

Chung Pyung Staff Prepare for Youth Workshops

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The seven-day workshop for volunteer staff of the international 21-day and 40-day summer workshops at the Chung Pyung Heaven and Earth Training Center began on June 24, 2016. Middle, high school and university students from over 17 countries have signed up to participate and will arrive in just a few days.

For the last five days, a group of 10 young adults from America, the Philippines, Brazil, Korea and Europe and one parent figure bonded over planning sessions, hikes, prayer and reflection. They received internal guidance and education from members of the International Department at the Chung Pyung Heaven and Earth Training Center, and were greeted by Rev. Jin Hwa Chung, Director for the International Department and Education Director for FFWPU International who welcomed the volunteers to Chung Pyung. Rev. Chung is a Unification-born elder born in 1964 and raised in the Unification movement. His father was a reverend in the Unification movement since 1960, and Rev. Chung lived a public life for a long time before taking on his current role in February, 2016. He was originally continental director of North East region and is mainly interested in education of youth. He shared:

“I consider this role to be my new mission, though I don’t feel qualified to educate our youth as my English is not perfect. But I do my best to offer Divine Principle lectures in English. I do my best to communicate to youth what is the most important essence of our life and how we can best follow the hopes of our True Parents. This is my mission.”

“True Mother talked about holding Sunghwa (youth) workshops in the summer and winter for 21 or 40 days and that made me think, ‘Wow, we need more staff.’ There about 7000 Unificationist-born youth in the world, so right now we are discussing a plan to be able to hold workshops twice a year for all these youth. So please share your thoughts with us. How can we create an enjoyable experience?”

“Please do your best to make your experience fun as staff. I’m really grateful to all of you for volunteering and don’t forget to reflect often on what is your goal. What do you hope to learn? What do you expect out of this experience? You will get your answer during your time here.”

Everyone spent the first day bonding with open, honest sharing of why they volunteered to staff. Many shared that they felt a pull or inexplicable desire to come. Sunny Pisano, a Unificationist-born youth from Portland, Oregon, who studied Psychology specializing in human sexuality with an emphasis on

pornography, shared, “I really do feel I have something unique and precious to offer our youth; I focus on pornography and how it’s such a pervasive issue with youth everywhere. I feel that is why I am here now. So in whatever way I can offer in knowledge, experience, I want to be able to do help our youth develop their relationship with God and True Parents by addressing these external issues that may not have yet been addressed with our youth.”

Myra Meijer is a first-generation Unificationist who lives just down the street from the training center. She has dedicated much of her time assisting with various workshops and programs for youth. Her youngest son is participating in this year’s summer program. Myra shared, “Whenever I participate in workshops as staff, I try to see what it is that moves the youth to come. Why do some grow in their faith, while others have an inspiring experience and then go back to a lifestyle that hinders their growth once they get home? I really want to focus and pray on this question during this workshop.”

For Evelyn Barata, a 29-year-old Unificationist-born youth from the United Kingdom, Chung Pyung had saved her life. “My faith before was very weak,” she shared, “and I gained many spiritual experiences while here in the past. I felt a voice asking me to help at this workshop. It was very clear for me that I should come to help, though, in truth, I had at first resisted making the decision to come. In the end, I really want to be here to help our struggling teens and offer my own experiences to them in hopes that it will help them.”

Though it wasn’t his first choice, Jonathan Hoyte, a 22-year-old Unificationist-born youth also from the United Kingdom, chose between two possible summer programs and decided to be staff for this summer workshop. “This felt like a better option for me. I’ve been staff once before and I couldn’t say I had the best experience, but it helped me grow a lot. It shaped me more as a person in general and helped me become closer to God and True Parents when I realized how much was on the line for the younger youth who have to go through this as well. So I want to be there for them and support them and support the staff here.”

The volunteer staff receives a great deal of support from the Chung Pyung International Department: Inpyo Moon, International Team Leader, Ryuichi Kishimoto, workshop supervisor, Sachika Hayashi, international team staff in charge of registration, and Georgia-Li Hewitt, volunteer staff for the team. Working alongside this tight-knit team created a solid and united group to staff these next 40 days of youth workshops. Everyone is excited and ready to make this experience memorable and meaningful. Join us next week to hear from the 40-day workshop participants and what their hopes are for their workshop experience.

