

## The first of six Peace Road 2017 events across the USA held in Barrytown, NY

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Over 70 people including Blessed Culture and Sports Festival (BCSF) participants held a two-part Peace Road event at Barrytown, New York on August 12 and 13, kicking off this year's Peace Road tour in America. For the first time, Peace Road and BCSF co-sponsored a race, with young Unificationists as well as guests participating in a mud run and 5k run to ignite hope that we can achieve a peaceful world and to promote the dream of one Global Family through connection and communication fostered by the international peace road events.

This Peace Road event marked the first of six Peace Road events across the nation, with FFWPU Vice President Rev. Mari Curry present as the Peace Road representative. In the midst of BCSF, where the participants learned to appreciate their cultures through sports, music, art, and various other activities, they took the time to appreciate the physical coming together of the world through Peace Road.

Peace Road comes from True Parent's idea of a "Peace Road" or an international highway that physically connects all people of the world together. If people could meet each other in daily life, through culture, trade, and travel, they would come to break down the historic fears and misunderstandings that often divide us from our closest neighbors.

In an address at the United Nations in Geneva he said:

“This tunnel can help make the world a single community at last...Think of how much money the world is wasting on war. The time has come for nations to work together, pool their resources and, as the prophet Isaiah taught, beat our swords into plowshares and pruning hooks.”

The annual Peace Road tour is keeping that vision of peace alive by traveling as much of the Peace Road as possible each year.



This path brings us to Barrytown on a beautiful Saturday afternoon where approximately 50 young Unificationists and guests gathered for a mud run spanning roughly 3.5 miles across the Unification Theological Seminary campus. As they ran along True Father's trail, through woodland, hills, and mud, the young people challenged their physical and spiritual limits while symbolically taking the spiritual path of their elders. The mud run concluded with a giant wall climb, which roughly half of the mud runners successfully traversed.

The following day, 20 people participated in a 5K peace run. Prior to the participants' five kilometer run for peace, Roland Platt, the Director of Generation Peace Academy who has personally participated in Peace Road many times, provided a special message to the youth on the significance of Peace Road and its derivation in True Parents' vision for an international highway of peace.

Through connecting nations of the world in a peaceful relay race it hopes to allow for resolution of conflicts and build a sense of community across all nations and boundaries. By running together we stand in solidarity with the desire and efforts for building peace. We represent the crossing of borders and the need for us all to work together to create this world of peace.