

## Family Church of Connecticut holds its Second Annual Volunteer Retreat

Abe and Mika Deshotel  
September 2, 2017



Around 40 Connecticut Unificationists of all ages held their Second Annual Volunteer Retreat on Saturday, September 2, 2017.

The program began on the University of Bridgeport campus and concluded at the Holy Ground in the town of Hamden. The multigenerational group featured volunteers as young as 12 years old, all the way up to the senior members of the community.

Abe and Mika Deshotel, pastors of the Family Church of Connecticut, led the list of speakers. A presentation by Roger Wetherall featured time for the participants to brainstorm and develop pilot projects for their respective ministries. Greg Breland gave a testimony on the power of the Divine Principle and how it changed his life. Each ministry also had a chance to meet separately to make goals for the year and strategize on accomplishing them.

The pastors expressed their happiness at the birth of a newly revised Blessing and Family Ministry in Bridgeport, coordinated by Rev. and Mrs. Chen Lawrence Fong, recent arrivals in the community.

The retreat concluded with intergenerational discussions and a cheer of Ok Mansei at the Holy Ground. Participants then were treated to dinner at Sonobana, a Japanese restaurant in Hamden owned by the Muto family.

Pastors Abe and Mika's intention for the retreat was to build a culture of excitement and pride around volunteering. Last year's retreat took place at Camp Sunrise in New York. Pastor Mika said, "Even though we could not meet at Camp Sunrise this year, by meeting at UB, more participants could get involved."

### REFLECTIONS

"I was really inspired by the energy and ideas happening today. I was also inspired by the intergenerational sharing, a meeting of middle-school-aged through to our older members."—Roger Wetherall, Blessing and Family Ministry marriage enrichment coordinator

"It was a great idea to get to know the different ministries. I didn't know a lot of them before today. I feel it's important for the staff to get to know each other. There were a lot of great ideas generated; the challenge will be in being consistent in making them happen."—Stone Zodzi, 20, Youth Ministry

"I really liked this event because though we are already active, it's a good chance to clarify our direction and find out what everyone else is doing."—Keiko Breland, education and witnessing coordinator