Bridgeport's College of Public and International Affairs where he taught graduate courses on Culture and Development, Peace and Conflict Studies, and Political and Economic Integration.

Professor Lisa M. Brady is an environmental and military historian of Asia and the United States. She has earned degrees from the University of New Mexico (BA), the University of Sydney, Australia (MA), Montana State University-Billings (MEd), and the University of Kansas (PhD). Her research examines the ways military activities—during peace and in times of conflict—shape and are shaped by the natural environment. Her first book, *War upon the Land: Military Strategy and the Transformation of Southern Landscapes during the American Civil War*, was published by the University of Georgia Press in 2012. She is currently working on a volume on global war and environment for the *Very Short Introduction* series by Oxford University Press and on a book exploring the environmental history of the Korean War.

Mr. Miilhan Stephens is a visionary that has dedicated his life to making a world of peace. He has contributed to this cause through his leadership with the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification for eight years. He currently serves as the President of the International

Association of Youth and Students for Peace USA where he works to empower young people to take responsibility for the greatest challenges our world is facing today.

2021 YOUTH HEROES' AWARDS RECIPIENTS



Karina Samuel

byebyeplasticbags.org



Esha Venkat

nest4us.org

During the National S!NERGY event, two recipients for the annual Youth Heroes' Award were also recognized. The Youth Heroes' Award is an award given by each IAYSP chapter nation to recognize exceptional youth and young adults who have contributed to creating a global culture of peace and sustainable development through their projects and have shown exemplary public-mindedness to bring a positive, lasting impact on their community and/or broader society. The recipients for the 2021 awards were 17-year-old Karina Samuel from Florida and 16-year-old Esha Venkat from Virginia.

Karina Samuel places profound emphasis on both climate change awareness and education as well as reducing plastic waste. Her leadership in these areas extend to an international level, as she is currently a global representative for Bye Bye Plastic Bags, single-handedly directing the Florida Chapter.

Esha Venkat is a global changemaker, ambitious servant leader, and groundbreaking girlpreneur who has spent over 1,500 hours giving back to her community on projects ranging from feeding the homeless and tutoring kids worldwide to creating care packages for low-income families and facilitating global workshops. She is the co-founder and COO of NEST4US, a 501©3 non-profit with a mission to make the world better through kindness by mobilizing volunteers worldwide to advance progress on societal issues and spark equitable solutions for the greater good.

Both award recipients received a medal, certificate and a \$500 grant for their projects.

The event wrapped up with some final words from each of the judges, who were also able to give important feedback and ask questions to each of the presenters after they presented.

Watch the entire event recording [HERE!](#)

The first place winners will go on to present for the Regional S!NERGY on January 22, 2022 along with Canada's presenter.